

**'Pyan' and 'Rambai' Captivate At Sending-Off For 14th Agong
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SEPANG, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Two elephants, Rambai and Myanthopyan@Pyan which led the departure procession for the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, caught the attention of the public today.

The mammoths, standing in the front row, were decorated with bright-coloured cloths, and each carrying an actor from the National Culture and Arts Department (JKKN) who were dressed as king and queen.

Although it was the first time the occupants of the Kuala Gandah Elephant Sanctuary were used in such an event, the two elephants strode majestically and calmly to the rhythm of traditional music.

However, many did not know that behind the calm exterior was the training undergone for two weeks by Rambai and Pyan for the historic occasion.

Nasharuddin Othman, Unit head at the Wildlife Department's National Elephant Sanctuary, said they needed to ensure that the elephants followed the instructions given and were comfortable with the new environment in front of the Bunga Raya Complex, Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

"Elephants, like most animals, want an environment they are accustomed to. If not, they would feel stressed.

"We also need to ensure that the elephants receive sufficient rest and food so that the procession would run smoothly," he told Bernama, recently.

Nasharuddin said, as security precaution, 13 elephant trainees had been assigned to take care of the animals since Thursday as well as during the procession.

He said Pyan and Rambai@Pek were chosen from among 27 elephants at the Kuala Gandah sanctuary for their friendly nature and obedience.

The use of elephants as royal steeds, especially by Malay royal rulers, had been recorded in history and old chronicles.

The nostalgia of the glory of the ancient Malay kingdom was relived with the use of the elephants in the colourful parade steeped in pomp and grandeur, while displaying the customs of yore to the public.

About 200 people including from JKKN and school students were involved in the parade for the sending-off, marking the end of Tuanku Abdul Halim's term as Yang di-Pertuan Agong, today.

Tuanku Abdul Halim will be replaced by the Sultan of Kelantan, Sultan Muhammad V, who is scheduled to take his oath of office as the 15th Yang di-Pertuan Agong tomorrow.

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