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Airod to lead local aerospace consortium

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THE nation's premier aerospace maintenance and modification facility, Airod Sdn Bhd, will spearhead a consortium of four aviation companies to take Malaysia's aerospace industry to greater heights.

Announcing this yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the four had agreed in principle to the proposed merger.

The other three are Aerospace Industries Malaysia Bhd, UPECA Engineering Sdn Bhd and SME Industries Sdn Bhd.

"Details are being sorted out, ... including valuation of the companies and the roles they should play."

"Such a move would not only reduce costs but also ensure that there is no duplication of facilities."

Dr Mahathir was speaking after witnessing components handing-over ceremony at the Airod hangar in Subang, Selangor.

In the first agreement concluded, aviation components, jointly manufactured by Airod and UPECA Engineering, a local high-precision engineering company based in Kinrara, Selangor, were handed to ShinMaywa Ltd to be used in both Boeing 757 and 767 planes.

A second agreement allows the company to supply rocket booster components to Macnab Manufacturing Inc of the US.

The ceremony coincided with Airod being accorded the ISO 9002 quality management system certification by the French-based Bureau Veritas Quality International for provision of aircraft maintenance, overhaul and rectification.

Among those present were Defence Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar, Airod chairman-cum-president Tan Sri Ahmad Johan, its board of directors, BVQI chief executive (South East Asia) Vincent L. D'Arifat, Craig Beecroft (Acnab) and ShinMaywa general manager Takao Masuda.

Asked on the possible role of Government-owned Composites Technology Research Malaysia Sdn Bhd in the amalgamation, Dr Mahathir said that CTRM was specialised in its own way.

He also complimented Airod chairman and his team, describing their efforts as being responsible for turning the company around.

The Prime Minister said although Malaysia ventured into the aerospace industry only recently, compared to other aviation giants, it had proven it had the capacity, skill and ability to make good progress in this area.

"We have come a long way in the industry... A Malaysian company would export 250 four-seater single engine planes to the United States."

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