

**DSA starts with a bang**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**April 17, 2012**  
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KUALA LUMPUR: Thousands turned up at the opening of the 13th Defence Services Asia (DSA) 2012 show hosted by Malaysia.

The grand event was graced by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah yesterday.

The four-day premier defence and security exhibition and conference will be attended by representatives of 850 local and foreign companies from 45 countries.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, top armed forces officials and dignitaries welcomed the King at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) where the exhibition was held.

The highlight of the opening ceremony was a demonstration by commandos who used their skills to rescue hostages from terrorists. Several explosions were heard while helicopters flew overhead in the "drama" which captivated the audience.

The King later visited the exhibition booths.

Among the other highlights of the exhibition are the display of a full-scale replica of the Eurofighter Typhoon jet outside the PWTC building, a tactical bridge, Agusta and Tiger helicopters and missiles.

The Airbus Military A400M airlifter is also displayed at the Subang RMAF airbase in conjunction with the show.

The Defence Ministry is expected to announce several contract signings during the exhibition.

Malaysian companies showcasing their products and services include DRB-Hicom Defence Technologies Pesaka Astana, Westar and Sapura.

In the last DSA in 2010, Malaysia signed a record RM10bil in deals and agreements.

Meanwhile, Dr Zahid said ongoing tension between China and the Philippines over their maritime borders must be resolved peacefully through diplomatic channels.

The issue should not be allowed to escalate into armed conflict, he said, adding: "For Malaysia, we want both sides to resolve such issues through amicable talks."

It was reported on Sunday that the Philippines deployed its largest warship the Gregoria del Pilar after several Chinese fishing vessels were spotted at Scarborough Shoal.

Two Chinese maritime surveillance ships later reportedly positioned themselves between the Philippine ship and the Chinese fishing vessels, preventing the arrest of the fishermen.

Dr Zahid said such issues should not be allowed to drag on into open conflict, noting that the countries should instead resolve outstanding issues at the Asean Defence Ministers Meeting.

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