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Lima '97 third largest exhibition in the world

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THE fourth Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition (Lima '97), to be held from December 2-7 this year, will be the third largest exhibition in the world in terms of participation.

Defence Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar announced yesterday that a total of 1,150 companies from 38 countries will be participating in this year's event. The Le Bourget Paris Air Show in France is currently the biggest airshow in the world, followed by the Fairborough International Show in the UK.

"Lima '97 will be the third largest airshow ... an achievement for us. We have reached the target set by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to make Lima as an outstanding airshow in the world," he told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday after chairing the Cabinet Committee on Lima.

Syed Hamid, who is the chairman of committee, said the target was to have 800 companies participating in the aerospace show and 350 companies in the maritime show. "Currently, we have confirmed participation of 534 companies for the aerospace show and 235 companies for the maritime show.

"Altogether, the confirmed participation for both shows has exceeded the total participation of 642 companies in the previous exhibition, Lima '95," he said.

Syed Hamid said the focus of the aerospace exhibition this year is on high technology such as the total defence system, computerised surveillance system and control command system.

He said Lima is not only an exhibition venue but also a platform for business transaction. It is an attractive market for exhibitors to sell their products such as executive jets. "Exhibitors see Lima as having a great sales potential. The previous Lima '95 saw sales transaction worth more than RM700 million," he said.

This time around, the aerospace and the maritime exhibitions are organised by separate organisers.

The aerospace exhibition, organised by Le Proton Lima Sdn Bhd, will be held at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre. The maritime exhibition, organised by Huswah Exhibition Shn Bhd, will be held at Tanjung Malai.

Syed Hamid said Dr Mahathir will launch both exhibitions at Mahsuri Hall.

"Tanjung Malai has a good berthing facility. The jetty and accommodation including the hotels, apartments and luxury cruisers are ready," he said.

The exhibition area at Mahsuri Hall has also been widened to a total 22,000 sq. m, which makes it one of the largest exhibition centres in the South-East Asia. He said 80 per cent of the exhibition space has been taken up.

He said the Langkawi Development Authority (Lada) has also upgraded infrastructure facilities, where roads have been repaired and widened, and the airport runway extended.

"Tenaga Nasional has also guaranteed adequate supply of electricity, and Lada promised that the water supply problem will be a thing of the past," he said.

Invitations have also be sent to many more foreign defence ministers. Dr Mahathir has also invited his counterparts to the show.

He said there will be adequate rooms for the visitors and participants.

A total of 6,800 rooms is available, ranging from five-star accommodation to budget ones.

In conjunction with the exhibition, two conferences will be organised by Asian Strategic Leadership Institute (Asli) on aerospace and maritime.

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