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75,000 celebrate Hari Raya with Najib, ministers

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MULTIRACIAL EVENT: People of different backgrounds, tourists attend open house

**HASHINI KAVISHTRI KANNAN
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P RIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house here on Wednesday saw Malaysians and people of various nationalities com-

ing together to celebrate the festival with Najib and ministers.

The Seri Perdana grounds were transformed into a sea of people dressed in their best as visitors from all walks of life took the opportunity to meet and greet the leader.

Some 75,000 people started queuing up at the entrance to Najib's official residence here as early as 8.30am.

Najib, who appeared resplendent in a marsala Baju Melayu, made an appearance at 11am and greeted guests with his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, who was clad in a matching floral-printed baju kurung.

Among the Malay delicacies served were *mee rebus*, *mihun sup utara*, satay, tomato rice, *ayam masak merah* and laksa Penang.

At 2.30pm, Najib joined in the an-

nual cake-cutting ceremony where he cut a 100kg cake, which was served to guests.

This year, security was tighter. Guests were screened with a security sensor and a metal detector in light of terror attacks around the world and in Malaysia.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.

Visitors who came to the open house with their friends and family were overjoyed to see people of dif-

ferent races turning up for the celebration.

Ariff Firdaus, 26, and his wife, Siti Nurul Jannah, 26, attended the open house with their family, dressed in matching turquoise blue outfits.

Ariff, who is attending the open house for the second time with his family, said he enjoyed the company of so many people of different backgrounds.

Many tourists also came to experience the celebration.

Twin sisters Justine and Elise Bouvier, 20, from France, said they were thrilled to be at such a big gathering.

"It is amazing to see so many different people in the same place. Our friends told us about the open house and said we shouldn't miss it," said Justine, while holding a bowl of *mee rebus* in her hand.