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Thai PM, ministers for Raya gathering

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ALOR STAR, Wed. - The Thai delegation to the National Hari Raya Aidilfitri gathering in Jitra on Saturday led by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will include most Cabinet members including Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai and Energy Minister Phongthep Thepkanjana.

Thai ambassador to Malaysia Chaisiri Anamarn said the delegation will travel to the venue after a Cabinet meeting in Haadyai on Saturday morning.

Thaksin, Surakiart and Phongthep, will fly to Alor Star while other Cabinet members will travel to Alor Star in a convoy of eight coaches.

Upon arrival, Thaksin, Surakiart and Phongthep will attend the launch of a joint undertaking to share electricity supply between the two countries which is

scheduled to be held at Dewan Kota Setar here at 6pm.

The Sultan of Kedah will grant an audience to the Thai Prime Minister at Istana Anak Bukit.

Thaksin will then proceed with his Cabinet members to the Hari Raya Open House celebrations at Taman Tasik Bandar Darul Aman in Jitra.

The event is jointly organised by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism and the Kedah Government.

The following day, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and a delegation consisting of several Ministers, Federal and Kedah Government officials, will visit Haadyai.

Chaisiri said that Thaksin and his Cabinet are scheduled to receive Dr Mahathir and the Malaysian delegation, who are expected to travel by road, at the Danok checkpoint on Sunday at 11.30am.

The two delegations will have informal talks while the Malaysian Ministers' wives will visit Thailand's "One Village, One Product Fair".

Dr Mahathir is scheduled to make the return journey by train, travelling via the Padang Besar border checkpoint in Perlis to Alor Star.

Dr Mahathir, who along with Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali is scheduled to arrive in Alor Star on Saturday morning, has also a tight schedule ahead of the open house gathering in Jitra.

The Prime Minister will visit the teachers' housing complex at Sekolah Kebangsaan Bukit Kayu Hitam and the Heritage Village project site at Mukim Temin, Jalan Sintok.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah will then attend a Hari Raya gathering hosted by the Prime Minister in his capacity as Kubang Pasu Member of Parliament at Dewan Wawasan in Jitra at 11am.

In the afternoon, Dr Mahathir is expected to launch the Lye Huat Garden rock museum in Napoh at 3.30pm.