

20 DEC 2002

Adilfitri-Open House

PUBLIC ASKED NOT TO QUESTION EXPENDITURE ON AIDILFITRI OPEN HOUSE

BANDAR DARULAMAN, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir today called on the people not to question the cost of holding the national-level Aidilfitri open house here tomorrow.

He said that this was a less expensive and more effective way to introduce Malaysia to the world.

"The government feels that it's not wrong to spend on organising the function because of the benefits to the nation," he told a media conference at the site for the open house at the Darulaman Golf Club theme park here.

In this way, Malaysia could showcase to the world the unique cultures of its multiracial people and the harmony in which they lived, he said.

He said 22 foreign television networks and over 20 foreign media representatives, including those from Asia, West Asia and Europe, as well as 500 tour agency representatives from all over the world had been invited to cover the event.

Thai Prime Minister would also be leading his cabinet members to the open house where they would meet their Malaysian counterparts led by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

On Sunday, Dr Mahathir would lead the Malaysian cabinet to Haadyai to meet the Thai cabinet ministers led by their prime minister.

Abdul Kadir said that the open house concept was not only to promote tourism but formed the basis of the country's formation programme based on the cultures of the various races.

The ministry would hold open house to mark the main festivals of each community throughout the year, starting with Aidilfitri, followed by Christmas in Melaka on Dec 28 and Chinese New Year, Deepavali, Gawai and Kaamatan, he said.

He said the Aidilfitri open house in Bandar Darulaman would be an historic event because about 250,000 people, including 20,000 from Thailand, were expected to attend.

He gave an assurance that there would be enough food for everyone but advised them not to be wasteful or to take the food home because the open house concept was for one to enjoy the food at the venue.

He also said that the police had taken measures to ensure security and smooth traffic flow.

Among the artistes performing at the open house from 6pm to midnight are Siti Nurhaliza, KRU, Erra Fazira and three Thai artistes, Sob Chai Kriyon Sen, Narumn Chirangkur and Yupa Jaiyen. RTM will televise the event live from 9pm.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong and the Sultan and Sultanah of Kedah will grace the event.

-- BERNAMA

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