

Kedah Sultan, Sultanah meet the people during historic parade

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ALOR SETAR, Oct 20 (Bernama) – The Sultan of Kedah, Sultan Sallehuddin Ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah, and the Sultanah of Kedah, Sultanah Maliha Tengku Ariff, went on a historic parade today in the ‘Bahtera Layang Emas’ conveyance in the shape of a boat to meet the people as part of the events leading up to the installation of the 29th Sultan of Kedah on Monday.

About 10,000 school children of all races from the Kota Setar district lined both sides of the 3.2-km route of the parade which began at about 8.30am from Dataran Wisma Darul Aman to Dataran Medan Bandar and waved excitedly as the ‘vessel’ passed them and the six main checkpoints along the way.

Members of the public joined the school children, having turned up as early as 7 am to take up vantage points, as they did not want to miss the unique historic spectacle last seen almost 60 years ago, on Feb 20, 1959, when Sultan Abdul Halim Mu’adzam Shah was installed as the Sultan of Kedah.

During the parade of the 25-metre-long and five-metre-high Bahtera Layang Emas, Sultan Sallehuddin and Sultanah Maliha smiled and waved at the people who had come to get a glimpse of Their Royal Highnesses up close.

The Bahtera Layang Emas was accompanied by the Sultan Abdul Hamid College band and preceded by 10 horsemen in ceremonial attire from the Royal Malaysia Police mounted unit, symbolically displaying the importance of safeguarding the Sultanate of Kedah, the oldest sultanate in the world, dating back to 1136.

Twenty officers of the Kedah State Administration walked along both sides of the

conveyance, from Wisma Darul Aman up to Dataran Medan Bandar near the Zahir Mosque.

Also accompanying the Bahtera Layang Emas were 40 penghulus dressed in the ceremonial attire of the penghulu.

Three elephants – Pian, Alam and Rambai – specially brought from the Kuala Gandah National Elephant Conservation Centre in Pahang, also made up the parade, drawing much interest from the spectators.

The elephants are symbolic of the powers of the royal administration and the golden age of the Malay Rulers.

At the second checkpoint, in front of the Sri Maha Mariamman Temple, nine horses from Island Horses brought by the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) joined the parade. The riders were dressed as Malay warriors, symbolising the undivided loyalty and love of the combatants for the Sultan.

The band of Sekolah Menengah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina Keat Hwa, Alor Setar, joined the parade at this checkpoint.

The highlight at the third checkpoint was the participation in the parade of 40 school children of various races in the school prefect attire, symbolising the next generation.

At the fourth checkpoint, 60 military personnel joined the parade. They comprised 20 from the Army (6th Infantry Brigade in Sungai Petani), 20 from the Navy (Naval Region 3 of the Royal Malaysian Navy in Langkawi) and 20 from the Royal Malaysian Air Force in Kepala Batas. Forty officials from the Religious and Syariah Judicial offices also joined the parade there.

More colour was added to the parade at the fifth checkpoint with the participation of 20 federal administrative officers from various services attired in tunic jackets. An 80-member

band of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sultanah Asma also joined the parade there.

At the final checkpoint, the Chief of Protocol, Datuk Paduka Syed Unan Mashri Syed Abdullah, joined the parade, along with 10 'Datuk Bergelar' titled chieftains also referred to as Orang Besar 16 as well as 40 state administrative officers in traditional attire.

Teachers and school children staged various performances at the third, fourth and fifth checkpoints, adding to the gaiety of the event. These included dances, aerobics, Wushu, Taekwondo, Diabolo (Chinese yo-yo), solo singing, and band performances by SK Seri Muda and Sultan Abdul Halim Secondary School.

Upon arrival at Dataran Medan Bandar, Sultan Sallehuddin took the salute as a guard-of-honour was mounted by 136 officers of the 6th Brigade Royal Malay Regiment of the Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Camp in Jitra.

Then, the 'Allah Selamat Sultan' song was played as a 21-gun salute was fired. The Sultan then inspected the guard-of-honour.

'Allah Selamat Sultan' was played again, after which Their Royal Highnesses left, followed by members of the royalty and guests.

The Raja Muda of Kedah, Tengku Sarafudin Badlishah Ibni Sultan Sallehuddin, and Raja Puan Muda of Kedah, Che Puan Muda Zaheeda Mohamad Arif, also attended the guard-of-honour event.

The Tunku Bendahara of Kedah, Datuk Seri DiRaja Tan Sri Tunku Abdul Hamid Thani Ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah, and Toh Puan Bendahara of Kedah, Datin Seri Diraja Puan Seri Datuk Nora Abdullah; Tunku Temenggong of Kedah, Datuk Seri DiRaja Tan Sri Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz Almarhum Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah; and Tunku Laksamana of Kedah Datuk Tunku Shazuddin Ariff Ibni Sultan Sallehuddin also attended the event.

Also present were Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Tun Mahathir and his wife Tok Puan Norzieta Zakaria.

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