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DATE:	THURSDAY, 21 APRIL 2016	PAGE NO.:	1 OF 3
CIRCULATION:	ONLINE	FREQUENCY:	ONLINE
HEADLINE:	DEFENCE EXPO ATTRACTS 32,000		



Defence expo attracts 32,000

BY HARIZ MOHD - 21 APRIL 2016 @ 11:01 AM

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Defence Services Asia Exhibition & Conference 2016 (DSA 2016) is a great success due to the added values it offers.

Besides having attracted participation of 1,200 companies, and 29 nations with their own pavilions, the exhibition had successfully garnered 32,986 official visitors as of yesterday.

Defence Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Abdul Rahim Mohamad Radzi said the ministry had been receiving positive feedback from participating nations, many applauding the opportunities DSA 2016 opened for industry dealings and government-to-government cooperation.

"DSA 2016 had gone through its third day today (yesterday), and since beginning on Monday, the exhibition had been receiving an overwhelming number of visitors not only at the participating booths but also in all the programmes we had organised so far.

"I am positive that the number of visitors, which up to date (yesterday) had reached 32,986, will continue to soar tomorrow (today) despite it being the exhibition's final day," he told the *New Straits Times* yesterday. Rahim said the numbers of participants and visitors, however, only reflected DSA 2016's physical success.

He said instead of just being an exhibition that offered traditional fulfillment in the form of business opportunities, the organising of DSA was aimed at bringing about much bigger benefits.

"It is an event aimed a forging ties and building cooperation. DSA is not only about exhibiting products, but also a strategic centre that stimulates information sharing and closer ties between organisations."

The real deal behind DSA 2016's success, added Rahim, lay with the added values that come with the programmes, including the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Forum, Chief of Army Roundtable Talks (Chart), Putrajaya Forum, and Cyberspace Security, and the cooperation and understanding that came with them.

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“One of the examples is Sudan, among several underdeveloped countries, that joined this DSA.

“During their courtesy visit earlier today (yesterday), they relayed to me how participants from their country enjoyed the opportunities offered through this exhibition and its programmes – how they could be a part of the industry’s development.

“At Turkey’s pavilion, which is the largest in this event, I was told that this DSA was considered special by the Turks, offering them something unique that enables them to expand cooperation in defence and security.”

Rahim said the huge number of participants was considered overwhelming, considering today’s global economic challenges.

During the HADR Forum on Tuesday, members of international armed forces discussed advances and technological applications in times of disaster while the Chart discussion focused on the army’s role in border security challenges and implications. The Putrajaya Forum, which saw the participation of eight Asean ministries and other countries, discussed regional cooperation in addressing security threats.



A highly sophisticated Mica air-to-air missile at the MBDA booth. Pix by Khairull Azry Bidin

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A visitor getting a closer look at a model of the Al-Zarrar, a modern battle tank manufactured in Pakistan, at the DSA 2016 exhibition.