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( PRIME MINISTER )

EVENT: THE LANGKAWI INTERNATIONAL MARITIME & AEROSPACE  
EXHIBITION 1991 - LIMA

VENUE: PULAU LANGKAWI, KEDAH

DATE: 11 NOV 1991

TIME:

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku Sultan,  
Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku Sultanah,  
Ampun Tuanku beribu-ribu ampun, sembah patik mohon diampun.  
Patik merafak sembah mengalu-alukan keberangkatan Kebawah  
Duli-Duli Tuanku, dan seterusnya menjunjung kasih atas  
limpah perkenan Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku  
berangkat ke majlis ini.

Ampun Tuanku, patek dengan penuh takzim memohon izin untuk  
berucap kepada hadirin sekalian. Ampun Tuanku.

Excellencies;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Langkawi, Malaysia, the newest destination  
for the tourists seeking a relaxed holiday. Welcome to LIMA  
91, the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace  
Exhibition, 1991.

2. You may ask why there is a need for yet another air  
show. Worldwide there is a surfeit of air shows. Now in  
the Far East, air shows are becoming almost a dime a dozen.  
At the rate we are going airplanes will have to be built  
purely for exhibition and aircraft manufacturers will have  
to spend more time flying from one exhibition to another,  
not to speak of Defence Ministers and defence chiefs from  
neighbouring countries and elsewhere.

3. When the idea of an air show in Langkawi was mooted, it  
was felt that there was a special need to exhibit aircrafts  
which may interest a region that is not only getting more  
affluent but the geography of which makes air commuting not  
just a convenience but a necessity.

4. It is acknowledged that the South East and East Asia  
regions are the most dynamic in the world. When other parts  
of the world barely grow economically, these Asian regions  
regularly register high and even double digit growth. And  
the growth is consistent and is most likely to continue.

5. Geographically these two regions are fragmented and road  
and rail linkages are so poor that most travelling has to be

done by air. Within each country domestic air routes are fairly well served, even when the countries are categorised as developing countries.

6. Today in Malaysia a padi farmer thinks nothing of flying from his state to Kuala Lumpur in the morning to return late at night. It may be merely visiting sick relatives or attending some meeting with Government officials or whatever. The fact is that air travel has become an accepted form of travel even for the low-income.

7. The same is true for the bigger ASEAN countries. Certainly it is the most convenient means of travel between the ASEAN countries.

8. With increasing affluence, domestic tourism is picking up. A fair number of domestic tourists travel by air. There is an increasing demand for the provincial airports to be linked by commuter planes. And commuter lines are also required to link the international airports with outlying districts and provinces.

9. The economic growth of the region is largely due to private enterprises. Some of the private companies (i.e. the non-Government public limited companies) in the region are big names even by Fortune Magazine standards. Executives of these large corporations have to travel and travel fast without being constrained by airline schedules.

10. Already some companies own small propeller-driven or jet aircrafts and helicopters. It is not unreasonable to think that in the near future more companies will want to own aircraft individually or jointly. And, of course, small aircraft charters are going to be more popular.

11. Flying is being encouraged by all the Governments in the region. It is not only because it is a great sport but with the rapid expansion of airline of the regions there will be a need for more airline pilots in the future. Already the national airlines in the region are having to hire pilots from outside the region.

12. The region's needs can only be met if more youths take up flying. Trainer aircrafts are therefore going to be in demand more and more. There will be a need for basic trainers as well as more advanced ones.

13. The amateur flying schools and flying academies in the region are unable to cope with the demand for places. As more schools are set up and existing ones enlarged the demand for all kinds of training is going to increase. Malaysia welcomes the setting up of flying schools from abroad in joint ventures with local partners.

14. Between flying as a sport and the need for pilots for commercial airlines in the region not only will trainer

planes be in great demand, but also the aircrafts used in sports flying and sky-diving.

15. Clearly the demand for small aircrafts, including commuters of all sizes, will be increasing in the East Asian region in the near future. It is for this reason that the Malaysian Government considers the holding of an airshow for small aircrafts appropriate and timely. We had in fact thought of an Oshkosh East. However, when the exhibition became known, a lot of interest was shown by companies wishing to exhibit military aircrafts as well as large commercial jets.

