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## Prayers and slaughter of cattle mark Raya celebrations

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Muslims nationwide celebrated the Hari Raya Aidiladha with morning prayers at mosques, slaughter of cattle as sacrifice or korban and family gatherings.

Today being a Friday, many Muslims, clad in their traditional best, returned to the mosques around noon for the weekly Friday prayers.

As such, many korban ceremonies were either hastened or the number of cattle reduced to enable the volunteers to finish their work on time.

Many Muslims in major towns had returned to their kampungs to celebrate the Hari Raya with their families and relatives.

However, this year's celebrations have been overshadowed by a fire in Mina which has to date claimed the lives of 343 pilgrims and injured 1,300 more.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar performed the Hari Raya Aidiladha prayers with 500 Muslims at the Masjid Tuanku Munawir in Kuala Pilah, Negri Sembilan.

The King also paid his respects and offered tahlil prayers at the Royal Mausoleum, next to the mosque, where his late father is buried. Among those present were his son, Tunku Muda Serting Tunku Imran, senior State government officials and members of the royal family.

A reception was later held at the Istana Besar Seri Menanti.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, celebrated Aidiladha in Kedah. They held an open house at Dewan Jitra, near Alor Star, from 10am to 4pm with a break from 1pm to 3pm for the Friday prayers.

Guests included Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and his wife, Datin Seri Nila Inangda Manyam Keumala, State executive councillors and dignitaries.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir performed Aidiladha prayers at Masjid Zahir and had an audience with the Sultan of Kedah at Istana Anak Bukit.

In Penang, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim performed his Aidiladha prayers at Masjid Cherok To'kun in Permatang Pauh along with 500 people.

Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir performed the prayers at the State mosque along with about 1,000 people.

In Kuala Lumpur, at the Azzubair Ibn Awwam mosque in Cheras, about 1,200 packets of korban meat from 16 head of cattle were distributed to the poor and those living nearby.

The mosque committee secretary Mohamad Daim Abdullah said only 16 head of cattle were slaughtered this year instead of the usual 20 because they had to finish the work before the Friday prayers.

One of the recipients was Syed Omar Syed Fadilah, 12, who represented his father.

In Hulu Kelang, the principal of Rumah Bakti, Lamang Donggoh, distributed korban meat to the orphans at the home during the Hari Raya celebrations this morning.

The meat from five cows were donated by individuals, corporations and the staff of the orphanage.

"We had to start culling the cows early, at 10am, as we wanted to finish cleaning and distributing the meat before Friday prayers," he said.

Each orphan was given two kilogrammes of meat to take home to their foster families.

"Those with no families to go back to will remain and we shall cook a good meal for them," he said.

In Johor Baru, the Sultan led more than 2,000 Muslims in the Aidiladha prayers at the Pasir Pelangi Mosque.

The Sultan was accompanied by the Tunku Mahkota of Johor Tunku Ibrahim Ismail Sultan Iskandar, Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, Speaker of the State Assembly Datuk Mohd Ali Hassan and members of the State Executive Council.

Several mosques and suraus throughout the State also held "korban" ceremonies, involving the slaughtering of hundreds of head of cattle.

However, many mosques and suraus will be holding the "korban" ceremonies tomorrow, because of the time limitation. The Friday prayers were held just a few hours after the Aidiladha prayers.

In Kuantan, the Pahang Welfare and Sports Council, together with the State Veterinary Services Department, Kuantan Municipal Council and Sultan Ahmad 1 mosque management committee, held the Aidiladha prayers.

State Welfare committee chairman Zainul Ayob said eight cows were slaughtered. "We distributed the beef to the needy and those who attended the prayers."

"We hope more locals will participate in the future as this is an opportunity for them to help the less fortunate," said Zainul, who is also State Town and Country Planning Department director.

The Sultan of Pahang performed Aidiladha prayers at Masjid Sultan Ahmad in Pekan, while Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob prayed at Masjid Lepar Hilir Dua in Kuantan.

In Ipoh, Sultan Azlan Shah and Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib were among 1,500 people who attended Aidiladha prayers with the rakyat at the State mosque. The Sultan and MB also met with the people after the prayers.

Ten cows and a goat were slaughtered and the meat distributed to the public.

In Kota Baru, the Sultan and his consort, the Raja Perempuan of Kelantan joined Muslims in performing prayers at the Muhammadi Mosque, along with leaders and senior government officials.

Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat performed Aidiladha prayers at a mosque near his residence in Pulau Melaka.

Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa joined army personnel at the Kem Desa Pahlawan for the Aidiladha prayers at a mosque near the camp. Annuar also held an open house at his residence at Seri Puri in Bukit Marak.

Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed will hold his open house at his residence at Batu 11, Kemahang in Jeli tomorrow.

In Kota Kinabalu, more than 1,000 Muslims attended Aidiladha prayers at the State Mosque which began at 8am. Similar prayers were also held in mosques around the State capital followed by the slaughter of several head of cattle.

In Kuala Langat, the Sultan of Selangor and Cik Puan Besar Selangor Siti Aishah, held an open house at his palace at Pantai Bahagia, Morib.

Hundreds visited the royal couple including State Assembly Speaker Datuk Onn Ismail, State executive councillors Datuk Mohd Aini Taib and Datuk Abdul Fatah Iskandar.

Two cows were also slaughtered and the meat distributed to the people. Earlier, the Sultan performed the Aidiladha prayers at the Masjid Bandar in Kuala Langat.

In Kangar, Aidiladha was celebrated in an atmosphere of moderation with Muslims visiting relatives after performing their prayers. Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim was away in Mecca performing the haj.

In Malacca, more than 800 cows were slaughtered for the celebrations, according to a State Religious Department spokesman.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Zin Abdul Ghani performed his prayers at his kampung in Melekek, Alor Gajah while Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam performed his at the Bukit Katil mosque near here.

In Kuala Terengganu, the Yang di-Pertuan Muda of Terengganu performed Aidiladha prayers at Masjid Abidin with 5,000 Muslims, including Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, State executive councillors and government officials.

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