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PUBLICATION:	BERNAMA.COM	SECTION:	NEWS
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## Thales Confident Of Malaysia's Future

By Azizul Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, April 20 (Bernama) -- France's multinational company, Thales, is confident of Malaysia's future and positive that there are plenty of opportunities to further grow its business in the country.

Thales Malaysia, Country Director, Nicolas de Fougereux, said beside offering reliable workforce, the group also found Malaysia to be a stable country with a competitive market.

"As an industrial group, we are confident of the future of this country. For Thales group, Malaysia is among top priority country, in terms of investment and growth of the company in the future.

"Malaysia also emphasises on innovation. All these conditions make the headquarter decide that this country is worth to invest in," he told Bernama on the sidelines of the ongoing 15th Defence Services Asia 2016 Exhibition and Conference (DSA 2016) here.

de Fougereux said the fact that Thales was very confident of the local capabilities had shifted the company's strategy here towards setting up a local industrial footprint starting this year.

"We absolutely have no problem with the labour force in Malaysia. Indeed, we started having several local engineers that really can speak French," he said.

Present in Malaysia since 1980, Thales proposes solutions and technologies for defence, security, transportation and aerospace.

Thales employs over 250 people, including personnel from its joint venture with the Sapura Group in the field of communication systems.

In 2011, Thales was awarded a major contract for the integration of an advanced electronic architecture system for the 257 new 8x8 armoured-wheeled vehicles of the Malaysian army (the AV-8 programme).

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A part of this programme involves knowledge transfer to DRB-HICOM Defence Technologies Sdn Bhd (DEFTECH)'s engineers.

"The MoU signed at DSA 2016 will see Thales establishing a Systems Integration Laboratory (SIL) at DEFTECH's facility in Pekan, enabling them to eventually gain expertise in integration, verification, validation and qualification of electronic components.

He said this was testament to the strong capabilities Thales saw in Malaysia's workforce and the commitment to giving self-reliance to the partners it worked with as the company continued to grow its industrial footprint in Malaysia.

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