

30 SEP 2003

Lima-Najib

ABDULLAH HAS GIVEN ASSURANCE TO CONTINUE LIMA, SAYS NAJIB

LANGKAWI, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has given his assurance that the government will continue hosting the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (Lima) in the future, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said that Abdullah, who will take over as Prime Minister when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad steps down at the end of next month, had given his commitment to Lima's future.

"Sir, I have spoken to your successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, and he has given his assurance that the government will be committed to continue with Lima in the future," he said, addressing Dr Mahathir who later opened Lima '03 at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre (MIEC) here.

"I hope our exhibitors and visitors alike will continuously support Lima as you have done in the past," Najib said.

Lima is the brainchild of Dr Mahathir and since its inception 12 years ago, the maritime and aerospace exhibition has grown to become one of the largest exhibition in the region.

The biennial event, according to the Defence Minister, had been synonymous with the Prime Minister.

"Lima -- its inception, its growth and its success -- is attributed to his vision and leadership. This is not merely a praise but most certainly a fact that must be acknowledged and recorded," he said.

The event, recognised by the aerospace and maritime industry as one of the most important in their calendar, has grown by leaps and bounds since its modest inception back in 1991.

This year, Lima's aerospace component, which will be held at the MIEC and Padang Matsirat International Airport, will see the participation of more than 600 exhibitors from 25 countries as compared to a mere 99 exhibitors from 15 countries in Lima '91.

Meanwhile, the maritime component of this year's event, at Porto Malai, will see 204 exhibitors from 17 countries plus 90 naval and commercial vessels taking part.

The aerospace segment is organised by Le Proton Lima Sdn Bhd while HW Lima Sdn Bhd is the organiser of the maritime exhibition.

-- BERNAMA

MHI MAD AHH RM