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AEROSPACE-EXPERTS

MALAYSIA TEAMS UP WITH RUSSIA TO PRODUCE LOCAL AEROSPACE EXPERTS

KOTA BAHARU, Oct 9 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is currently working with Russia to produce local experts in the field of aerospace with the view to enable them to design and build their own ships in the years to come.

The president of Defense, Medical and Aerospace Research Laboratory Sdn Bhd, Ir Ismail Ibrahim, said a company, Malaysian-Russian Aerospace Design Bureau (M) Sdn Bhd, has been also established to meet this aim.

An agreement was signed here Wednesday between Defense, Medical and Aerospace Research Laboratory and a Russian company, Mohamedov Flugzenbau GmbH, for the establishment of the company.

Ismail represented the Malaysian party while the Russian company was represented by its president, Fatidin Moukhamedov.

Mohamedov Flugzenbau, is a renowned company in the aerospace industry especially for its designing of the early planes such as the MiG 29 fighter jet.

Talking to reporters after the ceremony, Ir Ismail said Malaysian-Russian Aerospace Design Bureau would be responsible for research, design and building of the amphibious planes.

He said, initially a total of 50 graduates from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) would be sent to Moscow Aviation Institute early next year for a year study in aerospace.

Upon their return, they would work with the company under the supervision of experts from Russia.

"By this way, we hope to be able to see the technology transfer from the Russian aerospace experts to Malaysians so that we would be able to fully create planes locally in five to seven years time," he said.

The project is expected to cost RM50 million.

He said the move to encourage more Malaysians towards expertise in the aerospace field has received very high support from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

On why Malaysia was choosing to build planes with seating capacity of 10 to 14, he said that a research conducted by his company found that there were still many places in Sabah and Sarawak that were not accessible by land transportation.

Plus, these planes could be easily modified into amphibious planes, he said.

He said there was a possibility that the plant to build the planes would be set up in Kelantan although no dates have been fixed yet.

"We hope that the plant would be built in Kelantan as many youths from this state currently have to move to Kuala Lumpur in search of employment.

"If the plant is set up here they would not have to go to Kuala Lumpur as we need about 600 people to work in the plant," he said.

Ir Ismail said the plant would also become an effort towards helping local graduates practically applying whatever skills they have. -- BERNAMA

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