

Thaksin-Dr M meeting this Sunday in Pulau Langkawi

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KANGAR, Fri? — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will lead a 15-member delegation comprising five ministers to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Langkawi on Sunday.

The visit is in conjunction with the fourth Annual Consultation with Dr Mahathir since the Thai Premier assumed office in 1999.

Both prime ministers will deliver keynote addresses before issuing a joint statement on Malaysia-Thailand Technology and Business Partnership Dialogue themed *Harnessing Strategic Business and Technology Partnership For Economic Growth*.

The dialogue is jointly organised by the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysian Industry-Government Group For High Technology (MIGHT) and National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) of Thailand.

The Thai Cabinet members are Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Surakiart Sathirathai, Interior Minister Wan Muhamad Noor Matha, Science and Technology Minister Phinij Jarusombat, Energy Minister Phonthep Thepkanjana and Commerce Minister Adisai Bodharamik.

Both Prime Ministers will witness the signing of a Joint Declaration of the Malaysia-Thailand Dialogue Co-operation Framework as well as two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) — Co-operation on Customs matters and Co-operation on Stock Exchange.

Among the issues that will be discussed are the on-going co-operation between the coun-

tries along the border areas, border demarcation and trade and investments.

The Trans Malaysia-Thailand Pipeline Project in Southern Thailand is also on the list, together with information co-operation and various other regional and international issues of mutual concern.

"Both countries are aware of the need to use the two-way initiative and their respective strengths to jointly ensure the momentum of economic growth to continue," Thai Prime Minister's Department spokesman Wisanu Sucharit said today.

Wisanu said the dialogue would further enhance techno-business co-operation between the private sectors of both countries.

He also said that Malaysia is Thailand's fifth largest trading partner while Thailand is Malaysia's seventh largest trading partner.

"There will also be a four-eyed meeting with the Malaysian Prime Minister at 4pm and a visit to the Oriental Village and cable car site at 6pm," said Wisanu.

He said the issue of Myanmar and cross-border security and trade are expected to be discussed between the two Prime Ministers during a private lunch at 1.15pm.

Thaksin will arrive in Langkawi at 9.15am in a Thai Air Force aircraft and return to Bangkok at 9am on Monday.

Meanwhile, Thai Ambassador to Malaysia Chaisiri Anamarn described Thaksin's visit as of special significance since the Thai Prime Minister "will be looking up to his elder brother for advice and guidance before he (Dr Mahathir) retires in October".