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SINGAPORE - The Istana grounds will be open to the public on Oct 22 from 8.30am to 6pm in celebration of Deepavali, said a statement released by the President's Office today.

Visitors can look forward to performances by various volunteer arts groups such as PAssionArts, Combeatz, and PA Talents.

Highlights of the Open House include NUS' Indian Dance Group and SMU's Samba Masala, in addition to band performances by Tampines and Siglap Secondary Schools.

Visitors can also view the animals on display from Wildlife Reserves of Singapore Zoo, take instant portraits at Gloria Photo Studio and have their faces painted by Cosmoprof. National Council of Social Services will also be selling Istana merchandise to raise funds for Comchest.

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Members of the public can also sign up for the Nature Guided Walk at the Istana, or take a guided Heritage Tour of the Istana main building. They can view selected function rooms and a display of gifts presented to the President and the Prime Minister by foreign dignitaries.

Visitors can also go on a self-guided tour using the "Istana Garden Walk" phone application which is available for free on the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.

Singaporeans and Singapore permanent residents enjoy free admission to the Istana grounds. Other visitors will be required to pay an entrance fee of \$1 per person. Visitors may access the Istana by the nearest MRT station Dhoby Ghaut, and enter the Istana grounds via the main gate at Orchard Road.

Additional fees apply for the guided tours. Proceeds from the sale of Istana souvenirs during the open house and all entrance fees collected will be donated to charity.

If air quality deteriorates to "unhealthy" or "very unhealthy" levels, scheduled programmes and activities may be shortened or suspended accordingly. The status of the Istana Open House will be provided onsite and on the Istana website.

minlee@sph.com.sg