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Rheinmetall: State-of-the-art systems for the Malaysian military

Located amid some of the world's most strategic shipping lanes, Malaysia is an influential member of the Asia-Pacific region, serving as an intermediary between the West and the Islamic world. Modern, well-equipped armed force and security services form an important component of its multilateral security policy. The Defence Services Asia (DSA) tradeshow takes place in Kuala Lumpur 16-19 April. Rheinmetall will be on hand at DSA, showcasing an impressive array of products and services.

Force protection

Whether the requirement is protecting friendly forces from optical, optronic or electronic surveillance; supplying innovative vehicle protection systems; or safeguarding critical infrastructure from attack, Rheinmetall offers a full range of system solutions – all from a single source.

Among the passive protection systems on show at DSA is the VERhA line of products from Rheinmetall Verseidag Ballistic Protection Systems (RVBP). These include lightweight high-performance materials which can be built into special vehicles, helicopters and ships for protecting passengers and crew. Visitors can also inspect inserts for ballistic vests made of these materials.

For the first time, Rheinmetall will be presenting a three-dimensional ceramic composite component at DSA used for hardening the driver's cab of the new protected HX trucks made by Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles (RMMV). It is earmarked for Australia's LAND 121 programme, for which RMMV was selected as preferred bidder. Another exhibit from the "VERhA-Land" portfolio are the doors from the HX series, which were also developed using high-tech composite materials.

Ultra-light spall materials from Rheinmetall Verseidag Protection Systems will be used in a forthcoming armoured vehicle-program. Specially developed for the purpose, it performs particularly well in overmatch situations, significantly reducing the fragmentation cone despite the low addition to the vehicle's total weight.

In the naval domain, RVBP develops and produces customer-specific passive protection solutions ("VERhA-Marine"). On behalf of the Malaysian Navy, for example, RVBP has equipped the first six MEKO A-100 Kedah-class warships with composite armour.

In addition, Rheinmetall Chempro will be presenting its Mobile Modular Protection System, or MMS. Reinforcing checkpoints, hardening shelters in combat outposts and forward operating bases and shielding portholes or machine gun positions on board ships are just a few of the potential applications for the highly flexible MMS,

which can be quickly deployed in all climate zones in accordance with STANAG 4569, even in difficult terrain.

In the realm of active protection, Rheinmetall supplies high-performance “soft kill” solutions for ground vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters and ships. Smoke/obscurant protection systems like “Rosy” render vehicles invisible to the enemy if attacked, while Rheinmetall’s MASS naval countermeasures system now sets the standard worldwide. A decoy-based system, MASS produces phantom targets that reliably divert enemy missiles from their intended targets. “Hard kill” systems serve as a last line of defence, engaging incoming projectiles immediately before they hit their target, as with Rheinmetall’s ADS vehicle protection system.

One of Rheinmetall Defence’s special strengths is the integration of new and existing products and systems into a highly effective whole.

Reconnaissance and fire control technology

Among other products, at DSA Rheinmetall’s recently created Electro-optics division will be presenting its Vingtaqs II+ observation system, which is capable of precise collection and transmission of target data even over long distances.

Vingtaqs II+ features a fully integrated ground surveillance radar and can also serve as a laser target-marker, e.g. for forward artillery observers and forward air controllers. It can be integrated into vehicles or deployed in dismounted operations. The Malaysian armed forces have selected the Vingtaqs II+ to equip their family of 6x6 vehicles. At DSA, it can be seen at the stand of Rheinmetall’s customer Deftech.

Moreover, Rheinmetall will be presenting various night observation devices, including GN night vision goggles and the KN 200/250 night vision sight. These make it possible to detect potential threats in the dark and in conditions of poor visibility and adopt appropriate countermeasures.

Also on display will be the Group’s tried-and-test laser pointers, laser target markers and laser light modules, including the Vario Ray (LLM-VR) and the LLM01, already used by numerous armed forces and security services. Rounding out the division’s array of products on show will be the Dismounted Soldier Identification Device/DSID (a friend/foe identification system) as well as the FeLVis fire control unit and its successor, the MultiRay, specifically designed for 40mm low-velocity ammunition.

The VinPos Mortar fire control system is specially designed for mortars. Its positioning and navigation features make it easier for the crew to precisely determine their own position, in turn enabling exact laying and engagement.

Besides the Saphir 9.6 aiming device and a fire control unit, the Vingmate aiming and fire control system features a combined tripod and gun cradle. It is thus suitable for various 40mm automatic grenade launchers such as the MK19, but also for heavy .50 cal. machine guns like the BMG, or even 20mm automatic cannon such as the GAM B01.

Lethality

As a token of its commanding lead in the field of 40mm technology, Rheinmetall will also be showcasing a wide array of 40mm x 46 (low velocity/LV and MV medium velocity) and 40mm x 53 high velocity (HV) cartridges, ranging from practice rounds and non-lethal products to highly effective service ammunition, including 40mm x 46 MV and 40mm x 53 HV time-delay airburst rounds. Rheinmetall has developed the Cerberus grenade launcher and Hydra automatic grenade launcher specially for firing medium-velocity ammunition. Both feature hydraulic shock absorbers that reduce the recoil to the level of LV ammunition.

In the munitions domain, Rheinmetall is presenting an improved flash-bang stun grenade with bottom-top-vent (BTV) technology. Its new chamber system is designed to enable different decibel levels: 180 dB for military applications, 170 dB for law enforcement operations. For maximum flexibility, the new generation can be fitted either with a conventional flash-bang charge or a newly developed perchlorate-free flash-bang charge. The new perchlorate-free charge has the added advantage of producing less smoke.

Rheinmetall has also enhanced its classic fast-acting SPIRICO smoke grenade. The new ISIS (InfraRed Smoke Instantaneous Spread) red phosphorous smoke/obscurant grenade also provides split-second protection from hostile detection by opponents equipped with optics, night vision or infrared devices.

To enable its customers to detect and engage hostile forces around the clock, Rheinmetall developed its handheld MITHRAS signalling and illumination rockets. They are available for ranges of 300, 600 and 1,000 metres, and come in normal and IR versions. The British armed forces have already introduced the MITHRAS signalling rocket.

Cutaway models of the Group's successful family of 25mm and 30mm ammunition round out the range of Rheinmetall products on display at DSA. Its 30mm ammunition has been selected as a forward-looking solution for the main armament of the Malaysian military's new 8x8 vehicle – a source of great pride at the Düsseldorf, Germany-based Group. Rheinmetall has in any case been cooperating successfully with Malaysian ammunition maker SME Ordnance for years.

The Rheinmetall products on display at DSA underscore once again the versatility of a globally leading systems supplier and longstanding partner of the armed forces and security services of Malaysia and its neighbours.

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