

Show could be springboard for aerospace industry, says Dr M

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad went on relentlessly yesterday to promote the culture of flying among Malaysians by extolling the virtues of a keen interest among the local population in the aerospace industry.

The Prime Minister, who maintained an extremely busy schedule, officiated several functions related to the promotion of aviation-related industries.

His first assignment after meeting Cambodian First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh was a live appearance over TV3's morning talk show *Malaysa Hari Ini*.

In the short interview, Dr Mahathir spoke about the success of Lima '95 which could serve as a springboard for the Malaysian aerospace industry.

"Malaysians are also now more familiar with sophisticated matters relating to aircraft manufacturing and equipment," he added.

He said at the on-going Lima '95 exhibition itself, there were many Malaysians who have proven to be experts in the various aspects of the aerospace industry and they were respected by other foreign participants who had even expressed interest in carrying out joint-venture pro-



jects with the Malaysian counterparts.

Dr Mahathir said he was satisfied with Lima '95 which not only attracted many participants but also saw the signing of various agreements and Memorandums of Understanding for joint venture projects.

The Prime Minister then proceeded to launch the Mofaz Air Sdn Bhd Fixed Based Operations (FBO) sited at the 'Airshop' adjacent to the Langkawi International Airport.

He said the island resort had grown considerably since it was declared a Free Trade Zone.

"It has grown further since Lima '91 and Lima '93," he said, adding that this could be seen in the last four years.

From a mere sideshow, he added that it had now attained international recog-

niton.

Dr Mahathir also noted that some people were now saying the country's economy was experiencing "overheating" but the Government would work to overcome the problem.

The Prime Minister also witnessed the signing of two Memoranda-of-Agreement and a Memorandum-of-Understanding.

Mofaz Air Sdn Bhd president Mohamed Fauzy Abdul Hamid signed agreements with Airscan International on air surveillance and Augusta Corporation, an Italian aerospace company, for sales and consultant and service centre agreement.

Mofaz Marine Sdn Bhd also signed an agreement with a subsidiary of Singapore's public-listed Singmarine Industries, a member of the Keppel Group, to set up a shipyard for the construction of marine craft.

Also present were Italian Ambassador to Malaysia Alberto Candilo, Singapore's High Commissioner Low Choon Ming, United States Charge de Affairs Wendy Chamberlain, Agusta president Gen Basilio Cottone, Keppel Corp chairman Loh Wing Siew and president of US-based Airscan John Mansur.

Dr Mahathir also presented pilot's wings to the graduates of the Mofaz Flying School.

He then moved on to launch the Eagle Chapter 1130 before proceeding to officiate at the opening ceremony of a *gamat* (sea cucumber) ointment factory.

The small factory located just a few kilometres from the airport, produces traditional medicine for the domestic market.

In a short speech at the ceremony, he said small scale industrialists should work hard to carve a niche in the market.

Dr Mahathir then went for Friday prayers at Masjid Temoyong about 10km from the airport.

In the afternoon, he launched the Tour de Langkawi cycling before returning to the Mahsuri Hall to visit stalls managed by Russian aircraft exhibitors.

Dr Mahathir then took part in a specially-arranged teleconferencing interview which was originally planned for Wednesday.

Last night, he attended a thank you dinner attended by exhibitors and all those involved in Lima '95.

The Prime Minister then left for Kuala Lumpur after spending four full days at Lima '95.