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Police out in full force for national Christmas do

MALACCA, Fri. - Police are deploying 900 men for the national Christmas open house at Hang Tuah Mall tomorrow.

Melaka Tengah police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohamed Salim Abbas said police will beef up traffic and crime prevention surveillance in the surrounding areas.

A choir, comprising 500 men and women from churches here, will be among the attractions at the open house.

Popular comedy group Senario will entertain the crowd.

Other performers include Francissca Peter, Kenny Lee, Hashim, Watie and the Malaysian Elvis, Marciano Franco.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said the open house represented tolerance practised among the various communities.

"Since independence, Malaysians have been trained to be tolerant of each other and the open house during major festivals is a manifestation of this," he said.

Kadir expected a crowd of between 100,000 and 150,000 at the Hang Tuah Mall, a new place of attraction here which was opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in October.

Kadir said the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, the Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabudin, Dr Mahathir and Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam were expected to attend.

He also expected 166 foreign dignitaries to attend.

His ministry has also invited 32 foreign journalists and seven foreign television stations to cover the event.

Meanwhile, several roads will be closed to the public tomorrow.

Jalan Hang Tuah has already been closed to traffic.

Traffic from Jalan Munshi Abdullah and Jalan Kubu will be diverted to Jalan Kampung Hulu to allow the construction of a stage in Jalan Hang Tuah.

Several roads such as Jalan Tun Mamat, Jalan Graha Maju, Jalan Ong Kim Wee and Jalan Ong Kee Hoon would be closed later today.

Roads to be closed from 3pm tomorrow are Jalan Munshi Abdullah and Jalan Temenggung, near the junction to Bukit Cina, Jonker Bridge, Jalan Tokong as well as Jalan Kubu.