

**Malaysia Intends To Send Second Astronaut To International Space Station**  
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SEREMBAN, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Government intends to send a second astronaut to the International Space Station to conduct scientific research by next year-end.

To this effect, the science, technology and innovation ministry will submit a proposal to the government, says Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Abu Bakar Mohamad Diah.

He said the ministry was currently working out the details through meetings, discussions and consultations with scientists, academics and those involved in determining the appropriate types of research to be carried out by the nation's second astronaut.

"We need to justify what the second programme is, based on the success of the first astronaut programme. So, it means that the mission should be different.

"We have to gather information and new proposals can be sent in, because this second mission is fully funded by the Malaysian Government and not offset by the Russian Government as was the case in the previous mission," he said.

Abu Bakar was speaking at a press conference after opening the UKM Carnival in Space, in conjunction with the Negeri Sembilan state-level 8th Anniversary of the National Astronaut here Friday.

Also present were National Astronaut Datuk Dr Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor Sheikh Mustapha, Kuala Pilah Member of Parliament Datuk Seri Hasan Malek and state public utilities, environment, cooperatives and consumerism standing committee chairman Datuk Abu Ubaidah Redza.

Abu Bakar said the second mission should be more complex than the first, and meaningful to the development of science and technology in the country.

Meanwhile, Abu Bakar said today's programme was one of the approaches to promote science development in the country.

"Space exploration is important for science in the future, and this is part of the success we have achieved," he noted.

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