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Dr M: This year's Lima a success with greater number of participants

DESPITE several last minute withdrawals, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this year's Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition was a success.

Dr Mahathir said the number of participants and visitors had increased tremendously compared to previous exhibitions.

"I'm satisfied with this year's Lima although a few participants had withdrawn," he said at the Langkawi International Airport before departing for Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir, who opened the exhibition on Tuesday, had spent hours since then visiting booths put up by more than 300 participants from 26 countries at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre for the aerospace exhibition and Awana Porto Malai Langkawi for the maritime exhibition.

Despite the Sept 11 attacks in New York and Washington, 10 American companies took part in the six-day exhibition. The United Kingdom has the highest number of participants with 13 followed by 10 from Russia.

The exhibition, the sixth since 1991, ends on Sunday.

Dr Mahathir was also impressed with the aerobatic display by the Royal Malaysian Air Force pilots.

"We can take pride in their performance. The pilots of our F18 (F/A-18D Hornet) and MiG29 (MiG-29N Fulcrum fighter jet) performed admirably although they are combat pilots and not aerobatic pilots. They have given us an exciting aerial display."

He was also impressed with the participation of Malaysian companies at the maritime exhibition.

"The participation of Malaysian companies at the maritime exhibition is remarkable. There wasn't enough floor space for Malaysian exhibitors to the extent that they had to take up space designated for foreign participants," he said.

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