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Lots of surprises in store

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HW Lima Sdn Bhd, the organiser of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition maritime segment, is again set to provide a grand event with additional surprises for delegates and visitors.

Executive chairman Vice Admiral (Rtd) Tan Sri Abdul Wahab Nawi said the event would see larger participation from local companies, which will display their latest defence technology.

This year, 192 companies from 17 countries have confirmed their participation - a decrease as compared with Lima 2001 when 22 countries took part.

Among the countries participating this year are the UK, Italy, France, Germany, the US and Russia.

"Despite the reduced participation, I am confident this year's event will be livelier with greater co-operation from international and local companies," he said.

"This year, we also foresee better deals and business ventures taking place," he said.

Being held from today until Sunday at the Awana Porto Malai, the exhibition is unique for its centralised location for the land-based exhibitions and ships on display.

The exhibition, supported by the Government, comprises indoor static display (pavilions and booths), out-door static display (on land), on-water static display (at the marina), berthing for visiting and local warships and daily live on-water demonstrations with a dedicated viewing gallery.

Although often considered as the less glamorous segment of the biennial event, the maritime show has grown to include even those not within the naval circle, such as those involved in tourism and maritime exploitation.

The maritime segment is an indication that more companies are beginning to realise the importance of the event as a platform to showcase their wares and expertise.

The maritime show, among others, will create better awareness of maritime activities among the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) and government agencies and will see many memorandum of understanding signed and business ventures taking place.

Lima Maritime features a range of equipment, technology and services for the navy, academies, customs, immigration, marine police, fisheries, fire and rescue, shipyards, ports and harbours.

Abdul Wahab said this year's event was also a tribute to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad.

"Through his vision and support, the event was made a reality."

This year's Lima maritime exhibition is the fourth organised by HW Lima Sdn Bhd since 1997.

"It is indeed a great honour for HW Lima Sdn Bhd to, once again, organise the Lima 2003 maritime segment," he said.

This year, the highlights for the event is the Super Lynx helicopter display by Agusta Westland and also the daily boat shows and demonstrations by local and international participants.

He said the RMN would sail into the show with 21 warships, including the latest F2000 frigates, KD Lekiu, and the advanced hydrographic research vessel, KD Perantau at Tanjung Malai.

Besides RMN, 10 other countries have confirmed that they will display

their warships off the waters of Tanjung Malai.

Among them are Korean submarine rescue ship and frigates from the Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh.

To date, 22 invited Navy chiefs and representatives from participating countries have confirmed their presence.

The maritime sector this year, a floor space 7,800 square metres have been allocated for the exhibition with 7,100 square metres for the indoor exhibition while 700 square metres for the outdoor exhibition.

Of the space, the Malaysian pavilion will take up 2,700 square metres, the largest pavilion this year.

During Lima 2001, 9,200 square metres were taken up: 8,700 square metres for the indoor and the remaining 500 square metres for the outdoor exhibitions.

He said all delegates, especially foreign naval chiefs, would have access to information on every single exhibit. "Our maritime industry needs the exposure and this is the time for them to showcase their talent and products," he said.

He said the maritime segment of the exhibition would showcase every facet of maritime interest in tourism and fisheries in this region and not merely on the the defence aspect.

He said local participants should realise the importance of the maritime industry to the country as the industry had been around for a long time and had been expanding.