

09 SEP 2002

Students

MALAYSIAN STUDENTS IN QUEENSLAND CELEBRATE NATIONAL DAY

BRISBANE, Sept 9 (Bernama) -- Malaysian students in Queensland celebrated Malaysia's National Day by holding Merdeka Ball 2002 at Brisbane's Greek Club Friday.

Under the organisation of the Malaysian Students Council of Australia, Queensland chapter (MASCA Queensland), the event helped bring together all the various university-based Malaysian students' associations.

MASCA was formed in an umbrella system to unify the Malaysian students community in Australia, and to promote the spirit of Malaysia among the students as well as the wider Australian community, said Andrea Jasmine Entoney, chairperson of MASCA Queensland.

The parent body, MASCA National, is based in Sydney, under the Malaysian Students Department. It remains the only Malaysian body that is recognised by the Malaysian Government.

The occasion began with the reciting of the four prayers of the four major religions of the country -- Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism.

The chief guest, Muzni Borhan, Student Advisor of the Malaysian Students Department, read the National Day message of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Over 60 students performed the entertainment for the night. First among them was a dikir barat performance welcoming the guests, followed by a media presentation by MASCA Queensland's IT Director Vinesh Latchmanan introducing the Merdeka theme.

A "sajak" rendition called "Erti Kemerdekaan" followed by an Indian dance and Chinese and Malay songs reflected the multicultural facet of the evening. A fashion parade of ethnic wear and a Chinese lion dance further endorsed this.

A lucky draw giving away prizes was another attractive segment. The first prize, an economy class return flight to Malaysia, was sponsored by Malaysia Airlines (MAS).

Some 350 guests attended the event, including locals outside the Malaysian community.

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