

Wan Azizah hosts Asean leaders' spouses

PUTRAJAYA: It was a display of unity wrapped in elegance at Seri Perdana Complex here as Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail hosted the spouses of Asean leaders ahead of the 46th Asean Summit.

Among the distinguished guests hosted by the Prime Minister's wife were First Lady of the Philippines Louise Araneta-Marcos, Le Thi Bich Tran of Vietnam, Vandara Siphandone of Laos, Dr Pich Chanmony of Cambodia and Loo Tze Lui of Singapore.

Also in attendance were Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri, her deputy Datuk Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad and Raja Datin Seri Salbiah Tengku Nujumudin, the spouse of Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.

Dr Wan Azizah hosted a luncheon in honour of the delegation, followed by a welcoming speech in which she expressed her appreciation for the presence of the Asean leaders' spouses and the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening regional ties.

"This year's Asean theme is Inclusivity and Sustainability. As Malaysia chairs this year's summit, we hold firmly to the belief that development must uplift every community and that our growth must respect both people and planet.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has spoken of the importance of 'truly shared development', ensuring that no one is



Inspiring artwork: Dr Wan Azizah (centre) leading the spouses of Asean leaders in exploring innovative products developed by special needs groups under the ProWell project, during a programme held in conjunction with the 46th Asean Summit at Seri Perdana Complex in Putrajaya. — Bernama

left behind. That includes not only economic opportunities, but also upholding dignity, identity and the well-being of all," Dr Wan Azizah added.

She also stressed the important role of Asean leaders' spouses in promoting the values of inclusivity and sustainability during this year's summit.

"As spouses of our Asean leaders, we play an essential role in nurturing that spirit. Through our

work in community welfare, education, arts and culture, we hope to shine a light on compassion and connection. We build bridges, not just between nations but between hearts," she said, according to Bernama.

Guests were also treated to a choral speaking presentation by students from SMK Subang Utama, Subang Jaya, as well as a traditional dance performance by the Selangor Department of

Culture and Arts and a musical performance by the National Symphony Orchestra under Istana Budaya.

The programme concluded with an exhibition of Malaysian fruits organised by the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority.

This year marks Malaysia's fifth time chairing the regional bloc, having previously held the Asean chairmanship in 1977, 1997, 2005 and 2015.