

PENANG

# Celebrating diversity of Chingay

Parade in Butterworth sees participation from all races

THIRTY-NINE troupes captivated the crowd with dazzling displays of skill and artistry during Seberang Perai Chingay Parade 2024.

The parade took place along a 4.7km route, from Dataran Pemuda Merdeka to the Tow Boo Kong Temple in Butterworth, Penang.

Spectators were immersed in a breathtaking cultural spectacle that showcased vibrant traditions and talents.

Balancing giant flags on their foreheads, shoulders, mouths or necks amid unpredictable winds was no doubt challenging, but the performers handled it with impressive skill and courage.

Other performances included lion and dragon dances, *kompang* group, Silambam team, marching bands from Chung Ling Butterworth Wind Orchestra and SMK Bagan Jaya Wind Orchestra as well as Christmas carol choirs.

Four young girls known as Super Girls wowed the crowd with their energetic dances, reported Buletin Mutiara.

The parade also featured a float that carried three large "snakes" in white, green and yellow, accompanied by a man in traditional Chinese attire and several maidens.

The float incorporated elements inspired by "The Legend of the White Snake" Chinese folktale, which centres on a romance between a man named Xu Xian and a female snake spirit named Bai Suzhen.

This addition was particularly



Chingay performers (right) and a Chinese folktale-inspired float (above) at the Seberang Perai Chingay Parade in Butterworth.



timely as 2025 will mark the Year of the Snake.

Among the spectators was Fauziah Abu Bakar, accompanied by her daughters Farina Zainul Ariffin, Fariza and Fadrina as well as her two grandchildren – Putri Rifdha and Hyder Rahman.

"I love to watch this Chingay procession and other cultural events," she said.

"I like how the different races in our country celebrate Christmas, Chinese New Year and other festivals together."

Fauziah was especially proud to see Putri Rifha performing dances at the event.

"We enjoy watching such events as a family," said Fauziah, who is asthmatic and attended

the event in a wheelchair.

Bagan MP and former chief minister Lim Guan Eng said the establishment of Crown Plaza, the first international hotel in Bagan, speaks of the area's growing potential as a tourist destination.

"For a place to be a successful destination, you must have the 3Ps – right product, right programme and right people. Bagan has all of these.

"We not only have the Chingay parade here as a tourist draw but also a replica of the old Penang ferry, art walk and lantern procession.

"The old iconic Penang ferry is a symbol of Bagan.

"We will support holding a big-

ger Chingay procession next year," Lim said in his speech.

Penang tourism and creative economy committee chairman Wong Hon Wai said the parade encapsulates the diversity of Malaysia's cultural heritage.

"It is presented in the spirit of unity and celebration.

"I hope the parade inspires everyone here with the beauty of Penang's cultural harmony and our commitment to preserving and innovating our heritage."

Wong noted that the Chingay parade had evolved from traditional daytime processions into dazzling night-time spectacles.

"The integration of LED lighting and modern technology has transformed the parade into

a visual masterpiece.

"This evolution has breathed new life into the century-old cultural heritage, ensuring its relevance in a modern context while enriching Penang's cultural landscape," Wong said.

Lay Hock Peng, the event organising committee chairman and special coordinating officer to the Chief Minister, said the Chingay parade, which was originally confined to Penang island, had expanded to the mainland since 2008.

Also present were Sungai Puyu assemblyman Phee Syn Tze, Bagan Dalam assemblyman Kumaran Krishnan and Bagan Jermal assemblyman Chee Yeeh Kean.



(Above) The fun continues until Dec 31 in Bukit Bintang.

(Left) Event organisers and supporters promoting 'City's Rhythm, Your Surprise' campaign. — Photos: CHAN TAK KONG/The Star

## Bringing the sound of music to Jalan Bukit Bintang

THE evening scene at Jalan Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur is being further enlivened with flash mob-style performances by local musicians.

This is thanks to a campaign by property investment group Bangsar Heights Pavilion (BHP) in collaboration with Malaysian Buskers and Persatuan Pemuzik Malaysia (PPM).

The campaign themed "City's Rhythm, Your Surprise" aims to celebrate Malaysia's cultural heritage while empowering local musicians.

BHP chief executive officer and executive director Aaron Yap said the campaign, which runs until Dec 31, sought to raise

RM10,000 and provide a platform for musicians to showcase their talents.

"The contributions can also support PPM's members, including those who are ill, bedridden or in need of essential food and medication," he said.

"Attendees are invited to participate in the campaign by contributing a minimum of RM1.

"This initiative is particularly meaningful during the holiday season, aiming to bring much-needed relief and cheer to these musicians."

He added that the company would step in to meet the RM10,000 target, if necessary, to ensure the campaign's success,

which reflects BHP's commitment to uplifting local musicians, nurturing artistic talents and enriching Malaysia's cultural landscape.

Yap said the campaign aligned with the company's mission to create vibrant urban spaces that blend sophistication with cultural richness.

"It not only highlights our dedication to nurturing talent and preserving heritage, but also reinforces our role as a community-focused brand, echoing our vision of enriching communities through purposeful initiatives."

Throughout the campaign period, flash mob-style performances will take place in front

of the MyNews Jalan Bukit Bintang store, from 5pm to 10pm.

During the campaign launch, performers from Malaysian Buskers entertained passers-by with classic Christmas tunes such as *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* and *Jingle Bells*.

The audience was further entertained with pop song *APT* and folk song *Rasa Sayang*, with onlookers singing and dancing along. A Santa Claus was on hand to hand out gifts.

Present at the launch were BHP senior manager of corporate brand marketing Sophia Lim, Malaysian Buskers group chairman and founder Wady

Hamdan as well as PPM exco member Latifah Abdullah.

Wady said the organisation appreciated the support provided by companies such as BHP as well as the public.

"We make the city lively through our musical contributions," he added.

Latifah said the campaign had set a precedent for similar platforms where local musicians could showcase their talents.

"We have been working together with BHP to support local buskers and musicians," she said.

The public can watch the performances in person or donate via <https://tinyurl.com/xp9teacx>