



**Celebrating together:** Anak-anak Malaysia in Bangladesh waving the Jalur Gemilang at the National Martyr's Monument in Savar, outside Dhaka.



**With love from Madrid:** Civil servant Mawaddah Ghazali, 34, with her five-year-old twins, Alea Zuleika (left) and Alea Zahara, flying the Jalur Gemilang in front of a monument that honours the Spanish language and the most outstanding work of Spanish literature, Don Quixote.

# Far apart but close at heart

Malaysians abroad band together to celebrate the nation



By MICHELLE TAM

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**PETALING JAYA:** Absence makes the heart grow fonder and over the last few weeks, many anak-anak Malaysia overseas have joined hands with *The Star* to send back messages of love for their homeland.

With the 54th Malaysia Day celebrations taking place today, those who miss Malaysia dearly include English teacher Guvan Sivasharen and engineer Uthaya Kumaran, a married couple based in South Korea.

"We are proud to be citizens of one of the most colourful countries in the world, where we are tolerant and feel the love among our brothers and sisters from all walks of life.

"As our hearts are still with our homeland, we visit home as often as we can. We miss our families, friends and authentic, delicious Malaysian food!" Guvan added.

An agricultural science major in Ireland said that being "10,000 miles away from home" makes her appreciate Malaysia more than ever.

"Happy 54th Malaysia Day!" said Universiti Putra Malaysia student Siti Zuriani Zakaria, who is completing her internship in the seaport city of Cork.

And although regional talent director Karen Chiew has lived in a few other countries, such as New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Italy, over the last two decades, home will always be Kluang, Johor.

"Living overseas, there are a few things that strike me every time I go home and realise what we take for granted.

"Like our diversity and how often we use two or three languages in one conversation, and not even thinking twice about it. How easy it is to get good, cheap food at any hour and how much I miss doing simple things like wandering around the *pasar pagi* and *pasar malam*," said the Singapore-based professional.

"On Malaysia Day, I hope for con-



**Missing Malaysia in Ireland:** Mohd Nazri Halim, Murni Azureen Mohd Pakri, Tasnim Mazlan and Siti Zuriani flying the Jalur Gemilang at Dublin Castle, Ireland.

tinued harmony and for everyone to appreciate how truly unique we are!" she added.

Malaysians in Bangladesh had a National Day picnic on the Saturday before National Day.

"We held it at the National Martyr's Monument in Savar, outside Dhaka. We had a fun day singing the *Negaraku* and patriotic songs while waving the Jalur Gemilang," said a staff of the Malaysian High Commission there.

The #AnakAnakMalaysia campaign is organised by Star Media Group in collaboration with Eco World Development Group Bhd to commemorate National Day and Malaysia Day.

On Aug 27, more than 6,000 Malaysians, including Selangor Ruler Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah and his consort Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin, gathered in

Shah Alam for #AnakAnakMalaysia Walk 2017.

Until the end of today, overseas Malaysians who want to send home a message of love can e-mail their words along with photos and videos.

All they have to do is download the official campaign poster from The Star Online Facebook page's cover photo, print it, pose with it and send the photographs to online@thestar.com.my.

Or they can display it on their mobile device; selfies and wefies are welcome.

They can also make a public post via their favourite social media site with the hashtag #AnakAnakMalaysia.

Pictures and videos submitted will be shared on The Star Online's social media accounts and published on its different platforms, so join in the fun!



**Thinking of home:** Chiew is a proud anak Malaysia in Washington, DC, the United States. In the background is the Washington Monument.



**Proud Malaysians:** Guvan (left) and Uthaya at Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul, South Korea.