

'Selamat datang, PM'

Malaysians in US fete Ismail Sabri at Hari Raya gathering

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WASHINGTON DC: Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob had a perfect start to his engagements in the United States with a warm and cordial meeting with Malaysians here.

The Prime Minister was at a Hari Raya Aidilfitri gathering hosted by the Malaysia Association of America (MAA) and Malaysia Business Council of the United States at a hotel here.

To make their special guest feel at home, an array of Malaysian delights such as mee goreng, satay, kuih muih and ais kacang was served.

Also feted were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Abdullah, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali and other senior officials.

The Malaysian delegation came dressed in baju Melayu to add to the festive air.

MAA chairman Kim Bong, who also heads the council, said the large Malaysian diaspora in the United States was very pleased to be informed of the Prime Minister's maiden visit and his participation in the special Asean-US Summit.

"The PM enquired about our well-being and asked if we needed any help.

"He knew of the tough times we endured during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic in the US.

"We had a heart-to-heart talk and he invited us to visit him whenever we are back in Malaysia," he said in a phone interview.

Wisma Putra secretary-general Tan Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, who was present, said the Prime Minister was moved by the warm welcome.

"He was touched to know that some Malaysians had travelled great distances from other parts of the US just to meet him.

"The true spirit of Keluarga Malaysia filled the air," he said.

Shahrul Ikram said preparations for the special summit were coming along smoothly, adding



Keluarga Malaysia welcome: Ismail Sabri (centre), Saifuddin and other guests smiling for the camera at the festive gathering in Washington DC. - Bernama

that he had, with his Asean counterparts, negotiated the Joint Asean-US vision statement to underscore the commitment and desire to enhance the partnership between both sides.

Ismail Sabri and the other participating Asean leaders are scheduled to meet US President Joe Biden at a dinner at the White House, followed by the summit meeting to be held at the State Department.

The leaders will also hold talks with Vice-President Kamala Harris and meet with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

US ambassador to Malaysia Brian McFeeters said he was optimistic of the success of the spe-

cial summit.

"There is no better way to show our commitment than to have the leaders of Asean together with the president in Washington. We are walking the talk.

"Malaysia is coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic and has an excellent record in vaccinating their population.

"The US had contributed vaccines to Malaysia at key moments," he said in a video discussion with the US Mission to Asean.

He concluded with a pitch to promote Malaysia to Americans: "The nasi lemak, char kuey teow and banana leaf meals are simply delicious."