Ladies and gentlemen,

16. Malaysia entertains ideas about pioneering new routes in the South. Today it is necessary for travellers from South-East-Asia wishing to go to the southern part of Africa or South America to go north to Europe or North America first and then fly south. Admittedly there are presently not many of such travellers whether tourists or businessmen. But people will travel if it is convenient and cheap. Obviously it is neither convenient nor cheap to fly north in order to go south.

17. But the southern route poses problems because of the vast expanse of water that has to be crossed. If there are large numbers of passengers and freight, the present wide-bodied long-range aircraft can be used. But in the initial stages there is very little likelihood for economic demands for such aircraft. The need is therefore for long haul smaller aircraft capable of a maximum of say 150 passengers possibly with combi configuration.

18. Perhaps aircraft like the 757, 737 or BAe 146 with extra fuel tanks could prove suitable. Twin-engined aircrafts flying over vast expanses of water will need some ability to stay afloat should they be forced to land on water. Not being an aircraft engineer I had often wondered why the kind of inflatable floats or sponsons sometimes available on helicopters cannot be fitted to keep aircrafts afloat longer in the water. It is a silly idea, but I would feel much safer if I think that engine failure over the oceans would result in the aircraft staying afloat long enough for location by rescue vessels to reach it.

Ladies and gentlemen,

19. LIMA is, of course, not only an aerospace exhibition, but a marine exhibition as well. This is the first time that the two have been combined. Langkawi is most suited for this combined exhibition.

20. Again we believe that the increasing affluence of the people in this region will make ownership of pleasure boats more common. Presently such crafts are not being promoted and marketed in this region to take advantage of the potential.

21. Malaysia imposes no tax on pleasure crafts. Foreigners are welcome to register their boats in Malaysia. Of course, they can keep their boats here as well. We intend to encourage the setting up of marinas and boat servicing and maintenance facilities in Malaysia, in particular in Langkawi in the West Coast, and Terengganu in the East Coast. Additionally Labuan, the Off-Shore International Financial Centre, will be equipped with similar facilities.

22. Yacht racing and therefore ownership is getting more popular. Several yacht clubs are very active on the West Coast of Malaysia. Boat rentals for both power boats and sail boats are also getting popular.

23. With all the countries of South-East-Asia bounded by very long coastlines, patrol-boats with all the sophisticated equipments that they must have are in great demand. The boat yards of the region are not sophisticated enough at the moment. Patrol-boats and other small police, customs, immigration and naval crafts will be in continuous demand. A whole new industry is needed to meet this demand.

24. While it may be easier to buy the boats from abroad, convenience and good business sense demand that such boats be built in the region. Numerous local partners and investors would, I am sure, welcome the idea of joint-ventures to build all kinds of crafts here.

25. Malaysia has numerous incentives for such investments. Additionally we have a highly trainable and disciplined workforce able to handle all language problems. As with the very many investors who have invested in all kinds of manufacturing industries in Malaysia, I am quite sure that anyone investing in boat-building or other naval products in Malaysia will not regret his decision.

Ladies and gentlemen,

26. There is a third reason for LIMA 91. We are promoting Langkawi for selected aerospace industry and business. Ample land has been acquired next to this airport for the purpose.

27. As Langkawi is a free trade area, imports and exports are completely taxfree. Components or products can be brought in for processing or sale and reexported without any hassle.

28. For this purpose we intend to allow expatriates to take up temporary residence here. Bungalows and condominiums are being built for sale or rental or time-sharing in order to enable expatriates to live comfortably. Imported foods and supermarkets will meet the needs of the expatriates as indeed throughout Malaysia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

29. I am sure that you will appreciate now why LIMA 91 is not just another aerospace show or boat show. I cannot guarantee that you will make a sale here. But I am quite sure that there will be a lot of potential buyers whom you can cultivate. After all, one does not decide to buy an aeroplane or a yacht just like that. They cost a pretty penny and the people who come by these pretty pennies are not the kind who will throw them away.

30. I wish all exhibitors all the best. Even if you make no sale you will have a nice relaxed vacation in Langkawi, the 99 enchanted islands of Malaysia.  
Thank you.