

28/10/1998

Bringing together all local aerospace firms

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The Government is bringing together all local aerospace companies in the country so that they do not duplicate each other's activities, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"They can be under one consortium or one company. We are trying to bring them together so that we don't waste efforts in duplicating...each one of them doing the same thing.

"They will now be brought together. That's what we hope to do," he said in reply to questions at a Press conference after opening the Heli-Asia '98 exhibition at the Mines international exhibition and convention centre in Sungai Besi here.

He was asked about the "blueprint for the aerospace industry in Malaysia" which was unveiled at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition in Langkawi last December.

Among other things, the blueprint lists 45 recommendations to pilot the industry's take-off.

One is to "consolidate various light aircraft manufacturing companies into a single entity either through a merger or the formation of a consortium to be called Consortium for Light Aircraft and Systems led preferably by an entrepreneur with expertise in aerospace/aviation.

Another recommendation is for the establishment of "a large consortium to lead Malaysia's entry into systems integration" which will consolidate the nation's investments in large aerospace-related systems such as airport facilities, RMAF's weapons systems and Malaysia Airlines' flight simulators into a single entity.

The Prime Minister was also asked if Malaysia had plans to build its own helicopter.

He said this would be realised one day. The country would try to obtain technology from foreign countries.

Earlier, in his speech, the Prime Minister called on "the big names" in the international helicopter industry represented in the exhibition to "not only look at the market place created by an exhibition of this kind but also at the scope for manufacturing your products in this country."

Dr Mahathir said the country looked ahead to the day when Heli-Asia would feature made-in-Malaysia helicopters.

In welcoming the foreign participants to the exhibition, Dr Mahathir said they had chosen to come to Malaysia at a very difficult time.

"It is a moment of history when the support of our friends is most timely and will be remembered."

Heli-Asia 98 which runs until Oct 29, is being organised by Shephard Conferences and Exhibitions Sdn Bhd.

Its chief executive officer Alexander Shephard, and executive director Brig Gen (Rtd) Datuk Muslim Ayub were present at the opening ceremony.

Also there was Lord Simon Glenarthur, the chairman of the British Helicopter Advisory Board. Among the guests were key members of the aerospace and aviation industry from here and abroad.

The Prime Minister later visited the booths in the exhibition hall for about an hour.

(END)