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Italian deputy minister arrives with delegation

LANGKAWI, Sun. - Italian Deputy Defence Minister Filippo Berselli arrived in Langkawi today for a three-day stay on the resort island for the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition 2003.

He will also head the Italian delegation, comprising representatives of the Defence Ministry and the industry at the five-day exhibition.

He is expected to pay courtesy calls on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Italian ambassador to Malaysia Anacleto Felicani said the high-level delegation from Italy marked the importance placed by his country on relations with Malaysia.

"Our desire is to further enhance the close relations between both countries, especially in the field of defence," he said.

"We have close relations with Malaysia in terms of procurements of defence equipment and training and Lima is a perfect place to cement such a relationship," he said .

Among Italian companies which have confirmed attendance at Lima 03 are Alenia Marconi Systems (AMS), Fincantieri, Elettronica SpA, WASS, Intermarine, Agusta-Westland, Galileo Avionica, Alenia Aeronautica and Finmeccanica.