

'Aerospace City will boost aviation'

LANGKAWI: The establishment of the Asia Aerospace City (AAC) in Malaysia will not only benefit the local aviation industry, but will also be a game changer in the Asia Pacific region.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said the AAC would help fulfil the needs of the ever-growing aerospace industry in the region.

"The AAC targets a direct gross national income of RM1.1 billion and RM1.16 billion in investments, which would lead to the creation of 3,368 highly skilled jobs," he said in his keynote address at a forum on the aerospace industry.

The forum, organised by the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) was also attended by Mustapa's deputy, Datuk Lee Chee Leong, and MIDA chief executive officer Datuk Azman Mahmud.

More importantly to the region, the AAC would provide sustainable, industry-ready human capital solutions, said Mustapa.

He said this would be achieved through collaborations with original equipment manufacturers and industry-led academic institutions in professional development programmes.

Mustapa said the AAC would complement other training institutions and varsities in the country, such as the Advanced Aeronautics Technology Centre, Aero Precision Resources, Universiti Sains Malaysia, UniKL and Univerisiti Putra Malaysia, among others.

He said the aerospace industry's potential was vast and would continue to grow, especially in the region.

"The Asia-Pacific region is set to become the world's largest air travel market. Boeing predicted that the Asia Pacific would need almost 13,000 new planes, worth US\$1.9 trillion (RM6.7 trillion) over the next decade.

"During this period, the region would account for 36 per cent of global deliveries of passenger and freight planes."

Mustapa said this would create demand for maintenance, repair and overhaul services, engineering, electronics, composite materials, as well as manufacturing and systems integration.

"Based on this development, more talent programmes are needed to ensure a continuous supply of competent workforce," he said, adding that the government had taken initiatives to fulfil this need, such as setting up the AAC.