

MAHATHIR - HICOM  
BM

BY ZAINOOR SULAIMAN

KEMAMAN, MAY 10 (BERNAMA) -- THE PRIME MINISTER TODAY INAUGURATED THE INSTALLATION OF THE MAIN PLANT OF THE STEEL COMPLEX BEING DEVELOPED AT TELUK KALONG NEAR HERE.

THE BILLION-RINGGITHOT BRIQUETTED IRON (HBI) AND STEEL BILLET MANUFACTURING PROJECT BELONGS TO THE TERENGGANU PERWAJA SDN.BHD., A JOINT VENTURE COMPANY OF THE HEAVY INDUSTRIES CORPORATION OF MALAYSIA (HICOM) AND A SYNDICATE OF JAPANESE COMPANIES.

IN BRIEFING (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, HICOM CHAIRMAN TAN SRI JAMIL JAN SAID THE PROJECT WOULD BE OPERATIONAL IN APRIL NEXT, YEAR AND WAS EXPECTED TO HAVE A PRODUCTION CAPACITY OF 600,000 TONNES OF HBI AND 559,000 TONNES OF BILLET BARS A YEAR.

HICOM HOLDS 51 PERCENT OF THE EQUITY OF THE COMPANY, THE TERENGGANU STATE ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 19 PERCENT AND THE JAPANESE SYNDICATE 30 PERCENT.--MORE 2020/HM  
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TAN SRI JAMIL SAID THE COMPANY AT PRESENT HAD A STAFF STRENGTH OF 1,000, INCLUDING 115 AT THE MANAGEMENT LEVEL.

HE SAID THE PROJECT FELL IN LINE WITH THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE LOOK EAST POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS LATER HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT. \*WHEN I CAME HERE A YEAR AGO, NOT EVEN ONE BUILDING HAD BEEN SET UP.\*

ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LOCAL AND FOREIGN WORKERS, HE SAID FOREIGN WORKERS WERE WILLING TO WORK OVERTIME TO COMPLETE THEIR JOBS WHILE THE LOCALS WERE MORE CONCERNED WITH CLOCK-WATCHING.

HE URGED LOCAL WORKERS TO EMULATE THE WORK ATTITUDE OF THEIR FOREIGN COUNTERPARTS SENT TO THIS COUNTRY TO CARRY OUT MAJOR PROJECTS.

HE AGREED THAT JOINT COMMITTEES SHOULD BE SET UP IN ALL INDUSTRIES HAVING A MIX OF LOCAL AND FOREIGN WORKERS SO AS TO ENCOURAGE BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THEM. -- MORE 2100/SL

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ON CLAIMS THAT LOCAL CONTRACTORS, PARTICULARLY BUMIPUTERAS, WERE NOT GIVEN SUB-CONTRACT JOBS IN THE PROJECT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE WAS A POLICY ON THIS AND HE BELIEVED THE TERENGGANU GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO SETTLE THE PROBLEM.

HE STRESSED THAT CONTRACTORS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY PROJECT NEEDED TO MEET THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED.

ASKED WHETHER HICOM PLANNED TO SET UP MORE PROJECTS IN TERENGGANU, HE SAID THAT AS TERENGGANU HAD ALREADY BEEN GIVEN MANY INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS, OTHER STATES SHOULD HAVE THEIR TURN:

THE PRIME MINISTER LATER TOURED THE KEMAMAN PORT NORTH WHARF PROJECT NEAR HERE BEFORE LEAVING FOR PULAU PERHENTIAN WITH HIS DELEGATION. THEY WILL RETURN TO KUALA LUMPUR TOMORROW. -- BERNAMA