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Dr Mahathir performs fleet review

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday performed a fleet review during his visit to the maritime segment of Lima '01 at Porto Malai.

A fleet review is a naval tradition which has been performed all over the world to honour the navy personnel and ships involved in any gathering.

Spending about an hour watching all the 36 vessels participating in the event, Dr Mahathir was accompanied by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Armed Forces chief Jen Tan Sri Zahidi Zainuddin, Business Focus Group executive chairman Tan Sri Amin Shah Omar Shah and HW Lima Sdn Bhd executive chairman Tan Sri Abdul Wahab Nawi.

The Prime Minister was onboard the WaveMaster Three ferry, designed and manufactured by WaveMaster International, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Penang Shipbuilding and Construction Sdn Bhd.

The vessel will be handed over to its owner, Singapore-based Berlian Ferries Ltd, later this week.

Among the ships involved in the fleet review were Royal Malaysian Navy frigates KD Jebat and KD Lekiu, Royal Customs and Excise Department patrol boat Bahtera Perak, Singapore Navy Landing ship RSS Endeavour, Italian Navy landing ship ITS San Giusto, Indian navy destroyer INS Kulish and Bangladesh Navy frigate BNS Osman.

Another vessel involved in the fleet review was the KD Tunas Samudera, a training ship operated by the RMN.

Tunas Samudera is used to train pupils and youth in seafaring skills with the cooperation of the Education Ministry and Youth and Sports Ministry. Twenty youths or pupils are in the ship for a two-weeks to learn their skills.

Tunas Samudera usually berths at the RMN base in Lumut.

A Beriev Be-200 amphibian water bomber tried its best to steal the thunder from the naval ships by performing a touch-and-go (landing followed immediately with a take off) on the waters of Porto Malai before releasing water from its belly.

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