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Mahathir and Siti Hasmah with Sheikh Muszaphar.

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Spectacular Lima delights Dr M

LANGKAWI: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed delight over the progress shown by the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (Lima) 2007 exhibition, saying it has become increasingly popular among those in the maritime and aerospace industries.

The former prime minister said the ninth edition of Lima under way here had provided more exhibition space to cater to an increase in the number of local and foreign participants.

"Lima is progressing well ... It seems that Lima has become a permanent biennial event for Malaysia and proven to be popular, too," he told reporters after visiting the exhibition yesterday.

Lima 2007 kicked off on Tuesday with the participation of 450 defence companies from about 20 countries. Its aerospace segment is being held at the Mahsuri International Exhibition and Convention Centre, and the maritime portion takes place at the Awana Porto Malai.

Mahathir, who mooted the idea of organising Lima, held for the first time on the resort island in 1991, said the event had spurred economic activities in Langkawi to the extent that all hotel rooms had been fully booked for the week.

Earlier, Mahathir and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali were greeted by the country's first astronaut, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor Sheikh Mustapha.