

Malaysia may get more satellites, says PM

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PUTRAJAYA, Mon: The Malaysian Aerospace Council will explore the possibility of having more satellites as part of the country's agenda to enhance its strength in the industry.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia has launched its micro-satellite that has transmitted "interesting pictures" about Malaysia.

"We have launched our micro-satellite and we have received some interesting pictures, including that of Malaysia, and we think that there is some potential here," he said.

Mahathir, who was speaking to reporters after chairing the council's first meeting here, said however that no decision was made today.

He said a lot of opportunities exist in the aerospace industry, especially

in the manufacture of aircraft and the study of materials.

"We cannot expect returns on research in this area, and this is also the case in other countries, but it adds to the understanding of the industry," he said.

He also said the expansion in the use of the unmanned Eagle aircraft will be extended to both civilian and military purposes.

"It can be used for both. The aircraft can be programmed to conduct aerial surveys and transmit information on sea lanes and to check for instances of piracy," he added.

Members of the council include Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is deputy chairman, the defence, finance, transport, science, technology and the environment and the education ministers as representatives from government agencies, and those in the aerospace industry.