

60 South Korean delegates have whale of a time with GPF - Hung Jin Moon

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It was more than just a cultural exchange for 60 South Korean delegates when they paid a one-day visit to Kampung Tambak Paya in Ayer Molek, Malacca to experience Malaysia's culture and traditions.

They were given a VIP-standard of hospitality upon arrival with children dressed in traditional costume extended them a warm welcome accompanied by the sound of the kompang and colourful bunga manggar.

Made up of mainly government officials, social activists, academicians, and corporate and community leaders, the delegates visited the state recently as part of the three-day Global Peace Leadership Exchange (GPLE) programme.

Held at Kampung Tambak Paya's traditional neighbourhood watch centre, villagers and their local leaders took the effort by lining-up several activities and programmes for the delegates despite fasting during the month of Ramadan.



Hot stir: Kim Tao Hoo (middle) trying his hands on making the dodol as his friends looking on.

The villagers demonstrated the methods of making dodol, lemang and bubur lambuk, including how to weave the ketupat and tap a rubber tree.

Despite the language barrier, the delegates and their hosts have had a whale of a time communicating with signs and gestures while trying out new things and sampling local food in the village, which is famous for its homestay project.

They also spent several hours with their foster family to learn more about their way of life and customs before breaking fast together.

Global Peace Festival Foundation (GPF) Korea president David Yoo said the programme allowed the delegates to see for themselves how Malaysia's spirit of unity in diversity could be a model for peace.



Cones: Kil Sun Ok (right) and Yeon Sook Choi happily showing the local delicacies, tapai and rempeyek that they enjoyed.

“The program offered them an opportunity to broaden their perspectives and build networks, while providing a forum to share experiences in peace building.

“This is also part of a larger social vision to see the global community rise above differences and blend together as one human family,” he said.

In the past five months, several delegations of more than 250 participants from South Korea had visited Malaysia under the GPLE programme.

“Through our continuous efforts, we aim to foster greater inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding and cooperation, he added.

The programme was jointly organised by GPF Malaysia and the National Unity and Integration Department under the Prime Minister's Department.

One of the participants, art teacher Han Mun Suk, 46, said she made the right decision to visit Malacca for the first time and was amazed by the Malaysian hospitality throughout her stay.

“The people here showed great courtesy and sincerity.

“I feel good being around them,” she added.

Another participant, grooming specialist and lecturer Kim Tae Hoo, 40, said tasting the dodol was an

experience he would cherish for life.

Kim described the dessert as sweet, soft and full of aroma that reminds people of their first love.

The South Korean delegate were also treated to a ride on the Malacca River Cruise and a bird eye night view of the beautiful historic city on the Taming Sari Revolving Tower.