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MARINE-AGREEMENT

YASMIN TECHNOLOGY INKS AGREEMENT WITH UKRAINIAN COMPANIES

By: Mohd Kamel Othman

ODESSA (Ukraine), July 16 (Bernama) -- Yasmin Technology Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Knusford Bhd, has inked a technical collaboration agreement with Ukranian state company, UKRSPETSEXPORT, to facilitate technology transfer and set up production and marketing activities for commercial maritime and military naval vessels.

Under the technical collaboration partnership signed on Tuesday, two Ukranian companies, Progress and the Ukranian State Research & Design Shipbuilding Centre (SRDSC), have agreed to jointly set up a centre of excellence for maritime design and research within the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) in Malaysia.

The joint venture partners are also to set up Yasmin Marine Technology.

The signing of the agreement was witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is on a four-day official visit to Ukraine, which began Sunday.

Knusford was represented by its managing director, Datuk Lim Kang Hoo, and Yasmin Technology by Rashid Ghani. The Ukranian side was represented by Velery Shmarow.

Not only will technologies such as armoured aluminium alloy, stealth design and aquaplaning vessels that were once the exclusive domain of the former Soviet Russia be made available to Malaysia, the agreement also calls for a technical collaboration to design and manufacture future products locally and for them to be marketed worldwide, especially in South East Asia and West Asia.

"With the agreement, Malaysia would now be able to obtain intellectual assets, including readily available knowledge and resources to further develop its shipbuilding industry whilst creating a new export earner for the country," Lim said.

He said UKRSPETSEXPORT's decision to collaborate with Malaysia on such a highly skilled industry underscored its confidence and trust that the country has the necessary resources and skilled workforce.

"We are required not only to build those boats but the deal stresses the importance that the final product must also correspond with the standards of the world's best samples," he said.

"We believe that the group's expertise in the light and heavy machinery equipment for the construction and infrastructure development works, especially in the oil and gas, marine and industrial sectors would add mileage to our plans."

A professional training scheme would also be set up in collaboration with a local university whereby students and researchers would be able to study and conduct research in the scientific and technical areas of shipbuilding.

Plans are also underway to set up a distribution and marketing centre for the Falanga gunboat for both the local and international markets as well as a sales and service centre for Superfoil, a 300-passenger high-speed catamaran for leisure purposes.

For the Malaysian domestic market, Yasmin Marine Technology has identified potential customers wishing to be equipped with bullet-proof vessels to patrol and safeguard the nation's waters and coasts against pirates, smugglers and to prevent the illegal entry of immigrants.

"The armoured gunboat Falanga is very suitable to combat piracy along the Malacca Straits, the world's busiest shipping lane, which also attract

a lot of pirates," Lim said.

"We foresee a great demand for the deployment of such vessels in the region due to its capability of protecting the respective nation's waterways and maritime heritage. This would also boost the safety of vessels that passes through the area and alleviate concerns of merchants using the region's sea lane," he added.

Situated in Mykolayiv, which is the traditional centre of shipbuilding in Southern Ukraine for the past 200 years, SRDSC was established in 1975 as a leading organisation in modern surface warship design.

It is only specialised Ukrainian scientific-technical organisation which carries out the design of warships and auxiliary vessels, investigations into naval weaponry, shipbuilding sciences and the rendering of services in all fields of naval shipbuilding.

It is also engaged in international military and technical co-operation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), China, Poland and Turkey. -- BERNAMA

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