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N-Day celebrations to be different

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The National Day celebrations this year will see Malaysians out in full force on the streets - just like when the new millennium was ushered in.

Culture, Art and Tourism Ministry Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen said this would represent a change from previous years when the high point of the celebrations was the parade.

"It will be similar to the millennium celebrations. We have been celebrating National Day quite seriously before with the parade on the actual day. This year, we want the people to go out on the streets," she told a Press conference.

Ng said her Ministry would be working with retailers, hoteliers and other related bodies in planning the celebrations.

She said other activities being planned included mega sales, National Day sales, decorating of the city and the airing of patriotic songs over RTM.

She said unlike other Malaysian celebrations, National Day was for all Malaysians to celebrate together.

On Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's suggestion to have tour packages designed specifically for students, she said her Ministry was working with the Education Ministry on the matter.

"We have been discussing this idea for some time. The proposed student tour packages may be included in the school curriculum or through Tour Clubs held outside school hours," she said.

Ng urged the Parent-Teacher Associations and schools to start such programmes to educate students through tours and visits.

"We are promoting edu-tourism where the students get non-formal education. They can visit an oil palm estate and learn about product processing and visit a shopping complex to learn about consumerism.

"What matters is the way the tour is packaged," she said.

Earlier, Ng launched a Chap Goh Meh celebration at City Square organised by City Square, the Kuala Lumpur Tourism Association and the Crown Princess Hotel.

Chap Goh Meh is the 15th day of the Chinese New Year celebrations.

Some 300 tourists attended the event where they were entertained with cultural shows and handicraft exhibitions.

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