



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL CHINESE NEW YEAR OPEN HOUSE 2006

Penang plays host to the National Chinese New Year Open House on 4 Feb 2006 at 8 pm. The event is graced by Their Majesties the King and Queen of Malaysia, the DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang DiPertuan Agong and DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Raja Permaisuri Agong, as well as the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi.

The event is organised by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, the State Government of Penang, the Penang Chinese Clans Council and the Clans Association Youth Committee.

Prior to the opening ceremony, a colourful street festival will be opened at 5pm by the Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage, YB Datuk Seri Utama Dr. Rais Yatim at George Town's historic and heritage enclave.

The street festival, along Armenian Street, Cannon Street, Ah Quee Street, Acheen Street and Soo Hong Lane involves 5,500 participants comprising lion and dragon dancers as well as Chingay performers from more than 80 Chinese associations.

In addition, visitors will get to see 57 types of activities that will take place simultaneously at Yap Kongs, Khoo Kongs, Cheah Kongs, Lim Association and the Penang Youth Centre. They include cultural

dances, Chinese opera, traditional silk ball throwing, calligraphy, callisthenics and Chinese pastry making. There will also be a traditional cuisine and cultural exhibition by four “clan villages”, namely the Hokkien, Teochew, Hainanese and the Cantonese. This cultural celebration will help George Town in its bid for UNESCO World Heritage Site listing.

In Malaysia, although the Malays, Chinese and Indians, Eurasians and other indigenous groups retain and nurture their individual customs, traditions and religions, they live in peace and harmony. As a multi-racial and multi-cultural country, Malaysia offers a kaleidoscope of colourful events, customs and religions. The **National Chinese New Year Open House** is one of them and bears testimony to the tolerance displayed by the communities that live together harmoniously.

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