

WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK (WIHW) MALAYSIA 2013

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a multiracial, multilingual, multicultural and multi-religious country. Uniting, integrating and harmonizing the peoples have become the most important challenges to Malaysia. Serious thoughts and efforts have been continuously put into practice since independence in 1957 and formation of Malaysia in 1963. Institutions like the Department of National Unity and Integration and the Committee for Promoting Understanding and Harmony among Religious Adherences *locally known as JKMPKA* are among many other institutions and agencies that were established and were established by the government.

A harmonious nation requires people of diverse background in terms of race, language, culture and religion to learn, understand, compromise, work and live together for a progressive and prosperous future. Inter-racial and inter-religious harmonies are part and parcel of the society and needs to be nurtured. This is where World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) can play an important role in Malaysia.

In the first week of February 2013, Malaysia again celebrated the World Interfaith Harmony Week as proposed by His Majesty King Abdullah 11 of Jordan in the United Nations through its resolution A/65/PV.34. This is the third time Malaysia celebrate WIHW with the strong support and commitment from the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak. The **Malaysian week-long celebrations** carried the **symbol of love created by the arrangement of hands belonging to the adherents of multi-religious background of the nation**. It also carried the theme '**Goodwill**' which is understood locally as **MUHIBAH**.

Muhibah is a term borrowed and adapted from the Arabic word **Mahabbah**. Muhibah is always considered to be the **underlying factor that unite and integrate the various races of different cultural and religious background** and was extensively used by the country's first Prime Minister the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Alhaji. Now after almost six decades of independence, the Malaysian public still cherished the word Muhibah to simply mean love and 'care'.

OBJECTIVES OF WIHW MALAYSIA

1. Promote better understanding and harmonious relationship among the religious adherents.
2. Strengthening the practices of harmony as ways of life.
3. Serve as a platform for exchange of ideas and understanding among leaders and communities.
4. Show casing the inter-religious practices in the community.

WIHW MALAYSIA PROGRAMME

The week-long WIHW celebration in Malaysia adopted a holistic approach and was jointly organized by the Department of National Unity and Integration and the Committee for Promoting Understanding and Harmony among Religious Adherences (established by the Malaysian Cabinet in 2010). The program covers the following:

1. Promotion of WIHW Malaysia 2013
2. Khutbah, sermon and prayers in house of worship throughout 1st week of February 2013

3. Muhibah Travelogue (1st – 3rd February 2013) launched by **Minister In The Prime Minister Department**
4. Muhibah Bowl in Subang Jaya, in the state of Selangor (1st February 2013) with the **Minister In The Prime Minister Department**
5. Harmony Walk with **Prime Minister of Malaysia** in Brickfield, Kuala Lumpur (2nd February 2013)
6. Muhibah Communities Service in Sri Sakthi Vinagar Temple, Brickfield, Kuala Lumpur (2nd February 2013)
7. Communities Service Programme in state of Perlis (2nd February 2013)
8. Muhibah Dinner with the Religious Leaders hosted by the **Chief Minister of Sarawak** in Kuching Sarawak (4th February 2013)
9. Messages on WIHW by school headmasters during school assembly to student throughout Malaysia (4th February 2013)
10. Muhibah Visit by Religious Leaders to Kuching Buddhist Village, in the state of Sarawak (5th February 2013)
11. Muhibah Visit by Religious Leaders to Drug Rehabilitation Centre Kuching, in the state of Sarawak (6th February 2013)
12. Muhibah Breakfast with Religious Leaders in Thean Hou Temple, Seputeh, Kuala Lumpur hosted by the Federation of Taoism Malaysia (7th February 2013)
13. Muhibah Visit by Religious Leaders to Hospital Umum Kuching, in the state of Sarawak (7th February 2013)
14. Launching of WIHW at school level by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia in Kinrara Secondary School, Puchong, in the state of Selangor (8th February 2013)
15. Dialogue on Bio-ethics and Religion “Definition of Life From The Religious Perspectives” in Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) (21st February 2013)
16. Muhibah Forum “Faith and Good Governance” in Kuching the state of Sarawak (23rd February 2013)
17. International Seminar on Interfaith Harmony and Tolerance in International Islamic University Malaysia, in the state of Selangor (26 - 28 February 2013)

PARTICIPANTS OF WIHW

1. More than 10,000 people from all walks of life including Hon. Prime Minister of Malaysia, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Chief Ministers, religious and community leaders as well as students and youths involved in the programme.
2. Thousand of peoples involved indirectly throughout the country vis-à-vis media.

TESTIMONY

Testimony from President Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGO (ACCIN), Director General of Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) and Director General of Department of National Unity and Integration Malaysia.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

For further information please refer list below:

1. Promotion of WIHW Malaysia 2013
 - WIHW Poster (distributed to House of Worship and schools throughout Malaysia)
 - Article - Let's Enjoy Living In Harmony (published in The Star 29th January 2013)
 - Harmony Walk (published in Sin Chew 1st February 2013)
 - Media Plan
2. Khutbah, sermon and prayers in house of worship
 - Messages on WIHW
3. WIHW Malaysia 2013 Programme Book
4. Muhibah Travelogue
 - Muhibah Travelogue Programme
 - Article – published in Sin Chew 2nd February 2013
 - Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
 - Documentary WIHW 2013
5. Muhibah Bowl
 - Muhibah Bowl Programme
 - Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
 - Documentary WIHW 2013
6. Harmony Walk
 - Harmony Walk Programme
 - Article
 - published in Sin Chew 3rd February 2013
 - published in Berita Harian 3rd February 2013
 - published in Minggu Malaysia 3rd February 2013
 - published in fz.com 3rd February 2013
 - published in Malaysian Insider 3rd February 2013)
 - Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
 - Documentary WIHW 2013
7. Muhibah Communities Service
 - Muhibah Communities Programme
 - Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
8. Muhibah Breakfast, Dinner and Visit
 - Muhibah Breakfast, Dinner and Visit Programme
 - Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
 - Documentary WIHW 2013

9. WIHW At School

- WIHW At School Programme
- Article
 - published in New Strait Times 9th February 2013
 - published in The Star 9th February 2013
 - published in Berita Harian 9th February 2013
 - published in Harian Metro 9th February 2013
 - published in Sinar Harian 9th February 2013
 - Fostering Racial Unity In Schools
- Photo Journalism WIHW 2013
- Documentary WIHW 2013

Source: Department of National Unity and Integration Malaysia