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Mahathir-LIMA (Aerobatics)

DR MAHATHIR IMPRESSED WITH AEROBATIC DISPLAY BY RMAF PILOTS

LANGKAWI, Oct 11 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed pride and fascination with the aerobatic display by Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) fighter pilots during this year's LIMA show here.

"Although they are fighter pilots, their aerobatic capability is fantastic," he said when approached by reporters at the international airport here before returning to the federal capital today.

Dr Mahathir was here since Tuesday to open the 2001 Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA 01) show and visit the exhibition.

The RMAF used the United States-made F/A 18D Hornets and Russian MiG-29Ns for their aerobatic display at the biennial show, the biggest such event in the region.

Dr Mahathir was also satisfied with the response to the LIMA show this time around despite the absence of past crowd-pullers -- Britain's Red Arrows and the US' Thunderbirds aerobatic teams -- because of unavoidable circumstances.

Participant-wise, he said there is strong presence of Russian companies and aircraft in the aerospace segment this time around for instance.

As for the maritime segment, some exhibitors even had to pitch up extra tents and this illustrated the encouraging response, Dr Mahathir said.

About 300 exhibitors from 27 countries are taking part in the aerospace segment and 300 exhibitors from 22 nations, in the maritime segment.

LIMA '01, which ends on Sunday, is open to trade visitors from Tuesday till tomorrow and to the public during the weekend.

-- BERNAMA

JM RYN