

Thaksin to attend Raya open house in Jitra

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KANGAR, Tues. — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and several Cabinet members are expected to lead about 10,000 Thai nationals including senior Government officials for the National Hari Raya Aidilfitri Open House celebration in Jitra on Saturday.

Special posters in Thai prepared by the organisers have been given to Thai officials to be put up across south Thailand.

The posters read: "Hari Raya Open House celebrations at Jitra, Kedah beginning at 7pm Thai time (8pm - Malaysian). All are welcome."

A Thai Foreign Affairs Ministry

spokesman told the *New Straits Times* today: "Plans are being finalised for the Thai PM and his entourage to attend the function while the invitation has been aired over radio and television stations here."

He said more Thais living in the southern provinces bordering Malaysia would take advantage of the invitation. The Bukit Kayu Hitam/Danok checkpoint will be open 24 hours on Dec 21 for the arrival and return of Thai nationals.

The celebrations at Taman Tasik Bandar Darul Aman are organised by the Cultural, Arts and Tourism Ministry and the Kedah State Gov-

ernment. Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Sirajuddin and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah as well as the Sultan and Sultanah of Kedah are scheduled to attend.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain will deliver their speeches from 9pm and the King will launch the celebration at 9.30pm.

Dr Mahathir and several Cabinet members along with Kedah State Government officials are scheduled to hold talks with their Thai counterparts in Haadyai on Sunday.