



Merdeka a celebration for all M'sians

> Don't create controversy on N-Day do, says national unity and integration D-G

KUALA LUMPUR: Merdeka Day is an event celebrated by all Malaysians regardless of their race, religion and political ideologies.

Therefore, National Unity and Integration Department director-general Datuk Azman Amin Hassan said boycotting the celebration of the country's 55th year of independence was not only uncalled for but also denied people of their rights.

"The people should not boycott the celebration just because of disagreement on a certain matter. Although the celebration is organised by the government, it belongs to the people," he told Bernama.

He was commenting on the action by the opposition coalition-helmed states to use a different logo and theme for the 55th National Day celebration from that decided by the central government.

"Don't create controversy over the celebration. For me, Malaysians should celebrate the

country's anniversary regardless of what the theme is," he said.

Azman Amin said on that day, Malaysians must set aside their differences and unite to celebrate the independence of their country. "How will the world view Malaysia if many Malaysians boycott the celebration ... as citizens we need to be responsible for this," he added.

Malaysian Ex-Servicemen Association president Datuk Mohamad Abd Ghani said the theme '55 Merdeka Janji Ditepati' is not a main issue, as the message is for Malaysians to appreciate the spirit of independence.

Meanwhile, several roads around Dataran Merdeka here will be closed to all vehicles for the celebration on Aug 31.

According to the Kuala Lumpur police Facebook page, the roads will be closed in stages from 6am on Aug 27 for the rehearsal until Aug 31.

The roads will also reopen in stages on Aug 31 after the ceremony, it said.



VANDALISED...
"The Little Children on a Bicycle" mural created by Lithuanian artist Ernest Zacharevic was found damaged with an unknown liquid yesterday morning - causing much dissatisfaction among Facebook users and Penangites. The mural, which is located on Armenian Street, is part of the George Town Festival Mirrors Project.

'PAS needs to state stand on hudud, not DAP'

KOTA BARU: It is PAS that needs to issue a statement on its stand on the hudud law, not the DAP, said the prime minister's political secretary Datuk Mohamad Fatmi Che Salleh.

Mohamad Fatmi, who is also Kota Baru Umno division head, said that PAS, as a party that champions Islam in the opposition pact, must be firm on its stand to implement the hudud law although DAP disagreed on its implementation.

"What is important today is that PAS must make a stand, not the DAP. Malaysians have already known from the start that DAP is against an Islamic state, and rejects hudud.

"The mistake is why PAS has accepted the DAP," he told reporters when met at the open house organised by the Kota Baru Umno division yesterday.

The press reported on

Wednesday that PAS Youth deputy head Nik Abduh Nik Abdul Aziz had said that the DAP top leadership, especially its adviser Lim Kit Siang and secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, should make an official party stand on the implementation of Islamic law in the country such as the hudud law.

Nik Abduh had said that the statement was crucial to correct the public perception following a series of statements by DAP chairman Karpal Singh, who rejected the hudud law and Islamic state which PAS would try to implement if it were to take over the federal government.

Mohamad Fatmi said PAS should also make a stand whether it wanted to remain in the opposition pact after its statements on the setting up of an Islamic state appeared to be rejected by the DAP. - Bernama

BRIEFS

BURNS VICTIM'S BOYFRIEND NABBED

KUALA LUMPUR: Police have arrested the boyfriend of a 16-year-old girl suspected of setting her on fire at a secondary jungle near the Wangsa Sari People's Housing Project here on Aug 13. Kuala Lumpur CID chief Datuk Ku Chin Wah said the suspect was detained along with a woman in Setapak Jaya yesterday. He said they were remanded to facilitate investigations.

9 CHARGED WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING

KUALA LUMPUR: Eight Iranian men and a woman from Uzbekistan were yesterday charged in a magistrate's court with drug trafficking two weeks ago. Four of the men were charged with trafficking 53gm of methamphetamine in Mont'Kiara, Brickfields, on Aug 9. They also face an additional charge of trafficking 134.1kg of methamphetamine at the same place, date and time. - Bernama

TEACHER KILLED WHILE HUNTING

SEREMBAN: A teacher was killed and a friend was injured when hit by shotgun pellets fired by his brother-in-law while hunting with two others in a forest area at Kampung Pondo, Tampin, near here, on Wednesday. Amir Ain, 40, who was hit in the abdomen, died on the way to hospital in the 11pm incident. - Bernama

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