

# Land acquired next to Langkawi

# Plan for aerospace

## airport, says PM

# industry

By Shukor Rahman

PULAU LANGKAWI, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that Langkawi is being promoted for selected aerospace industries and businesses.

Ample land has been acquired next to the airport for the purpose, Dr Mahathir said when speaking at the opening of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (Lima 91) Exhibition today.

"As Langkawi is a free trade area, imports and exports are completely tax free. Components or products can be brought in for processing or sale and re-exported without hassle," he added.

For this purpose, he said, the Government intended to allow expatriates to take up temporary residence in Langkawi.

Bungalows and condominiums were being built for sale or rental or time-sharing in order to enable expatriates to live comfortably, he said.

Dr Mahathir expected more companies to want to own aircraft individually or jointly in the near future as executives of these large corporations would need to travel fast without being constrained by airline schedules.

Small aircraft charters, he said, would of course be more popular.

The region's needs for more airline pilots, he said, could only be met if more youths took up flying.

"Amateur flying schools and flying academies in the region are unable to cope with the demand for places. Malaysia welcomes the setting up of flying schools from abroad in joint ventures with local partners," he said.

Noting that this was the first time an aerospace exhibition was being combined with a marine show, Dr Mahathir said Langkawi was most suited for such a combined exhibition.

The increasing affluence of the people in this region, he said, would make ownership of pleasure boats more common.

At present, he said, such craft were not being promoted and marketed in this re-

gion to take advantage of the potential.

"Malaysia imposes no tax on pleasure craft and foreigners are welcome to register their boats in Malaysia. Of course they can keep their boats here as well."

The Government, he said, intended to encourage the setting up of marinas and boat servicing and maintenance facilities in Malaysia, especially in Langkawi on the west coast, and Terengganu on the east coast.

He said Labuan, the international off-shore financial centre, would also be equipped with similar facilities.

He noted that yacht racing and ownership was getting more popular and that several yacht clubs were active on the west coast of Malaysia. Both power boats and sail boats were also increasingly being rented.

Dr Mahathir said with all the Southeast Asian countries bounded by very long coastlines, patrol boats with sophisticated equipment were in great demand.

"Boat yards of the region are not sophisticated enough at the moment," he said.

Patrol boats and other small police, Customs, immigration and naval craft will be in continuous demand. A whole new industry, he said, was needed to meet this demand.

He said that while it may be easier to buy the boats from abroad! convenience and good business sense demand that such vessels be built in the region.

The Prime Minister was confident that numerous local partners and investors would welcome the idea of joint-ventures to build all kinds of craft here.

"I am sure that you will appreciate now why Lima 91 is not just another aerospace or boat show. I cannot guarantee that you will make a sale here. But I am quite sure that there will be a lot of potential buyers whom you can cultivate.

"After all, one does not decide to buy an aeroplane or a yacht just like that. They cost a pretty penny and the people who come by these pretty pennies are not the kind who will throw them away," the Prime Minister said.