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Warships from 10 countries to pull in the crowd

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The maritime segment of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition will be interesting with additional surprises in store for visitors.

With Lima `03 scheduled to kick off in two weeks, organisers of the maritime segment, HW Lima Sdn Bhd executive chairman Laksamana Madya (R) Tan Sri Abdul Wahab Nawawi said the event was a tribute to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad.

"Through his vision and support, the event was made a reality and is now on the international calendar for defence industry players," he said in an interview recently.

This year, he added, the maritime segment will see a larger participation from local companies who will put on display the latest in defence technology.

Seventeen countries will also be taking part with 192 exhibitors and this will include those from the United States, Russia, France, United Kingdom, Italy and China.

This year's maritime segment, the seventh since its inception in 1991, would be held at Awana Porto Malai, Tanjung Malai.

"It is indeed a great honour for HW Lima Sdn Bhd to once again organise Lima `03 Maritime at Tanjung Malai, Langkawi," he said.

Lima `03 is the fourth event, organised by HW Lima since 1997.

Scheduled to be held between Sept 30 and Oct 5, the Lima `03 maritime show is the largest maritime defence exhibition in the world.

Staged at Tanjung Malai, the event is unique for its centralised location for both the land-based exhibitions and ships on display.

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.

Abdul Wahab said the maritime show, among others, will create greater awareness on maritime activities among the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) and relevant government agencies and will see several memorandum of understanding and business ventures concluded during the event.

The RMN will sail into the show with 21 warships, including its latest F2000 frigates, KD Lekiu, and the advanced hydrographic research vessel, KD Perantau.

Besides RMN, 10 other countries have confirmed that they will display their warships off the waters of Tanjung Malai.

Among them are a South Korean submarine rescue ship, frigates from Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh.

Another highlight during the event is the Super Lynx helicopter display by Agusta Westland.

Besides naval defence hardware, commercial and leisure crafts would also be anchored for display.

To date, navy chiefs and representatives from participating countries have confirmed their attendance at the event.

The maritime segment this year boasts of an exhibition area totalling 7,800 square metres.