

King, Queen Attend Aidilfitri Prayers At National Mosque
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 28 (Bernama) -- Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah attended Aidilfitri prayers at the National Mosque, along with over 14,000 worshippers.

Their Majesties arrived at the mosque at about 8.30 am. They were accompanied by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor and Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and his wife Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman.

Several Cabinet ministers and other dignitaries, among them members of the diplomatic corps, also attended the prayers.

The prayers were led by the Grand Imam of the National Mosque, Tan Sri Syaikh Ismail Muhammad. Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom delivered a sermon.

After the prayers and sermon, Tuanku Abdul Halim exchanged greetings and chatted with the worshippers.

Jamil Khir, in his sermon, reminded the worshippers of the trying time the nation was going through in the wake of the two air tragedies, involving Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flights MH370 and MH17, that occurred in the space of five months this year.

Flight MH370 dropped off radar on March 8 as it flew from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 227 passengers and 12 crew on board. The Boeing 777 aircraft has yet to be found, even after an exhaustive search in the southern Indian Ocean where it is believed to have gone down after veering off course.

Flight MH17 crashed in eastern Ukraine on July 17 as it was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur with 283 passengers and 15 crew on board. The Boeing 777 aircraft is believed to have been shot down over the troubled country.

Jamil Khir said the families of the Muslim passengers and crew of the two Boeing 777 aircraft were without their loved ones on this Aidilfitri day.

"It must be pointed out that there are, among us, children who are not able to exchange greetings with their father or mother on this auspicious morning; there are women who miss receiving the blessings of their beloved husbands," he said.

He said the government, taking heed of the situation in the aftermath of the air disasters, had cancelled the official Aidilfitri open house today and urged the people to observe

moderation in celebrating the festival.

He also said that the prime minister would leave for the Netherlands on Wednesday for discussions on the Flight MH17 crash.

Jamil Khir urged the worshippers to ponder how fortunate they were to be Malaysians, as they were able to observe the fasting month of Ramadan and celebrate Aidilfitri in the country peacefully, unlike fellow Muslims in some other countries, including Palestine.

"In Malaysia, our children are sporting new and beautiful clothes on this auspicious day, but children in Palestine are attired in blood-stained clothes as they run helter-skelter seeking shelter.

"We look forward to eating all the food that we like during Aidilfitri, but over there in Palestine they are struggling to find morsels of food and no house is complete for celebrating Aidilfitri after their destruction by the Israeli forces," he said.

Jamil Khir said the worshippers should take the opportunity of this auspicious day to pray for the protection of the people of Palestine and seek God's help for a resolution of the MH370 and MH17 tragedies.

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