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Picnic-style open house

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - A grand-scale celebration to celebrate the New Year, Hari Raya and Christmas will be held on Monday at Dataran Merdeka.

Themed Pancawarna Malaysia - Malaysians' Open House, it is set to attract 100,000 people.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Cabinet Ministers will attend the picnic-style festival to be held from 3pm until the early hours of the morning.

Deputy Information Minister Datuk Mohd Khalid Mohd Yunus, who is co-chairman of the festival, said the event would serve as a get-together for the the country's multi-racial society.

"The public is encouraged to bring along food to be exchanged and savoured.

"Mats will be spread across the Dataran Merdeka so that the people can bersila in their traditional attire, which will help exude the racial harmony we are blessed with," he said.

Khalid said the people too would have the opportunity to get up-close with the leaders.

"This is a change from the previous New Year's celebrations. This new concept will help strengthen the ties between Malaysians," he said.

"Such an event will help attract tourists who can witness for themselves the Malaysian way of life," Khalid added.

A committee has been formed to liaise with hotels and travel agencies and publicise the event to tourists.

Flyers will also be distributed to housing areas in the Klang Valley.

Apart from enjoying performances by local artistes, a karaoke competition and poetry recital, the public will also be able to patronise 81 stalls selling a variety of items including white roses (symbolising peace), proceeds from which would go to charity.

Entrepreneurs interested in taking up the stalls can call the secretariat at 03-22848812 or fax 03-22848852.

The event is co-organised by the Federal Territory Listeners, Viewers and Readers group, Kelab Cinta Malaysia, The Malay Chamber of Commerce Malaysia, the Muslim Consumers Association of Malaysia, Blue Mosque Fraternity, Arab Foundation, Qurra' Malaysia Foundation, Kuala Lumpur City Hall, Tenview (M) Sdn Bhd, M-Square Sdn Bhd and Reap n' Rich Worldwide Holdings Sdn Bhd with the support of the Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry, Health Ministry, Information Ministry and Youth and Sports Ministry.