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### Challenge pulls eight countries

MALAYSIA CHALLENGE '99, a prestigious Grade One international sailing event, will set sails in waters off Langkawi beginning on Nov 20.

Sanctioned by the International Sailing Federation, top class sailors from eight countries would be participating in the 10-day event.

National petroleum company Petronas are the official sponsor and national carrier Malaysia Airlines is the official airline. Business Focus Group are joint sponsors.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to officiate the international sailing event on Nov 20.

"We are pleased to be awarded Grade One status which basically ensures competing skippers and teams receive maximum points from the event," said organising chairman Vice Admiral (Rtd) Tan Sri A. Wahab Nawi of HW Lima Sdn Bhd in a statement issued yesterday.

HW Lima Sdn Bhd are organisers of the maritime segment of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, Lima '99.

This year's event, which offers prize money totalling US\$75,000, is part of the World Match Race Circuit. Langkawi is the only Asian venue.

Among notable skippers expected to participate in Langkawi are Denmark's Sten Mohr (currently ranked world No 1), Sweden's Magnus Holmberg (No 4), Olympic bronze medallist Roy Heiner of Holland, German Markus Weiser (No 10) and Andy Beadsworth (No 11).

The Malaysia Challenge '99 is scheduled to commence on Nov 22 and will be preceded by two days of open qualifiers from which two teams will qualify.

(END)