

Close at heart, celebrating apart

Students spending Hari Raya on campus miss loved ones back home

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PETALING JAYA: While many university students have returned to their hometowns, some are choosing to spend Hari Raya on campus.

Mohamad Syazwan Saupi, 23, said his mother had told him to stay put at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) due to Covid-19 concerns.

"They are worried I may spread the virus to other family members or people in my hometown.

"My mother told me to return home when this is over," said Syazwan, who hails from Pasir Puteh, Kelantan.

He is the only one in his family who is not at home.

"I am feeling really sad because I'm far away from my family and this is the first time I have to celebrate Hari Raya on campus.

"Sometimes when I am alone, I will cry. But I will video-call my family every day," said Syazwan, who is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education.

He and a few friends at the university will still be celebrating Hari Raya by weaving ketupat and having barbecues to cook lemang.



"For students who are not able to return home, we shouldn't feel sad, take it as a learning experience.

"For those who are able to return home, take the opportunity to celebrate Hari Raya with your family, because we don't know when an event such as Covid-19 will happen," he said.

Another student, Mohd Khairul Niezam Mohd Abdullah, 24, stayed put on campus as his house in Johor Baru does not have Internet connection for online classes.

"If I choose to go back home, I have to top up my phone so that I can access the Internet.

"It is difficult for me as I don't have enough money and my parents are not well off," said the UPM student.

As he is entering his final year in October, Mohd Khairul has to spend time on his research paper and also homework that requires him to



In good spirits: Mohamad Syazwan (centre) spending the Hari Raya holidays cooking lemang at a makeshift barbecue pit with his friend Izzulfitri Madenan (right) and fellow student Mohd Shaqiq Ahmad.

have access to the Internet.

Mohd Khairul said he also wanted to protect his family from the virus by not travelling.

He currently does not have plans to celebrate Hari Raya and will just "go with the flow" on campus.

"I am a little bit sad but this is one

of the sacrifices that I have to make for a better future. I want to be a teacher so I have to do this to achieve my dream," he said.