

by hand



A T45 destroyer being launched on the River Clyde, in Glasgow, Scotland.

MoU will bring UK T45 destroyer technology here

KUALA-LUMPUR: When the United Kingdom's latest Type 45 (T45) destroyer was launched recently, one thing was not immediately obvious. Although the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) had never operated destroyers nor announced plans to do so, the T45 will benefit the RMN.

The technology used in the production of the latest T45 — the *Dauntless* — will be used in the production of the RMN's latest frigates.

The T45 anti-air warfare destroyers have been built by BAE Systems of the UK with the same company involved in the frigate programme for the RMN.

The Malaysian government usually negotiates a transfer of technology clause for procurement deals which it did with its frigate programme.

BAE Systems recently received a letter of intent from the government to provide two frigates via an industrial partnership with Labuan Shipyard & Engineering Sdn Bhd (LSE).

A transfer of technology is part of the deal and this technology will include those developed for the T45 destroyers.

Today, BAE Systems will be signing a memorandum of understanding with Realmaid Sdn Bhd, the owners of LSE, to be witnessed by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib

Razak, who is also Defence Minister.

Although details of the MoU are unavailable, it is understood that it concerns cooperation between the companies in the maritime industrial field, with the first project being the RMN frigate programme.

BAE Systems managing director (Asia Pacific) Steve Meighan told the *New Straits Times* he believed the RMN and the maritime and defence industries would benefit from the transfer of technology.

"The T45 has been built with the most modern, sophisticated production techniques. These techniques will be

transferred as part of the technology package to our Malaysian partners.

"Thus, the most modern naval shipbuilding technologies will soon exist in Malaysia.

"There are, of course, very key, central equipment technologies that will be common between the T45 and the new RMN frigates. These will be proven and developed on the T45 prior to integration on the RMN vessels," he said.

"Similarly, this equipment will be supported by Malaysian companies as part of the transfer of technology package."

Meighan said BAE Systems was confident LSE would be more than able to undertake

the frigate programme, once certain measures were taken.

The entire programme is expected to take about five years, but LSE needs to upgrade the infrastructure at its shipyard in Labuan before the programme can get started. The upgrading works is expected to take six months.

The *Dauntless* is the second of eight T45 destroyers which will, in concert with the UK's Future Aircraft Carrier, provide the backbone of the RMN's air defences for much of the first half of the 21st century.

The vessels are expected to be in service with the RMN until at least 2040.