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PM launches new name for Airod holding company

A NEW name and logo launch for National Aerospace and Defence Industries Sdn Bhd (NADI) was made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the opening of Lima `03 yesterday.

Nadi, incorporated in 1983, was previously known as Aerospace Industries Malaysia Sdn Bhd, the holding company of Airod Sdn Bhd, Malaysia's leading maintenance repair overhaul (MRO) centre.

"The unveiling of Nadi's new identity," said the company's president Tan Sri Ahmad Johan, "symbolises its establishment and demonstrates that the aerospace and defence industry in Malaysia is consolidating and moving towards achieving a stronger foothold in the global arena."

Airod yesterday also inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with United Kingdom firm BAE Systems to work towards forming a formal partnership with BAE taking an equity investment stake of 20 per cent in Airod.

The MoU, witnessed by Dr Mahathir, was signed by Ahmad and BAE Systems' director of international partnerships Alex Findlay.

Through this MoU, a joint venture company will be set up for total support of the Hawk aircraft maintenance activities operated by the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF).

The range of potential activities covered by the MoU include design, development and implementation.

The two companies will study wider areas of aircraft support, aimed at bringing regional businesses into the joint-venture company.

Findlay said he viewed the agreement as the "next step" in BAE Systems' long-term partnership aspirations in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir also witnessed the signing of two other deals yesterday at the Airod booth in the Mahsuri International Convention and Exhibition centre.

One was a memorandum of agreement between NADI and Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera (LTAT) for equity participation where LTAT would hold a 20 per cent stake in NADI.

Representing LTAT in inking this deal was its chief executive Tan Sri Lodin Wok Kamalludin, while Ahmad signed on behalf of NADI.

Separately, Ahmad also signed a letter of intent on behalf of NADI with the Governor of Jakarta Bapak Sutiyoso, for the city of Jakarta to purchase two Mi-171 helicopters costing up to RM20 million.