Company offers private aviation services in Subang

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SUBANG: Private and corporate aircrafts operating at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah (SAAS) Airport need no longer depend on maintenance facilities offered by neighbouring countries with the emergence of d'nest Aviation Services.

The local company provides maintenance, operations, ground handling and VIP lounge services for private and corporate aircraft owners at a fraction of the cost offered by its competitors outside Malaysia.

Apart from their limited hangar-based services, d'nest Aviation Services also provides valuation service to assist individuals and corporations in the acquisition and sale of all types of aircraft.

The pair behind the company are former Drainage and Irrigation Department director Tan Sri J. G. Daniel, who is the chairman, and former Royal Malaysian Air Force pilot Capt Ernest Koilpillai who is the managing director.

Daniel said setting up the facility was in line with the Government's efforts to transform the SAAS airport into an international hub for private aviation and also to support Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call to develop the country's technological capabilities.

"Capt Ernest and I agonised long and deep into the merits and demerits of going into this venture. However, the encouragement, enthusiasm and support that we had from the authorities left us in no doubt that we are doing the right thing," he said.

Formerly known as Airfoto Sdn Bhd, the company was founded 25 years ago by a New Zealander in Malacca. The company was then doing aerial photography of vessels plying through the Straits of Malacca for Lloyd Insurers.

In the 80s, the two men took over and the company was restructured in 1990.

"We started operations at the Royal Selangor Flying Club, maintaining light aircrafts and some Turbo Prop aircrafts. It was then that corporate companies started purchasing small and medium sized jets," Ernest said, adding that the company moved to Subang Airport and began work from a simple shed in 1994.

Space constraints made the management approach Malaysia Airports Bhd and d'nest finally built a hangar worth more than RM1mil in the vicinity.

The hangar, which is situated at the former Cargo and Quarantine complex, can accommodate six light aircrafts at any time.

The company's new premises were opened by Deputy Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk S. Subramaniam yesterday.