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BAE to invest another RM500m in Malaysia

BAE Systems is to invest an additional RM500 million in smart partnerships with Malaysian defence and aerospace companies over the next five years.

Revealing this during a preview of the company's participation in the upcoming Seventh Defence Services Asia (DSA 2000) exhibition and conference, vice president Robert Kemp said having operated in Malaysia for the past 30 years, it is committed to its partners in the Asia-Pacific region during both good and bad times.

BAE Systems has already committed RM1.6 billion for what it describes as "value-added partnership programmes" with 18 Malaysian defence and aerospace companies.

He added that the company felt honoured when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad referred to BAE Systems as "an almost Malaysian company" when he unveiled the new company identity at the LIMA exhibition in Langkawi last December.

"Strong adherence to this principle has enabled us to strengthen bilateral trade between the UK and countries in this region," he said.

Kemp added that to help Malaysia build its own aerospace and defence manufacturing industry, BAE Systems had invested substantially through joint ventures and technical collaborations with local companies to ensure sufficient technology transfers.

"Judging from the Malaysian Government's strong encouragement of the rapid development of a local defence manufacturing industry, we are confident that Malaysia can achieve its aspiration to become the central regional hub for defence equipment supplies," said Kemp.

He added that the show would be an excellent catalyst for British defence manufacturers to interact with local and regional entrepreneurs, defence and security forces' decision makers and senior government officials.

DSA 2000 will be held from April 11-14 at the Mines International Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

BAE Systems is said to be the largest overseas exhibitor at DSA 2000 and will lead the UK's national group participation of 36 companies.

At the event, BAE Systems will display a wide range of products and services applicable to the tri-defence services and government security forces.

Among the exhibits on display will be the Malaysian-built Sakti RO 105 Light Gun and the Vertical Launch Seawolf missile system, now in service with the Royal Malaysian Navy.

DSA 2000 has attracted 420 companies from 40 countries and is hosted by the Defence Ministry with operational support from the defence forces and Royal Malaysian Police.

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