

26 OCT 2000

Deepavali-Open House

PRIME MINISTER CALLS AT SAMY VELLU DEEPAVALI OPEN HOUSE

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 26 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister today called at the Deepavali open house of MIC President and Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu at the Chung Hwa Scholl Hall in Jalan Ipoh here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali was warmly received by Samy Vellu and members of his family as well as MIC and other Barisan Nasional party supporters.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his wife Datin Seri Endon Mahmood, Transport Minister and MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Rais Yatim and Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad were also at Samy Vellu's open house.

Also present were Deputy Ministers, community leaders and members of the diplomatic corps.

Apart from attending to the VIPs, Samy Vellu also distributed cakes and drinks and chatted amiably with peoples of the various communities and religions who had gathered at his open house.

Speaking to the press corps who called at his open house, Samy expressed his deep thanks and appreciation to all the people who visited his open house.

"I hope and pray that this happy occasion will further strengthen the bond of friendship and goodwill among all Malaysians," Samy Vellu said.

Before taking their leave, the Prime Minister and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Samy Vellu and his spouse cut a Deepavali cake which is a tradition at the MIC leader's Deepavali open house.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah also called at the open house of MIC Deputy President Datuk S.Subramaniam in Petaling Jaya.

The Deepavali celebration was more eventful for Subramaniam who celebrates his 56th birthday today.

Dr Mahathir garlanded Subramaniam to wish him happy birthday.

Deputy Rural Development Minister Datuk G.Palanivel also held open house at his house in Taman Melawati here.

In SHAH ALAM, Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo and his wife called at the open house of Selangor State Executive Councillor for Estate Workers and Mines Datuk K.Sivalingam.

Dr Khir said the joyous Deepavali celebration showed that the people of various religions were living harmoniously in Malaysia.

In MELAKA, Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabudin and his wife Toh Puan Marfuza Sheikh Mohd Osman visited the Deepavali open house of State MIC Chairman Datuk R.Raghavan at Taman Maju, Jasin. Chief Minister Datuk Wira Mohamed Ali Rustam and community leaders also called on Raghavan.

In NEGERI SEMBILAN, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Samad visited the open house of State MIC Chairman T.Rajagopalu and that of State Deputy MIC Chairman Dr L.Krishnan in Seremban.

The Menteri Besar also called at the open house of former State MIC Chairman Datuk M.Muthupalaniappan.

Yesterday was also a public holiday in Negeri Sembilan in conjunction with Israk and Mikraj.

In KEDAH, State Executive Councillor for Health, Unity and Welfare Services Datuk V. Saravanan received a stream of visitors at his Taman Petani residence in Sungai Petani.

Yesterday was also a holiday in Kedah because of Israk and Mikraj and tomorrow is the weekend holiday.

In LANGKAWI, many tourists took advantage of the long Deepavali, Israk Mikraj and weekend holiday in Kedah to visit the resort.

Chalets, hotels and motels in Langkawi had been receiving more than normal bookings since yesterday.

Malaysia Airlines and the local mainland-Langkawi ferry companies had mounted extra service.

In JOHOR BAHRU, Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman visited the open house of Johor MIC Chairman Datuk S Balakrishnan.

Indian-owned shops and Hindu temples were decorated with coloured lights and freshly cut banana trees complete with banana bunches so that the year ahead would be prosperous and the harvest would be bountiful.

Indian women draped in colourful sarees were seen waiting for buses to ferry them to the temples and the houses of relatives and friends.

In IPOH, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Diraja Tajol Rosli Ghazali and his wife Datin Seri Kamariah Mokri visited the open house of State Executive Councillor for Consumer Affairs Datuk G. Rajoo who is also Perak MIC Chairman.

Tajol Rosli extended "Manggal Deepavali Valthu" (Happy Prosperous Deepavali) greetings to all Hindus in Perak.

The Menteri Besar said that from next year all festivals including Deepavali would be celebrated grandly and the state government would provide special allocations for the celebrations.

In KOTA BAHARU, Kelantan Indians decorated their houses with oil lamps and banana trees.

They also held open house and entertained people from the various communities.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Deepavali was celebrated on a modest scale. The Deepavali holiday coupled with the weekend holiday made Terengganu a holiday destination for many.

Many people were seen at the Pasar Besar Kedai Payang, Masjid Terapung and Pantai Batu Buruk.

In PENANG, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon visited the open house of State Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) Chairman Dr B.S. Bhar at Minden Heights, Gelugor.

Apart from visiting the houses of Hindu friends, the people in Penang took advantage of the holiday to visit shopping centres and hold beach parties in Tanjung Bungah, Batu Feringghi and Teluk Bahang.

In PERLIS, Hindus including several politicians held open house.

They included Perlis MIC Youth Chief S.Sreetharan, Perlis MIC Treasurer, S.Gunasegaran and Tamil Youth Bell Club Adviser S.Subramaniam.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim visited the open house of these personalities.

-- BERNAMA

SA AD AZZ AAM