

Dr M approves allocation for Club's landing strip

JITRA, Fri. — The Kedah Air Recreation Club (Airec) received a shot in the arm when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad agreed to provide an allocation to the club to build a landing strip.

The Prime Minister told a 5,000-odd crowd attending the launching of the "Malaysia Prihatin" (Caring Malaysia) programme at the Institut Kemahiran Belia Negara here yesterday that the allocation was also for purchasing equipment for their aircraft.

Airec gave a spectacular display at the launching ceremony when two of their aircraft gave a colourful fly pass carrying the Malaysian and Kedah flags.

Dr Mahathir was proud with the achievement of the club especially after learning that most of the members responsible in forming the club hailed from Kodiang which is located in his Kubang Pasu constituency.

"The creditable achievement of the club is a symbol of pride to our youths that we can show to the world that Malaysians are on par with the international community in all fields," he added.

Airec president Likhman Mahmud was grateful and touched by Dr Mahathir's attention to the club.

Encik Likhman briefed Dr Mahathir on the aircraft on the Prime Minister's arrival at the Sultan Abdul

Halim airport yesterday.

An officer of the Kedah Department of Civil Aviation's search and rescue squad, Encik Likhman said the club needed about \$150,000 to build a landing strip and buy the aircraft.

With the present membership of 25, Airec is the first air recreation club established in the country for youths.

Encik Likhman said the club had identified a suitable piece of land at Kampung Paya Pahlawan in Kodiang for the building of a landing strip.

Presently, Airec hires aircraft from a private company — Pens Enterprise in Perlis — to provide training to its members.

The aircraft costing between \$24,000 and \$53,000 were bought from the United States.

He said a member needed to pay only \$600 for a three-month flight training to obtain a pilot's licence.

"It is cheap compared to the \$70,000 one has to pay for Cessna and \$90,000 for helicopter," he added.

Encik Likhman said the objective of the club was to provide opportunities to youths and members of the public to take up flying as a recreation.

"When I underwent parachuting course in 1988, I realised that the airspace could be turned into an interesting recreational space.