

04/12/1999

Silent drill wows the crowd

WITH synchronised dexterity, 32 naval provosts from the Royal Malaysian Navy performed a silent precision drill before the Prime Minister and officers representing the foreign naval fleet anchored off Porto Malai.

The 15-minute drill was the start of the Lima '99 Maritime March Past at Kuah yesterday morning.

The provosts performed with specially-modified M-16 rifles that glittered. Each gun was fixed with a bayonet.

Applying imaginative dance-like manoeuvres and movements, the provosts' performance wowed the big crowd.

Although a few provosts missed a beat or two, the drill was executed well, the highlight of which was the twirling of the rifles and synchronised exchanges of the guns in mid-air.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was accompanied by his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Defence Minister Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Mustapha, honoured the march past of naval officers and sailors from RMN's KD Indera Sakti, KD Lekir, KD Mahawangsa and KD Hang Tuah, BNS Osman (Bangladesh), FNS Siroco (France), KRI Pandrong (Indonesia), PNS Tariq and PNS Nasr (Pakistan), BRP Dagupan City and BRP Heneral (the Philippines), RSS Daring (Singapore) and USS Vincennes (United States).

The march-past was accompanied by the RMN Band and the United Kingdom's Royal Marine Band.

After the naval march, the show continued with cultural dances, including an elaborate dance and pantomime from Sarawak.

Dr Mahathir later witnessed the signing of 13 memoranda of understanding and contracts at Porto Malai.

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