

MAHATHIR-SHIP

82 (V)
KUALA LUMPUR, NOV. 28 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA'S NEWEST SHIPPING LINE, PERBADANAN NASIONAL SHIPPING LINE BHD (PNSL), IS TO OPERATE A PASSENGER/FERRY SERVICE TO LINK ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAYS PNSL HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THIS TO FACILITATE GREATER MOBILITY WITHIN MALAYSIA AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTE TO HASTENING THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION.

THIS WILL BE PART OF ITS +PIVOTAL+ ROLE IN THE OVERALL PROGRAMME TO SPEARHEAD MALAYSIA AS A LEADING MARITIME NATION, HE ADDS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAYS THIS IN HIS MESSAGE TO MARK THE NAMING AND DELIVERY OF PNSL'S FIRST VESSEL, +PERNAS ARANG+, IN JAPAN ON TUESDAY, COINCIDING WITH THE OFFICIAL LAUNCHING OF THE LINE HERE.

IN THE IMMEDIATE YEARS AHEAD PNSL WILL ALSO BE INVOLVED IN BULK SHIPMENTS FOR THE PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM-RELATED INDUSTRIES, THE MOVEMENT OF PALM OIL AND PALM PRODUCTS, VARIOUS CHEMICALS, CEMENT, IRON AND OTHER ORES, COAL AND STEEL.

--MORE 1610/AN

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+THERE MAY WELL BE OTHER SERVICES BEING PLANNED PARTICULARLY WITH THE VIEW TO BE IN A WELL-PLACED POSITION WHEN THE WORLD ECONOMY RECOVERS FROM ITS PRESENT DEPRESSED STATE+, HE ADDS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAYS THE GOVERNMENT IS HAPPY WITH THE PROGRESS BEING MADE BY PNSL AND WILL LIKE TO SEE IT GROW INTO AN EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION.

+THE SPEEDY MANNER IN WHICH PNSL HAS GONE ABOUT ITS TASKS IS VERY COMMENDABLE AND HAS MADE A CONSIDERABLE IMPACT AND RAISED MUCH INTEREST AMONG THE SHIPPING COMMUNITY+, HE ADDS.

HIS ADVICE TO THE LINE IS TO ENSURE A HIGH STANDARD OF STAFF DISCIPLINE AND PRODUCTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE COMPANY'S OPERATION, AS +THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY+.

SUCH AN EFFORT, WHILE IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DRIVE FOR A CLEAN, EFFICIENT AND TRUSTWORTHY ADMINISTRATION, WILL ALSO HELP EXPAND MALAYSIA'S TRADE AND REDUCE THE LARGE OUTFLOW OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE, HE SAYS.

--MORE 1615/AN

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IT WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING THE AIMS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF EQUITY AND THROUGH THE GENERATION OF MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES REQUIRING GREATER SKILLS AND EXPERTISE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S WIFE, DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH, WILL NAME THE +PERNAS ARANG+, A 64,000-DEADWEIGHT-TONNE BULK CARRIER, AT THE NIPPON KOKAN'S TSU SHIPYARD NEAR NAGOYA.

PNSL, A WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF PERBADANAN NASIONAL BERHAD (PERNAS), RECENTLY RAISED A US\$20 MILLION (M\$48 MILLION) LOAN FROM A CONSORTIUM OF FIVE BANKS FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE VESSEL.

THEY ARE BANK BUMIPUTERA MALAYSIA BERHAD, UNITED MALAYAN BANKING CORPORATION BERHAD, MITSUBISHI TRUST AND BANKING CORPORATION, THE NATIONAL BANK OF AUSTRALIA LTD (SINGAPORE BRANCH) AND TOKAI BANK LTD.

MEANWHILE, THE PNSL GENERAL MANAGER, CAPT. AHMAD SUFIAN, TOLD BERNAMA THAT THE COMPANY WAS INCORPORATED ON MARCH 29 WITH AN AUTHORISED CAPITAL OF \$100 MILLION OF WHICH \$10 MILLION HAD BEEN PAID UP.

THE LINE HAD AT PRESENT A SEA-GOING STAFF STRENGTH OF LESS THAN 100 BUT MORE WOULD BE RECRUITED TO MEET THE MANNING REQUIREMENTS OF FUTURE VESSELS, HE ADDED.

--BERNAMA 1620/AN