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MAHATHIR EXTENDS INVITE TO SET UP AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES IN LANGKAWI

Mahathir - aerospace

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LANGKAWI, March 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today invited more companies to establish aerospace industries in Pulau Langkawi.

The island is suitable for such industries, because its duty-free status keeps cost of production low, he said when launching the Mofaz Air Flying school at the Langkawi International Airport in Padang Matsirat here.

Furthermore, the airport provided adequate facilities and was not busy, thereby offering the ideal place for flight training, he added.

Dr Mahathir welcomed the establishment of the flying school, saying that the rapid economic development in Southeast Asia and East Asia or the Pacific Rim brought on the need for more pilots.

He said the setting up of the school was also in accordance with the needs of the nation which lacked flying schools to turn out commercial pilots, -- more

▼07/03/19-07MST

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Mahathir - aerospace 2 Langkawi

Malaysia only had one private flying school -- the Malaysian Flying Academy -- and the number of pilots trained there was insufficient to meet the needs of the country, he said.

Flying clubs offer training but it fell short of the requirements for turning out commercial pilots, he said.

+As a result, we have to send people overseas for training and at a high cost,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir said he hoped that the Mofaz Air Flying School would be able to take in many trainees from both within and outside the country, particularly Asia.

He said he hoped that the Mofaz Air Flying School would be able to develop into a world-renowned pilot training centre, -- more

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Mahathir - aerospace 3 (last) Langkawi

Dr Mahathir called on the people in Langkawi, particularly the businessmen, to ensure that cost on the island did 'not rise' too high and foil government efforts to attract investment.

Earlier, Mofaz Air Sdn Bhd President Haji Mohamad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, who is also Executive Chairman of the Mofaz Group, said the plan to establish the school was undertaken prior to the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA '91) Exhibition.

He said the school was the first flight training centre in the region established jointly with a Western training centre.

Mofaz Air, which runs the school jointly with Cessna Pilot Training Centre of the United States, hopes the effort will result in continuous transfer of technology. It also has plans to expand its services to air charter and air cargo.

The company will build a school building and a hostel complex on 12 hectares near the airport.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here in the +Beechcraft Starship+, dubbed the aeroplane of the future, later took a ride in the +MDM-20-N+ helicopter (which sports no tail rotor) of the McDonnell Douglas company of the United States. -- Bernama

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