

NO77: (F)
MAHATHIR-NAVY ۞'۞'۞'

LUMUT, DEC. 10 (BERNAMA) -- THE NAVAL BASE HERE, DESCRIBED AS BEING THE BEST IN THE REGION, WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH THE MOST MODERN FACILITIES, SOME OF WHICH ARE NOT EVEN FOUND IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

THESE INCLUDE THE 'DEGAUSSING RANGE' -- A FACILITY WHICH CAN NEUTRALISE THE MAGNETIC FIELD SURROUNDING SHIPS TO PREVENT THE VESSELS FROM BEING ATTRACTED TO MINES.

DISCLOSING THIS TODAY, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE NEAREST COUNTRIES WITH SUCH A FACILITY WERE INDIA AND AUSTRALIA.

BESIDES THE RANGE, THE BASE WOULD ALSO HAVE OTHER SOPHISTICATED FACILITIES SUCH AS THE SOUND BEAM.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER TOURING THE \$1,400 MILLION BASE FOR MORE THAN FOUR HOURS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE DEFENCE MINISTER, EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER THE PROGRESS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF FACILITIES AT THE BASE.

ALTHOUGH THE BASE COVERING A TOTAL OF 1,800 ACRES IS SCHEDULED TO BE FULLY OPERATIONAL BY 1985, HE HOPED THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED BY THE MIDDLE OF 1984. -- BERNAMA MORE 1635/A1

MAHATHIR-NAVY 2 LUMUT

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD AWARDED TO A WEST GERMAN FIRM THE TENDERS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DOCKYARD COSTING \$100 MILLION AT THE BASE.

WORK ON THE PROJECT WOULD BEGIN THIS MONTH AND IT HAD BEEN TARGETTED FOR COMPLETION IN LATE 1984.

WHEN COMPLETED, THE DOCKYARD WOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE REPAIRS OF ALL THE VESSELS OWNED BY THE ROYAL MALAYSIAN NAVY.

ON NEW SHIPS FOR THE NAVY, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD PLACED ORDERS FOR WARSHIPS OF THE CORVETTE CLASS (SHIPS SMALLER THAN THE FRIGATES) FROM GERMANY AND MINEHUNTERS FROM ITALY.

HE ASSURED THAT THE MINEHUNTERS WHICH WERE BEING BUILT BY THE INTERMARINE SHIPYARD AT SARZANA, ITALY WOULD BE DELIVERED ON SCHEDULE. -- BERNAMA MORE 1730/LK

NO91: (F)
MAHATHIR-NAVY 3 LUMUT

IT WAS REPORTED A FEW MONTHS AGO THAT THE MINEHUNTERS COSTING NEARLY \$100 MILLION EACH, MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO BE DELIVERED BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT PASS UNDER A LOW BRIDGE SPANNING THE MAGRA RIVER BETWEEN THE ITALIAN SHIPYARD AND THE OPEN SEAS.

DATUK DR. MAHATHIR SAID: "IT'S ALRIGHT, THEY WILL PASS UNDER THE BRIDGE, I CAN ASSURE YOU."

DURING THE TOUR, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR VISITED THE K.D. PELANDUK (RMN'S TRAINING SCHOOL), ITS ENGINEERING TRAINING CENTRES, THE HOUSING COMPLEX FOR THE RMN PERSONNEL AND THE JETTY.

HE ALSO DROPPED IN AT THE RECRUITS' DINING HALL WHERE HE CHATTED WITH SOME OF THE RECRUITS WHO WERE HAVING LUNCH.

EARLIER ON ARRIVAL, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR INSPECTED A PARADE MOUNTED BY 104 NAVY PERSONNEL LED BY LT. KOM. MOKHTAR ABDUL WAHID.

HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY LABOUR AND MANPOWER MINISTER DATUK RICHARD HO, WHO IS ALSO MP FOR LUMUT, DEPUTY DEFENCE MINISTER ABANG ABU BAKAR, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF DEFENCE MINISTRY TAN SRI MOHAMAD YUSOF ABDUL RAHMAN AND THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF NAVY (MANPOWER) LAKSAMANA PERTAMA HARON DATUK DR. SALLEH. -- BERNAMA 1733/LK