

# PM IMPRESSED WITH NATION'S DEFENCE COMPANIES

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Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad testing a virtual reality headset at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition yesterday. PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

We are capable of making defence products that can be exported, says Dr M

**LANGKAWI**

**T**UN Dr Mahathir Mohamad is impressed with the capabilities of local aerospace and maritime industry players, and it is all thanks to the Langkawi International Aerospace and Maritime Exhibition (Lima).  
The prime minister said he had toured the booths at both segments of the exhibition and was impressed by just how far Malaysia's industry has come.  
"Since we have had Lima, our

industry has improved tremendously. We are capable of producing defence products that can be exported to the world.  
"With our record, we hope that we can continue and reap the benefits of having Lima."  
Dr Mahathir said from what he saw of this year's Lima so far, it was one of the best exhibitions since the inception of the series in 1991.  
He said it was hoped that Lima would continue to help grow the nation's aerospace and maritime industries, bring in investments

and allow Malaysian technology to improve.  
With the end of trade days for the biennial exhibition, it was announced that Lima this year had seen more than RM4 billion worth of deals being struck either by the government or from business-to-business. This surpassed the amount set in 2017.  
Saying that he was amazed by what he saw when he toured booths set up by Malaysian companies at the exhibition, Dr Mahathir touched on one example.  
"I see how we have developed a control tower (system)... how

they control flights.  
"I am told now the control tower at airports (is so easy that it) can be done by someone without much education... as long as he has the interest (in learning the system), he can take off and land planes."  
Asked if there were any plans to export Malaysian talent overseas, Dr Mahathir said no such discussion had taken place.  
"But we hope that those who have the expertise will return to Malaysia to help build our abilities in the aerospace industry."  
Asked if having an arms indus-

try would help spur the nation's economy, Dr Mahathir said in a way, it would.  
"The arms industry requires knowledge of technology and modern systems, and if you want to become a developed country, you have to have command of this," he said.  
*Page 1 pic: The silhouette of a Sukhoi Su-30 jet fighter is revealed by the first beams of the rising sun at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition 2019 yesterday.*