

Malaysians turn out in droves to enliven 66th National Day celebration

Malaysiakini

31 August 2023

Bernama

The Jalur Gemilang flew majestically as thousands of Malaysians rekindled the patriotism spirit at Dataran Putrajaya in the federal administrative capital today to express their love for the nation on Malaysia's 66th National Day.

The early morning peace and tranquility was broken as early as 1am when the sea of people flocked to every corner of the square where the historic event is being held today.

The theme "Malaysia Madani: Tekad Perpaduan, Penuhi Harapan" (Determination in Unity, Fulfilling Hope) is apt with the framework of the new vision for Malaysia Madani, which is supported by the unity government.

This is seen as being capable of boosting the spirit of unity that has long existed among Malaysians.

Dignitaries and national leaders started to arrive at 7.30am, followed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah and the Raja Permaisuri

Agong, Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah.

As soon as Sultan Abdullah and Tunku Azizah took their place at the royal box, five helicopters - three Airbus H225M helicopters, Agusta Westland AW109 and Maritime Operations Helicopter AW 139 - did a fly-past accompanied by the 'Negaraku'.

His Majesty was then given the Royal Salute and invited to inspect the Guard of Honour mounted by four officers and 103 members of the First Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment, led by Major Mohd Ridhwan Mohd Asri.

Special batik attire

Dataran Putrajaya, which last hosted the historic celebration in 2019, then resounded to the beating of drums and three chants of 'Malaysia Madani' to mark the arrival of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Present at the National Day 2023 celebration were Deputy Prime Ministers - Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, and Fadillah Yusof, cabinet ministers, including Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil, diplomats, foreign delegates and dignitaries

In a move to promote Malaysia's batik heritage, cabinet ministers and guests of

honour wore special batik attire patterned with the hibiscus flower and Harimau Malaya stripes designed by Kraftangan Malaysia.

The event which involved 17,262 participants, 67 contingents, 36 brass bands, 534 land and air assets and 100 animals in service, was followed by millions of Malaysians through television and social media sites.

The National Day 2023 celebration started off with the rendition of 'Negaraku' and the hoisting of the Jalur Gemilang, accompanied by a 14-gun salute, symbolising the 14 states in Malaysia, by Unit 41 Battery of Royal Artillery Regiment led by Lt Col Mohamad Asri Che Wil.

The event would not be complete without the recitation of the 'Rukun Negara' pledge.

Sports icon Muhammad Haikal Roslan, who is the under-25 gold medalist in the 12th Asian Bowls Championship 2023, was given the role of leading the 66 pledge recitors of various races, highlighting the element of unity.

Chants of Merdeka

Even more special was the fact that 36 of them recited the pledge using sign language and this was followed by seven chants of Merdeka.

Enlivening the celebratory mood, the audience was treated to a performance of the theme song entitled 'Tekad Perpaduan, Penuhi Harapan' written by Affan Mazlan and composed by Mokhzani Ismail.

Meanwhile, 1,500 schoolchildren from the Klang Valley made human formations, waving colourful flags in sync with the song.

For the unity and well-being segment, the audience was treated to a new rendition of the song 'Kurik Kundi'.

It was sung by several artists namely Nadeera Zaini, representing the Malays in the peninsula, Suki Low (Chinese), Roshini Balachandran (Indians), Zizi Kirana (Sabahans) and Hazraniza Dollah (Sarawakians) signifying the people's unification.

The focus then shifted to the performance of the Army's Motorcycle Acrobatics team - the Army Red Warrior - which featured a stunt by Sergeant Saidatul Husna Kamaruddin using a 250cc Kawasaki Scrambler with 66 Royal Enfield motorcycles representing the country's 66 years of independence.

Cheers and applause rang out for the birthday girl who also received a standing ovation from the royal couple.

VAT 69 performance

The challenge and agility segment highlighted the Police's elite VAT 69 Commando unit in performing a precision jump from a height of 4,000 metres, and successfully landing in front of the main tent despite a slippery road surface following rain earlier.

A special 'Gegar Madani' performance was also enlivened by about 800 dancers and 600 school children moving to the beat and rhythm of 400 drummers of various ethnicities.

This year's National Day celebration parade featured contingents of Nationalism; Malaysia Madani Unity; Economics; Banking; Telecommunications; Creative and Broadcasting Industries; National Sports; Welfare and National Security.

Leading the nationalism contingent was the Army Music Training Centre's (Puzida) band parade followed by 100 cadet officers of the Military Training Academy of Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia carrying a 24.4 metre x 12.2 metre Jalur Gemilang, and a parade of 334 national flag bearers.

The Malaysia Madani Unity contingent followed suit, consisting of 400 participants of various races and ethnicities in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak donning colourful traditional costumes.

They were led by the National Unity Ministry deputy secretary-general Mohamad Sobri Mat Daud.

The economy contingent was represented by personnel from various government-linked agencies, government-linked investment companies and leading corporate entities including Petronas, DRB HICOM and FGV Holdings Bhd.

Athletes take part

The Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry paraded electric vehicle models such as Proton X90 Hybrid, Perodua Ativa Hybrid, GWM Ora Good Cat and Tesla Model Y Performance to reflect the government's commitment to developing the country's automotive industry including electric vehicles and components.

Characters from Malaysia's much-loved animated series including Mechamoto, Ejen Ali, Boboiboy and Didi were in their element as they were part of the creative industry and broadcast contingent, while Agrobank participants paraded in 30 antique cars.

Athletes who have brought honour to the country in various international sporting events also took part in the historic parade.

As the parade contingents marched in front of the royal box, they were cheered on by the King and Queen who waved the Jalur Gemilang along with other honoured guests.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <https://www.malysiakini.com/news/677577>