

Longhouse residents consider Najib's visit a Gawai gift

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JULAU: The visit of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to Rumah Jana Saweng about an hour's drive from Sibu has being described as a "Gawai gift" to the longhouse residents

Resident Christina Usun said since Najib's visit to the 60-year-old longhouse was during the Gawai Dayak celebration, it could be considered as a Gawai gift.

The 50-year-old, who is also the first cousin of Tuai Rumah Jana Saweng, said no Prime Minister had ever stepped into their longhouse.

"Two weeks ago when we heard that the Prime Minister was coming, we were all very excited and could not believe the news. We started making preparations for his visit a week ago," said Christina.

Another resident, Patricia Umus, 72, said they had met only Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud when he came to their longhouse a month ago.

"The highest leader to have come to our longhouse is the Chief Minister. But today another great leader has come to our longhouse," she said.

In **BETONG**, thousands of people flooded the Tan Sri Datuk Amar Stephen Kalong Ningkan Indoor Stadium to meet Najib.

He was visiting several towns in the state for Gawai yesterday with stops in Betong, Pakan and Julau before departing for Kuala Lumpur in the evening.

There were various cultural and musical performances during the celebration at the stadium, including a special song presentation by famous Iban singer Andrewson Ngalai.

The crooner sang a remix version of his song, *Berkikis Bulu Betis* (Giving my all to you), with the lyrics changed to *Wawasan Berkikis Bulu Betis* (Giving my all for the vision).

Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang, who helped revamp the song to suit the celebration, said Najib's visit to Betong for Gawai showed his care for all Malaysians, regardless of their race and creed.

Meanwhile, Taib urged the people to continue supporting Najib as Prime Minister for continuous development in the state.

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