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LIMA-LOCAL

LIMA '03 PROOF OF LOCAL MARITIME AND AEROSPACE COMPANIES' CAPABILITIES

LANGKAWI, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- The ongoing Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA 03) is proof that local maritime and aerospace companies now have the capabilities to compete in the international arena, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today.

He said local companies were now involved in the production of sophisticated and high technology based products such as the building of patrol boats, simulator, as well as the redesigning of aeroplane and helicopters.

"The growth in local maritime and aerospace companies has been very impressive during this LIMA 03 compared with the first LIMA exhibition in 1991.

"They can now compete at the international level," he told reporters after attending the weekly Cabinet meeting at the Rumah Kabinet Gunung Raya here.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad chaired the meeting which was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and other Cabinet members.

Najib said that through the continued efforts of the government, many local companies such as Airod, Composite Technology Research Malaysia (CTRM), ATSC, Sapura, Deftech and System Consultancy Services (SCS) had become successful in their fields.

He, however, reminded local companies that competition in the international arena was very steep and that sometimes decisions on the awarding of contracts would not be based on technical reasons.

The establishment of the Malaysia Defence Industries Council (MDIC) by the government is aimed at bringing the local defence industry to greater heights in the future, he said.

He said MDIC would also help the country to be independent in the defence industry area while ensuring support for the Country's Defence Policy more effectively by way of increasing the command of the latest defence technologies.

Apart from that, any purchase of defence system for the country now would have to ensure the establishment of joint partnerships between a local company and the international company to produce locally specific components for the system.

"The purchase of weapons for the country now would no longer be just about transferring foreign technologies also, we would ensure that certain components in the system are produced locally through smart partnerships between local and foreign companies," he said. -- BERNAMA

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