



Ambassador Budi Bowoleksono To Host Indonesian Christmas Celebration

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the United States, Budi Bowoleksono, will host the Indonesian Christmas celebration for the Indonesian Diaspora at his residence on Sunday, December 17, 2017. This event will involve 10 Indonesian churches and the Christian Indonesian community in the Washington, D.C. area.

The theme for the Christmas celebration this year is taken from the book of Colossians 3:15, "*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*". It is the national theme for the Christmas celebration in Indonesia, proposed by Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) and Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (KWI).

Although Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, it is also home to Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians, and other beliefs. About 10 percent of Indonesia's population is Christians. "Diversity is Indonesia's source of strength. We cannot afford not to have this diversity. Pluralism is in our blood. It is in our DNA," said Ambassador Bowoleksono. "For many years Indonesians, regardless of their social background, religions, race, and ethnicity have lived in harmony with each other," add Ambassador Bowoleksono to his comment.

Indonesian Diaspora in the US also embraces the pluralism. As a matter of fact, non-Christians Indonesian Diaspora are going to help the preparation. They will work hand in hand to make sure the celebration runs without a hitch and the Christians could solemnly celebrate Christmas.

The Indonesian Christmas celebration will be attended by around 300-400 Indonesians, Christian and non-Christian, in addition to friends of Indonesia. The mass/service will start at 6:00 pm, followed by special presentation from Indonesian churches and children in the Washington, D.C. area. Chairman of Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (KWI) and Chairman of Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) are scheduled to deliver their remarks through a video recording.

As part of the joyful celebration, Embassy Chef Galih Kuntobaskoro and his team will make *Nasi Tumpeng*, Indonesia's cone-shaped yellow rice with side dishes and garnishes of meat and vegetables. It is a symbol of gratitude and appreciation towards harmony. Ambassador Bowoleksono hopes this Christmas celebration can strengthen the unity of the Indonesian Diaspora in Washington, D.C.

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