

30/09/2003

10 nations to take part in cocktail party

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FOR the first time since its inception in 1991, the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition will have an international "cocktail" party featuring cuisine from the 10 countries taking part in its maritime segment.

Organiser HW Lima Sdn Bhd will host the party on Thursday and it will be graced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and other Government and foreign dignitaries.

HW Lima executive director Felix Thai said chefs onboard ships of the navies of the 10 countries taking part in the exhibition would prepare cuisine from their countries for the party, dubbed the "International Maritime Cocktail Carnival".

"We have also invited the sailors from these ships to come dressed in their respective national costumes if possible," he said.

The 10 countries which will be represented are Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Singapore, India, Australia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and France.

"This is the first time that South Korea will be taking part in the exhibition," he said.

Bangladesh is sending a frigate, Saudi Arabia will send a frigate and a supply ship, Thailand will be represented by two corvettes and two patrol boats, Singapore will be sending a landing ship tank while India will be represented by a destroyer and a frigate.

Australia is also sending a frigate, South Korea's navy will be represented by a submarine rescue ship, Sri Lanka is sending an offshore patrol vessel, Pakistan will send a frigate and a supply ship while a supply ship from France will also take part in the event.

The Malaysian Government will be represented by the Royal Malaysian Navy (24 ships), the Fire and Rescue Department (20 ships), Royal Customs Department (four), Marine police (two), Marine Department (two) and Fisheries Department (one). There will also be 21 commercial ships and boats taking part in the exhibition.

"This includes a hydrofoil from Ukraine, which is the first time such a ship will be taking part since the first Lima in 1991."

One highlight of the exhibition will be the handing over of a Super Lynx helicopter from its producer, Agusta-Westland, to the RMN.

Also a highlight is the maritime seminar held every Lima. One of this year's topics of discussion will be the proposed Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency.