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Ahern to raise collusion concerns with Blair

Taoiseach Bertie Ahern will meet Prime Minister Tony Blair in London today to discuss efforts to see the full implementation of the St Andrews Agreement.

Mr Ahern will also raise concerns about allegations of security force collusion in loyalist terror attacks in Ireland.

Last week an Oireachtas committee published a report with evidence that army and police officers in the North aided a paramilitary gang as it carried out a string of murders in the Border region in the 1970s and 1980s.

One of the attacks saw terrorists shoot dead three members of the Miami Showband in 1975.

The meeting is the first time the two leaders have met since the transitional Assembly was established at Stormont under the St Andrews Agreement.

With legislation now passed in Britain and a commitment to powersharing by the relevant party leaders, it is understood the focus of the talks

will be on ensuring the St Andrews timescale is maintained.

Mr Ahern is also expected to raise the issue of the peace dividend and to follow up on his recent meetings with victims of terrorism.

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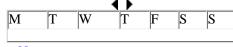
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