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## Celebrations nationwide

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The Chinese community ushered in the Year of the Goat today, with grand and moderate-scale celebrations around the country.

Hundreds of people visited the open house hosted by Transport Minister and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik at Wisma MCA here today.

The guests included Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Guests were entertained by three pupils of the Szechuan Arts School in China, who held the audience captive with their spectacular martial arts and acrobatic skills and comedy antics.

The ever popular Baba and Nyonya entertained with their jokes.

Visitors of other cultures, including foreigners, were "educated" in the art of tea serving with interesting methods such as "bachelor playing the flute" and "crouching tiger, hidden dragon".

A variety of food was served, including cookies, cakes, satay and traditional sweetmeat.

Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding hosted a private function at a hotel here for VIP guests.

In Penang, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and wife Puan Sri Chui Kah Peng hosted some 10,000 people at their open house at Fort Cornwallis.

Among the guest were Yang diPertua Negeri Tun Abdul Rahman Abbas and his wife Toh Puan Majimor Shariff and 60 special visitors from various charity homes in Penang.

Festive traditional delicacies such as kuih bangkit, kuih kapit and mandarin oranges were served, along with local favourites such as roti jala and ais kacang.

State Executive Councillor Datuk Dr Teng Hock Nan held his open house at the Penang Che Hoon Khor Moral Uplifting Society hall which was attended by about 2,000 people.

The Penang people's Progressive Party (PPP) held their open house at the YMCA building in Jalan Macalister, George Town, attended by party members and senior citizens from welfare homes.

The Chief Minister attended the open house as well.

In Kota Kinabalu, major hotels invited lion dance troupes to perform for tourists and locals.

At some hotels, staff dressed up as the God of Prosperity and gave out ang paws.

In Seremban, more than 5,000 people from all walks of life, turned up at the Seremban Municipal Council Hall for the Chinese New Year celebration hosted by the State MCA.

Among the VIPs present were Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad, State MCA chief, Datuk Hon Choon Kim, his deputy Datuk Dr Yeow Chai Thiam, State police chief Datuk Ahmad Fuaad Sidek and other State exco members.

Guests were entertained by lion dances and cultural performances and treated to a variety of local cuisine.

At the Terminal One shopping centre, the State Gerakan hosted a similar grand celebration.

In Kota Baru, Malaysians and foreign tourists attended an open house hosted by Kota Lama state assemblyman and state exco member Anuar Tan Abdullah at his service centre at Jalan Kebun Sultan.

In Malacca, 18 Muslims from See Ann province, China, were among the

guests at the Chinese New Year function hosted by the State MCA at the Taming Sari hall in Ayer Keroh.

Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabudin and his wife Toh Puan Sharifah Marfuza Sheikh Mohd Othman along with Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam and wife, Datin Seri Asmah Abdul Rahman were among the guests of honour.

In Kuala Terengganu, the Chinese community began the day by offering prayers at Kampung Cina temple in the morning and then hosted guests at their open-house shortly afterwards.

State executive councillor Mohd Abdul Wahid Endut and family were seen at the open house hosted by Terengganu Chinese Chamber of Commerce chairman Low Kiang Chuan in Batu Buruk today.

In Ipoh, Malaysians took the opportunity to visit the homes of their Chinese neighbours and friends including the open houses organised by two state executive council members here yesterday.

Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali invited the public to attend the state-level Chinese New Year celebrations tomorrow at Ipoh Padang which is scheduled to start at 7pm.

Sultan of Perak Sultan Azlan Shah and Raja Permaisuri Perak Tuanku Bainun are expected to grace the event.

A 155m-long dragon dance performance and a lion dance by a group of dancers, who won the world championship title for the 13th time, are among the events lined up.

Local artistes such as Amy Mastura, Safura, Prakash and Shashi, Guang Liang and others would also be entertaining the guests.

There will also be a 15-minute fireworks display and food.

In Miri, more than 5,000 people from all walks of life attended the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) open house held at the Miri Indoor Stadium.

The open house was co-hosted by SUPP chairman Tan Sri Dr George Chan, who is Sarawak's Deputy Chief Minister, Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Peter Chin and Lee Kim Shin, the State Assemblyman for Senadin.