25 MAR 2002
Najib-Defence
PURCHASE OF POLISH TANKS INVOLVES TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY, SAYS NAJIB

SEPANG, March 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's intention to purchase Poland's PT91 main battle tank will involve the transfer of technology for the maintenance and training in the deployment of the tank, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

"We will work closely with them in terms of maintenance of the tanks, which will be done by MMC Engineering Services Sdn Bhd," he told reporters at the KL International Airport (KLIA), here, upon his return from Poland.

He had accompanied Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on a nine-day visit to Russia, Germany and Poland.

Najib said that apart from the transfer of technology, the maintenance of the tanks would also require the transfer of tooling, and other necessary equipment.

He was commenting on newspaper reports yesterday quoting Dr Mahathir as confirming Malaysia will be buying the tanks from Poland.

Najib said that for the training, Poland was prepared to allow the usage of its training area, in terms of tactic in the deployment of the tanks since its training area is the largest in Europe.

"We can train there initially and later, here," he said.

Najib said the prime minister's trips to Russia and Poland were very successful for the Defence Ministry.

He said the Polish government showed them their hardware and defence technology, including their anaconda helicopter and the shipyard in Gdansk, and their capabilities to construct military craft and vessels of any size.

On Russia, Najib said it was keen to sell Malaysia its Sukhoi Su-30 multi-role combat aircraft which Malaysia was considering to buy.

"We are looking at Sukhoi and America's FA18 Super Hornet as well," he said.

He added that there would be more intense discussion on the purchase of the aircraft but he did not expect it to take long.

"When we are ready we will make the announcement," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MAD HK JK