

22 JAN 2004

CNY-Roundup

CHINESE COMMUNITY USHERS IN YEAR OF THE MONKEY WITH JOY

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 22 (Bernama) -- The Chinese community ushered in the Year of the Monkey which is considered a symbol of intelligence with great joy nationwide.

They held open house across the country in keeping with the rich Malaysian tradition and entertained people from all walks of life.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak attended the open house hosted by the MCA and Gerakan, component parties of the ruling Barisan Nasional.

The Prime Minister and Datuk Seri Najib were received on arrival at Wisma MCA in Jalan Ampang here by MCA President Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting who is also Housing and Local Government Minister.

Also present were former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

Exchanging greetings with the press corps present, Dr Mahathir expressed the hope that the new year would bring even more good to the people and the country.

MIC President and Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, Gerakan President and Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik were also present.

Former MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and thousands of people of various races also visited the MCA open house.

Datuk Seri Ong expressed joy over the presence of so many people including past and present leaders and hoped this year would be the beginning for even closer relations between the MCA and Gerakan.

The Prime Minister later called at the Gerakan open house in Wisma PGRM in Jalan Pudu Ulu.

In KUCHING, Chinese New Year was celebrated amidst heavy rain in the morning with flash floods in parts of the city.

The celebrations began last night with the festive air in the city where the streets were clogged with traffic and last minute shoppers.

The Chinese-based Sarawak United Peoples Party (SUPP), the second

biggest party in the Sarawak Barisan Nasional, hosted open house at its headquarters in Jalan Tan Sri Ong Kee Hui.

Sarawak Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Abang Muhammad Salahuddin and Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud were among the dignitaries who visited the SUPP open house.

Ini KANGAR, The Regent of Perlis, Tuanku Syed Faizuddin Syed Sirajuddin Putra Jamalullail and the Raja Puan Muda of Perlis Tuanku Lailatul Shahreen Akashah attended the open house hosted by Perlis Wanita MCA head Oui Ah Lan at the Chee Yang Khor Moral Uplifting Hall.

Their Royal Highnesses exchanged greetings with those present at the open house. Oui is the MLA for Indera Kayangan.

Also present were Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim and Deputy Home Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung.

The Royal Couple expressed the hope that the Chinese New Year would strengthen harmony among the various communities in Malaysia.

In a statement sent to Bernama, they called for the preservation of the tradition of visiting open house as it was invaluable in strengthening ties among the various communities.

In SEREMBAN, more than 5,000 people visited the open house hosted by the MCA and the Gerakan.

Among the dignitaries present were Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad and his wife Puan Sri Hazizah and state executive councillors.

The Negeri Sembilan MCA hosted its open house at the Seremban Municipal Council Hall while the Gerakan held its open house at the Wisma Gerakan in Jalan Templer.

In IPOH, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali visited the open house hosted by various dignitaries in Perak.

They included the open house hosted by Perak MCA Chairman Datuk Ong Ka Chuan, Gerakan Deputy Secretary-General Datuk Chang Ko Youn and Perak PPP Chairman Lee Heng.

Ipoh was busy despite the public holiday as people working in Singapore and the Klang Valley had returned to the city to celebrate Chinese

New
Year.

In SABAH, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman attended the MCA-Gerakan joint open house in Sandakan.

Several hundred people from various communities attended the open house being held jointly for the first time in the state.

In MELAKA, the Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabudin and his consort Toh Puan Marfuza, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam and his wife Datin Seri Asmah visited the open house hosted by Melaka Gerakan Chairman Datuk Chua Peng Soon at his residence in Bukit Baru.

The Chief Minister and his wife also visited the open house of Melaka Chief Police Officer (CPO) Datuk Christopher Wan Soo Kee at Seri Temenggung, Bukit Sebukor.

The Melaka MCA open house would be held tonight at Wisma MCA, Jalan Hang Tuah.

Thousands of holidaymakers and foreign tourists visited historic sites in the city and toured historic buildings such as St Paul's Hill and Bandar Hilir.

In PENANG, more than 10,000 people visited the open house hosted by Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon at his residence at Fort Cornwallis, Padang Kota Lama.

People joined the queue as early as 10am to wish Dr Koh and his family a happy new year and to wish speedy recovery for his wife Puan Sri Kah Peng who is recuperating from surgery.

Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Dr Hilmi Yahaya was among the dignitaries who attended the open house.

In the afternoon the PPP held open house at Wisma YMCA in Jalan Macalister.

The highlight of the Penang-level Chinese New Year celebrations will be when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi visits the joint MCA-Gerakan open house at the Penang International Sports Arena tomorrow.

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