

# CNY do shows Malaysian unity

## PM, Cabinet members and politicians attend modest MCA gathering

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The spirit of Keluarga Malaysia (the Malaysian Family) was strong and apparent during the MCA Chinese New Year reception at Wisma MCA here.

The gathering was special as it was a change from the usual open house festivities that were called off by MCA last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said Chinese New Year was celebrated not just by the Chinese community in Malaysia, but by all the races in the country.

"This symbolises the unity among the various races, which is in line with the spirit of the Malaysian Family (Keluarga Malaysia)," he told reporters after attending the reception on Tuesday.

He urged Malaysians to continue forging closer ties with each other for the good of the nation.

Ismail Sabri, who wore a maroon shirt, arrived at about 9.39am with his wife Datin Seri Muhaini Zainal Abidin.

They were welcomed by MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong and other party leaders.

MCA did not host its annual open house celebrations last year in adherence to the Covid-19 standard operating procedure (SOP) issued by the National Security Council to prevent Covid-19 clusters.

Interstate and inter-district travels were also prohibited last year, with visiting limited to close family members within a 10km radius.

The government decided to relax the SOP on family reunion dinners and travel this year after taking into account the high vaccination rate in the country and the number of people who have received the booster dose.

Dr Wee said MCA decided to hold a scaled-down and modest celebration to mark the occasion instead of the usual full-scale open house.

"This year, celebrations only involved invitees. We needed to limit the number of guests to prevent the spread of the virus," he added.

Nevertheless, he described the reception as meaningful.

"This year's celebration is extraordinary. We will face a lot of



**Using chopsticks:** Doing the prosperity toss at the MCA Chinese New Year reception are (from left) Mohamad Hasan, Saravanan, Najib, Ahmad Zahid, Dr Wee's wife Datin Seri Jessica Lim Hai Ean, Dr Wee, Ismail Sabri and his wife Muhaini, MCA deputy president Datuk Dr Mah Hang Soon's wife Datin Lim Soo Lee, Dr Mah, China Ambassador to Malaysia Ouyang Yujing and his wife Song Xiao Mei. - AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star

challenges in the Year of the Tiger as the nation goes through its recovery phase.

"The Year of the Tiger reminds us that we must champion the spirit of never giving up and be brave to face any obstacles in our way," Dr Wee added.

Earlier, leaders and guests were treated to a lion dance at the building's entrance.

They later participated in yee sang tossing before enjoying a sumptuous meal that included yam-basket, lemon duck and rendang.

Apart from live song and dance performances, guests were also entertained by a "Tiger" dance troupe to mark the start of the Year of the Tiger.

In a Facebook posting, Dr Wee hoped that the Year of the Tiger would bring strength, prosperity and abundance, as well as good health to all Malaysians.

"The spirit of the Malaysian Family can be seen when all communities come together to celebrate the festival.

"The harmony of the community in our country makes it unique and

has been our strength all this while," he said.

Among those who attended the reception were Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin, MIC vice-president and Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri M. Saravanan, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ah, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, Communications and Multimedia Minister Tan Sri Annuar Musa and Rural Development Minister Datuk Seri

Mahadzir Khalid.

Also present were Barisan Nasional secretary-general Datuk Seri Zambry Abdul Kadir, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, former Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Parti Bangsa Malaysia president Larry Sng.