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Mahathir-Indonesia

MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA TO UPGRADE COOPERATION IN AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

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LANGKAWI, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Indonesia will upgrade cooperation in implementing aerospace programmes which may be expanded to include other Asean countries, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said today.

He said that initially Malaysia would concentrate on developing the light aircraft industry while Indonesia would focus on the big aircraft sector.

Such cooperation could be further upgraded in future in line with developments in the aerospace industry and at the same time similar bilateral cooperation could be embarked with other Asean countries, he added.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to Indonesian reporters who accompanied Indonesian State Minister for Research, Science and Technology Dr B.J. Habibie who called on him after visiting the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (Lima '93) Exhibition here.

Habibie, who arrived from Jakarta this morning, left for home in the afternoon.

Responding to a question, Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that the aerospace industry in the region would be a success due to, among other things, the need for improved air transport services by its huge population.

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He also said that the government was still studying the possibility of acquiring Indonesian-made CN235 transport aircraft.

The aircraft were proposed for use by the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) but details including the number of units to be acquired had not yet been determined, he said.

In this respect, Dr Mahathir said that the close cooperation between the two countries in this field would contribute positively to the progress of the industry.

"Such cooperation will likely be extended to the Asean level," he added.

-- Bernama

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