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UK visitor praises PM for message

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Impressed by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Hari Raya message to the nation, Dr A. J. Goldman of Liverpool made it a point to congratulate the Prime Minister personally.

This was the reason Goldman and his wife R.V. Goldman were willing to wait in line with hundreds others who thronged Sri Perdana, where Dr Mahathir held his Hari Raya open house today.

Goldman said he read the message which was published in full in the New Straits Times today under the heading "A moment for Muslims to mull over weaknesses."

"I told the Prime Minister that it was an extremely well-written article and it should be published in newspapers in the West.

"At a time when there are so many Muslims in the West and so little knowledge about them, such a piece would help increase awareness (of Islam) there," said Goldman, who is on holiday with his wife.

Goldman, who said he is a professor, added that the message would be "very helpful" in countries that had no idea about Islam.

Another visitor who made a special effort to Sri Perdana was Linda Tan, a writer from Taiwan.

She flew in a few days ago to interview Malaysian businessmen for a book on the Malaysian economy.

Tan said she decided to observe the Prime Minister at the open house because she had heard so much about him from the businessmen.

Japanese language teacher Yoko Ota took the opportunity to show off the unique open house tradition to her friends visiting from Japan.

Ota, teaching under the Look East Policy programme and attached to the Japan Cultural Centre, has been working in Malaysia for some time but her friends are first-time visitors.

Hisashi and Yuko Ishiyama could not speak much English but smiled and nodded as Ota explained that she wanted her friends to experience Malaysian hospitality.

The women were splendidly dressed in baju kurung to suit the occasion. The Ishiyamas brought along their 20-month-old baby Masahiro.

Australians Leonard and Wendy Gawicke made the trip to Sri Perdana on the recommendation of their Malaysian friends.

"They told us all about it (the open house) and said that we should come and see for ourselves," said Leonard, a mechanical engineer posted to Malaysia two months ago.

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