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Singapore Airshow to feature top-notch speakers at conferences

By Wong Mun Wai, Channel NewsAsia | Posted: 16 January 2008 19:41 hrs

SINGAPORE : A list of high-flying speakers has been lined up for a series of conferences ahead of the first Singapore Airshow next month.

The experts, both from military and civil aviation industries, are expected to make several big announcements.

These include the latest on unmanned aerial vehicles and even details of Virgin Atlantic's plans to go to outer space.

Also speaking at the event will be Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew and Second Defence Minister Dr Ng Eng Hen.

Singapore Airshow 2008 will be held from 19 to 24 February.

Airbus, manufacturer of the new A380, is specially flying in an aircraft for the Singapore Airshow. Only a selected group will get to fly on that special Airbus plane, which will take off from Changi Airbase West.

Besides the European giant, the event is attracting other big names. And the organisers say their expenditure on accommodation as well as food and beverage should surpass S\$50 million.

However, the people behind the first Singapore Airshow are not setting a target for the number of deals to be signed.

A record of over S\$23 billion in deals was achieved at the last Asian Aerospace show held in Singapore two years ago.

Jimmy Lau, Managing Director, Singapore Airshow, said: "I hope to see a slew of announcements to be made. Not only in the sector of sales and options taken, but certainly we are looking at various policy agreements that may come out of that week."

The halls at the venue will be home to more than 900 exhibitors and tens of thousands of trade visitors next month.

Ahead of the official opening of the Airshow, the halls will hold various conferences. Participants will focus on the future of civil and defence aviation, international defence procurement as well as challenges faced by armies in the digital age.

There will even be a discussion on the latest technology in space engineering and design.

And since the original plans, an extra 2,000 square metres of exhibit space has been added.

And off the ground, there will be a lot of action in the skies as well.

The audience will be entertained by the likes of crowd-favourite Black Knights from Singapore and a team from the Royal Australian Air Force everyday from 12:30pm. - CNA/ch



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