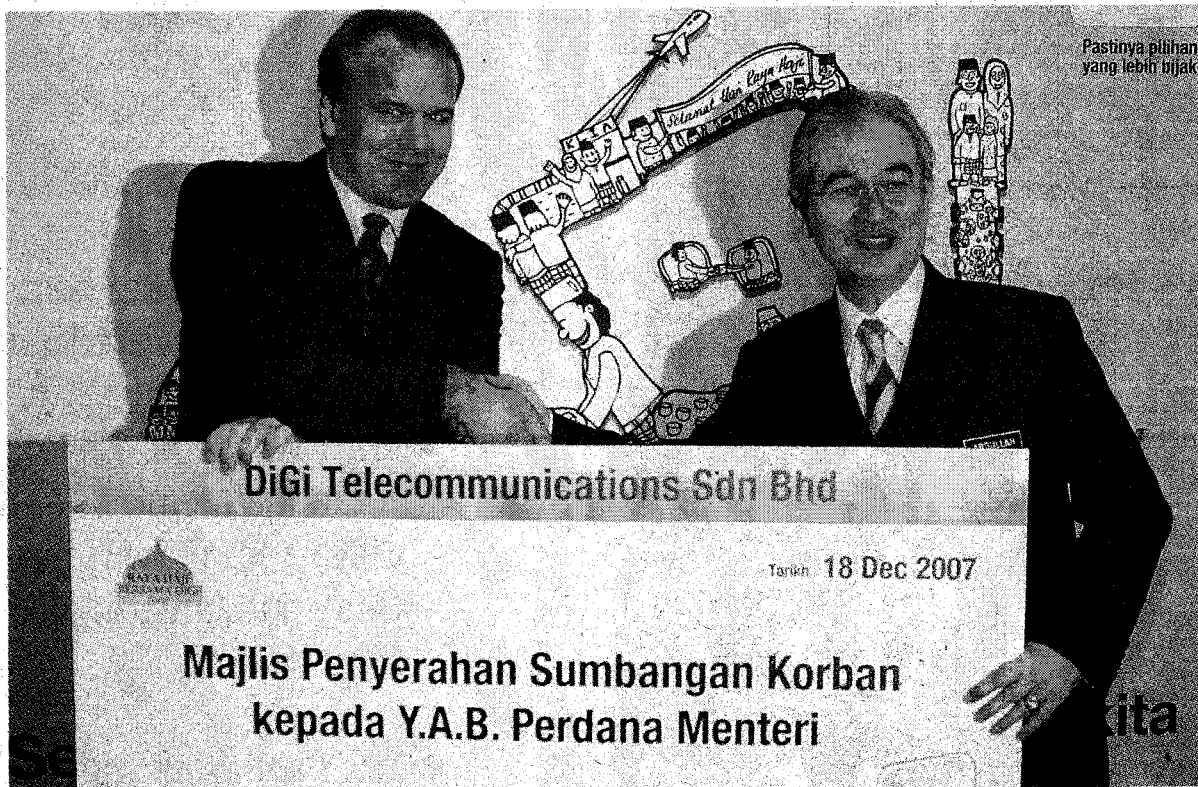


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# PM: Religious festivals unite all Malaysians

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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi receiving the contribution for Aidiladha from DiGi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Morten Lundal yesterday.

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia can pride itself in knowing that regardless of what religious celebration it may be, its ethnic groups will come together as one to honour the event, said the prime minister.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said religious festivals celebrated in Malaysia served to bridge gaps and foster better ties among the multi-religious and multi-racial makeup of the country.

Malaysia, he said, was blessed as the people had not only great respect for each other's religion, but also for the religious occasions that the different segments of the society celebrated.

Abdullah also said Malaysians never failed to display respect towards each other and it was customary for most to offer help and lend a hand during religious festivities, even to those outside their own race.

"A religious occasion, including Hari Raya, is a day when we seize the opportunity to visit our friends

and strengthen our ties as true Malaysians.

"In our everyday lives, we prioritise aspects of goodwill and understanding towards each other, including on religious matters, which are deemed sensitive," Abdullah said at a ceremony to symbolically receive 100 head of cattle for Aidiladha from DiGi Telecommunications Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Morten Lundal yesterday.

The contribution will be distributed to poor Muslims tomorrow.

Lundal said that, as a foreigner who had been in the country for a while, Malaysia's multi-ethnic society was a great asset for the country.

"It is a true differentiator and the value proposition is strong for both citizens and visitors," said Lundal.

"In business, we like to say that people are our greatest assets and this applies to a country as well.

"As such, the composition of Malaysia in itself offers significant advantages to this nation," he said.