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Najib: Best maritime show so far

We have come a long way since the first edition, says Prime Minister

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LANGKAWI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak hailed this year's edition of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA 2015), which sees the participation of a record-breaking 512 companies from 36 countries, as the best since its inception in 1991.

A total of 110 planes and 78 vessels are also on display.

He said the number of participating companies this year exceeded the 433 registered for the last edition two years ago.

"LIMA 2015 has seen many firsts and, with the much diverse exhibition this time around, it is the best LIMA we have ever had," he said at the opening ceremony at the tarmac of the Langkawi International Airport here.

He said LIMA had come a long way since its inception in 1991 when he, as the defence minister then, was tasked by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to organise the first LIMA show.

Najib quipped that he had had a far more difficult task organising the first edition of LIMA than the present Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein had experienced in organising the latest edition.

"I had to build from ground zero, including ensuring that a hotel was constructed in



Impressive: Najib (centre) with (from left) Liow, China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation deputy general manager Bill Ren, China Ambassador to Malaysia Huang Huikang, Armed Forces chief Gen Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin and China Defence Attache Senior Colonel Chen Wei looking at an aircraft carrier model at the corporation's booth at LIMA 2015.

50 days," he said, drawing laughter from the audience.

Najib also launched the Malaysian Aerospace Industry Blueprint (2015-2030), and signed

a plaque which symbolised its launch, which focuses on the country's aspirations to become the leading aerospace nation in South-East Asia by 2030.



Najib said Malaysia's aerospace industry is projected to contribute RM32.5bil in revenue and provide 32,000 high-income jobs by 2030.

"Last year, the industry generated RM19bil in revenue, RM4.2bil in investment and provided over 19,500 jobs.

"To underline the Government's commitment to this vision, the Cabinet recently approved the establishment of the National Aerospace Coordinating Agency."

The agency will be tasked with implementing the blueprint and will become the new secretariat for the Malaysian Aerospace Council, he said.

Najib also said that in 2013 alone, the shipbuilding and ship repair industry recorded a turnover of RM8.36bil.

Also present during the opening ceremony were Dr Mahathir, Cabinet ministers, including Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and other dignitaries.