

Guan Eng At Penang Festival In Melbourne

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By Neville D'Cruz

MELBOURNE, March 24 (Bernama) - Three days to celebrate "all things Malaysian" began on Friday when the Chief Minister of Penang Lim Guan Eng officiated at the opening of Fiesta Malaysia cum Penang Festival held in the inner suburb of Carlton, here.

The annual event, which began in 2006, is organised by Malaysian Students Council of Australia (MASCA), Victoria and supported by Tourism Malaysia, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Higher Education and the Australian Government.

Penang Tourism also played a major role by providing cultural dancers from the island and three well-known hawkers who dished out large amounts of Malaysian food to the delight of the huge crowds.

In his welcome speech, the Malaysian Consul General Dr Mohd Rameez Yahaya said Malaysia was blessed to have a "rich, colourful, multicultural diversity" which was developed over many centuries because of the country's "strategic geographical location in the middle of ancient trade routes".

"To me, Malaysia's rich multicultural diversity is in itself a unique culture," Mohd Rameez said.

"Our people have developed a unique sense of cheerful communication which can be identified no matter where we are.

"We, Malaysians are also very adaptable, respectful and tolerant of different beliefs and faith due to years of living together in harmony and peace."

Lim and his entourage including Executive Councillor for Tourism Development and Culture, Danny Law Heng Kiang and General Manager of investPenang (investPenang) Loo Lee Lian were delighted with the festival and the enjoyment it brought to the students and people of Melbourne.

Also present was the Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Susan Riley.

MASCA President Ashley Toh said a lot of hard work had gone into staging the fiesta and festival, which has been the best and biggest so far.

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