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Seek Russian expertise, Malaysian firms advised

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malaysians should look towards technologies from Russia at a time when that country is opening up vigorously, Aerospace Technology Systems Corp Sdn Bhd general manager Brig Gen (R) Datuk Richard Robless said.

He said the time for Malaysian companies to "give a shot" at Russian technology was appropriate, particularly so when its technology had proven to be on par, if not better than that from the West.

"The Russians may still be lacking a little in commercial infrastructure, marketing and networking but otherwise, I feel its technology is as good as those from the West, if not better.

"As such Malaysians should go in now so that they can evaluate for themselves how good is Russian technology," he said.

He said towards this end, Malaysian companies should take advantage of the TechXchange'97 conference and exhibition, which will showcase about 100 Russian companies and its technology.

The event will be held at the Malaysia International Exhibition Centre in Sungai Besi from Tuesday to Friday.

The event will showcase advanced and cutting-edge technologies from Russia, and provide an opportunity for Malaysian and foreign participants to be updated on technological advancements and to strengthen partnerships in business and technology.

The exhibition is being organised by Le Proton Exhibition, Novotek Group, Might and Machinoexport, a Russian company. The New Straits Times is the official newspaper.

Among the sectors to be represented at the exhibition are aerospace, construction and composite materials, electronics and optical systems, and pharmaceuticals.

The event will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who will also deliver a keynote address.

Citing an example, Robless said the ATSC, which was formed as MRAS Sdn Bhd in June 1994 and changed to its present name in May 1995, has learnt a lot from the Russians.

ATSC was formed as a result of a memorandum of understanding signed between the Malaysian Government, the Russian State Corporation for Export and Import of Armament and Military Equipment, and Moscow Aircraft Production Organisation or Mapo MiG, in June, 1994.

The Minister of Finance Inc owns 70 per cent stake in the joint venture followed by Mapo MiG, 25 per cent and the Russian State Corporation, five per cent.

Robless said the joint venture company was formed to provide total system support for Royal Malaysian Air Force MiG 29 aircraft, ensuring maximum development of Malaysia's technical capability.

It was also to provide a base and co-ordination for the expansion of advanced technology in the Malaysian aviation industry.

This, Robless said, had paved the way for the development of the company to become the centre of logistics and technical support for aircraft and other aviation products of Russian origin in the region of Southeast Asia and Australasia.

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