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LOCAL (BERNAMA EX)

BY MOHD. TUAH JAIS

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BINTULU, JUNE 22 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) IS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE SMALL NUMBER OF LOCALS ENGAGED IN THE VARIOUS PROJECTS IN BINTULU.

+IF THE KOREANS CAN COME ALL THE WAY TO WORK HERE, THE MALAYSIANS, ESPECIALLY SARAWAKIANS, SHOULD BE HERE TO BUILD THEIR OWN STATE. + HE TOLD BERNAMA TODAY AFTER VISITING THE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS (LNG) AND PORT PROJECTS AT TANJUNG KIDURONG NEAR HERE.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO TRAIN LOCALS BUT THE PEOPLE MUST BE WILLING TO WORK HERE.

+OF COURSE THE WORK IS HARD BUT THEY SHOULD HAVE SOME PIONEERING SPIRIT. + HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR IS HAPPY WITH PROGRESS OF THE LNG AND DEEP SEA PORT PROJECTS, WHICH WERE 49 PERCENT AND 45 PERCENT COMPLETED RESPECTIVELY.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THE TWO MULTI-BILLION RINGGIT PROJECTS WOULD BE COMPLETED ON SCHEDULE.

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ON HIGH COST OF LIVING IN BINTULU, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SUBSIDISE ESSENTIAL ITEMS TO BRING DOWN THE PRICES. BUT IT WOULD NOT GIVE ANY SPECIAL ALLOWANCE TO FEDERAL OFFICERS SERVING HERE.

+WE ARE NOT GOING TO GIVE THEM SPECIAL ALLOWANCES BECAUSE IF WE GIVE SPECIAL ALLOWANCES FOR BINTULU, WE WILL HAVE DEMANDS FOR SPECIAL ALLOWANCES TO SERVE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. + HE ADDED.

THE SARAWAK GOVERNMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS BEEN GIVING SPECIAL ALLOWANCES TO STATE OFFICERS POSTED HERE FROM APRIL THIS YEAR.

EARLIER, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WAS BRIEFED ON PROGRESS OF THE LNG PLANT BY MANAGING DIRECTOR M.B. HASHIM AND THE PORT BY GENERAL MANAGER CAPT. KAMARUDDIN MOHAMED NOOR.

ACCOMPANYING HIM ON THE VISIT WERE SARAWAK CHIEF MINISTER DATUK AMAR TAIB HARMUD AND FEDERAL MINISTERS INCLUDING TRANSPORT MINISTER DATUK LEE SAN CHOON.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR LEFT FOR KUCHING BY F28 JET THIS EVENING WHERE HE WAS GIVEN A ROLLING WELCOME BY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AT THE KUCHING AIRPORT.

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SARAWAK DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER ENCIK DANIEL TAJEM, LED STATE CABINET MINISTER IN GREETING THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH, WHO WAS PRESENTED WITH A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS. DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS GARLANDED.

CULTURAL GROUPS FROM THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES GAVE PERFORMANCES INCLUDING THE NGAJAT, SILAT, LION DANCES AND HADRAH DURING THE AIRPORT WELCOMING CEREMONY.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WILL CALL ON SARAWAK YANG DI-PERTUA NEGERI, DATUK PATINGGI TAN SRI HAJI ABDUL RAHMAN YAKUB, AT THE ISTANA TONIGHT.

—BERNAMA 1922/AN