

# Taking pride in diversity

Johoreans can take advantage of the state's rich culture and heritage to promote the Bangsa Johor spirit and its uniqueness, locally and internationally. >2

By YEE XIANG YUN  
xiangyun@thestar.com.my

**JOHOR BARU:** Bangsa Johor-themed events can help promote the state's specialities and uniqueness, from its people and places to its food, a state exco member said.

State Tourism, Domestic Trade and Consumerism Committee chairman Datuk Tee Siew Kiong said such events could also bring people together to celebrate the cultural and racial diversity in the country.

"It is beautiful that we are able to take the strengths of each race and showcase them as one, be it our food, music or dance performances," he said at the Bangsa Johor Carnival hosted by Mah Sing Group in Pasir Gudang here.

Tee said the state government encouraged organisations and companies to hold more of such programmes to promote unity among the people.

He also hoped that the Bangsa Johor slogan and spirit would be widely known locally and internationally.

"By being united and living in harmony, we can make Johor an attractive place for investors and tourists," he added.

The Bangsa Johor Festival kicked off with a 5km fun run and concert at the developer's Meridin East township in Pasir Gudang.

Visitors from all walks of life were treated to a day of activities, which included street food and performances showcasing the rich culture of Malaysia and Johor.

Some 2,000 participants turned up for the run to celebrate the spirit of unity in line with the Bangsa Johor tagline.

Mah Sing Group chief executive officer Datuk Ho Hon Sang said the festival's focus was on cultivating the spirit of togetherness among Malaysians.

"It is very much in line with our own tagline of 'Reinvent Spaces. Enhance Life' as we have transformed our Meridin East township and made sure to include the best of the state for this festival too," he said.

In addition to the fun run, there were ample activities for visitors.

Three lucky winners took home the recently released Apple iPhone X during the lucky draw.

Visitors were also given the

## Themed events can help promote Johor

Good turnout at festival celebrating cultural diversity through food, music and dance in Pasir Gudang



Participants of the 5km fun run at Meridin East.

opportunity to savour Johor's delicacies available at the food trucks.

To make the event even livelier, there were live performances by local bands Humming Bird, Mediaman, The Teh Tarik King, as well as the Bangsa Johor Drums - a performance combining drums from the various races in the country.

Local artiste Masya Masyitah also made an appearance during the event, much to the delight of fans.

The 531ha freehold Meridin East township has 40% lush green spaces.

There are plans to plant several thousand native trees around the 3.6ha Mulberry Lake to preserve and enhance the natural flora and fauna.

The township has 44.5ha dedicated to develop various activities including the 2.5km recently completed cycling and jogging path to encourage healthy living.



An upbeat performance featuring the kompong, 24 festive drum and urumi at the Bangsa Johor Festival.

Meridin East will feature a clubhouse in the future as well as a swimming pool, community hall, gym, yoga room, lounge and café, mini theatre and other features.

In support of the Government's initiative to develop more Chinese schools in Johor, Meridin East will be welcoming SJK (C) Sim Mow Yu on a 3.9ha site within the township.



**Back row from left:** Bangsa Johor Festival programme director Lee Sheah Liang, Pasir Gudang Municipal Council president representative Mohamed Ali Mohamed Backer, Ho, Tee and Mah Sing southern senior general manager Ben Ong with winners of various categories of the run.