

Sweet meeting with the Sultan

DOUBLE TREAT: The people's encounter with the royal family is further sweetened with free ice cream

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THE opportunity to meet and greet the royal family up close in the 17th Kembara Mahkota Johor (KMJ) was one much awaited by the folk of Johor.

The event allowed the people to personally meet the Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar and the royal family, who are making their way across the 10 districts of the state.

To add icing to the cake, for this edition of the KMJ, Sultan Ibrahim is bringing along an ice-cream truck, which will distribute free ice cream at each stop he makes.

Abdul Wahid Kasri, 60, was among those present at the flag-off of the royal entourage at Dataran Bandaraya on Saturday morning.

"I came with a group of friends and we are the senior citizen members of the Sri Stulang extreme bicycle riders group. We want to let the elderly know that it is not too late to get fit and enjoy a healthy lifestyle by joining recreational activities," he said.

Nabilah Abdul Aziz, 28, a housewife from Kota Tinggi, said the event brought cheer to Johor folk as they were able to personally meet the royal family during the stops.

"It is a good feeling that we can meet with the Sultan and extend our warm greetings.



Free ice cream is dispensed at the stops from a truck that accompanies the royal family on the Kembara Mahkota Johor. Pic by Zain Ahmed

The event is always a momentous occasion in the state and people from every nook and corner will come to see their beloved sultan," she said.

Nabilah was there with her two children Luth Mikail Mohd Fadzlan, 5, and Nurin Irdina Mohd Fadzlan, 7, to cheer on the royal entourage at the Kota Tinggi stop on

Saturday evening.

Junaidah Ismail, 49, from Simpang, said she had come early to join other Kluang folk in welcoming the royal family as they made their way to Dataran Kahang, one of the stops on the KMJ itinerary.

"The people love the sultan as each year, the royal family never fail to meet with the commoners. This year, it's a sweet treat for everyone as the sultan is bringing ice cream along on the tour," she said gleefully.

Sultan Ibrahim and the royal entourage will travel four days and cover a distance of 858km in three custom-made Prevost Marathon coaches. One of them is driven by the sultan.

The KMJ tour is the brainchild of Sultan Ibrahim and was first held in 2001. It is staged as a way for the sultan to meet and mingle with Johor folk as well as to learn about their welfare.

The tour this year also has the theme "Healthy Lifestyle". At each stop, the people will be able to undergo free medical check-ups as well as participate in various recreational activities.

The tour ends tomorrow at Dataran Mahkota in Kota Iskandar, Nusajaya.

Page 1 pic: Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar meet the people at Felda Bukit Permai, Layang Layang Kulaijaya on the first day of KMJ 2014