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Heli-Asia '98 highlights confidence in recovery

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The enthusiastic participation by exhibitors at the biennial Heli-Asia '98 is testimony to their firm confidence in the speedy recovery of the country's economy in the near future.

The three-day exhibition and conference, beginning tomorrow at the Mines International Exhibition Centre in Seri Kembangan, attracted 30 per cent more exhibitors than the first show two years ago.

Chief executive officer of Shephard Conferences and Exhibition Sdn Bhd, Alexander Shephard, said being the only dedicated helicopter show in the Asia Pacific region, it is the focal point for all with interest in this specialised aviation field.

He said the exhibition will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The hosting of the exhibition, conferences and workshops here is further testimony to the international community's confidence in the country's ability to act as a regional showcase for high technology and equipment, what with its world-class facilities and services," he said.

"Heli Asia '98 is also associated with the 'Britain in Malaysia - Just Between Friends', a campaign that celebrates the special relationship between the two countries which will take place through this year and beyond.

Shephard said the event, which is open only to trade visitors, will allow participants to attend 20 specialised workshops on topics like new engine technology, night vision technology and search and rescue.

Other topics will include naval operations, use of attack helicopters, civil and military training as well as future concepts. The workshops are free of charge.

The company's executive director Mej Jen (Rtd) Datuk Muslim Ayob (RMAF) said the exhibition is a good opportunity for local small and medium industries to use as a base for future interactions and joint ventures.

Muslim said among the highlights of Heli Asia '98 will be a fire fighting demonstration by a Mi-17 helicopter newly acquired by the Fire and Rescue Department as well as static displays of RMAF Nuri and Black Hawk helicopters.

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