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Umno celebrates 60th anniversary of its birth

JOHOR BARU: The sun smiled on a sea of red-and-white umbrellas as more than 60,000 Umno members gathered in the vast grounds of Istana Besar here for the party's 60th anniversary celebration yesterday.

The men also turned up in red-and-white *baju Melayu* while the women wore *baju kurung* of the same hues, in keeping with the colours of the Umno flag.

Members who flocked to the city since Wednesday to join in the festivities gathered at the grounds of the grand palace, Umno's birthplace, from as early as 7am.

They brought along banners, flags and portraits of the five Umno presidents.

The party members assembled at the historic location to remember the day when the late Datuk Onn

Jaafar announced Umno's formation.

The celebration was aired live over RTM1, beginning with a parade to welcome party president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and other Umno leaders by 210 members carrying *bunga manggar* and *bunga telur*.

The Prime Minister inspected a parade comprising Umno members before joining in the singing of *Negaraku* and the Umno anthem.

Johor Umno Youth head Razali Ibrahim read out the pledge of loyalty to the party before veteran artiste Datuk Rahim Razali recited the Umno proclamation which was delivered by Onn 60 years ago.

Sixty birds and 2,000 red-and-white balloons were released after Abdullah gave a speech.



ROYAL ADDRESS: Sultan Iskandar addressing the crowd while (from left) Abdullah, Abdul Ghani, the Sultanah of Johor Sultanah Zanariah Tunku Ahmad and Najib look on during the celebrations yesterday.