

Dr M: Third LNG plant may be set up

NST 10 JUL 1994

From **Zainon Ahmad**

PARIS, Sat. — Malaysia may set up its third Liquefied Natural Gas plant following the recent discovery of more rich gas deposits and in view of increasing demand by the growing economies of the Asia-Pacific region, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said for Malaysia, the world's third largest producer, the future of the LNG trade is also bright given the new emphasis on sustainable development and cleaner fuels. *Foreign Trips*

He said the completion of the on-going second LNG

project in Bintulu will see the doubling of Malaysia's production to some 15.8 million tonnes per annum.

"This will rank Bintulu as the world's largest producer of LNG from a single complex," he said during the launching ceremony of two Petronas LNG tankers built by Chantiers de L'Atlantique shipyard at the French port city of St Nazaire.

The second RM6 billion LNG plant in Bintulu is expected to begin production in January next year, two months ahead of schedule. It is being constructed next to Petronas' first LNG plant which has an annual production capacity of eight million tonnes.

Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah performed the honours by naming the ships *Puteri Delima* and *Puteri Intan*, the first two of the five contracted by Petronas for Chantiers de L'Atlantique to build. After each naming the *doa selamat* was read.

The five tankers are being built at a cost of RM3.4 billion.

With the growing demand for LNG from Malaysia, which has reserves of about 80 trillion cubic feet, Dr Mahathir anticipates a need for more efficient and reliable tankers to transport LNG to fuel the energy-hungry economies.

He said the construction of the tankers in France has

contributed further towards strengthening the firm foundation of trade and co-operation which exists between the country and Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir, who is on a four-day official visit to France, described the naming ceremony as having put in place another stone in the foundation of economic and social ties that have been established between France and Malaysia.

"What we have witnessed today serves to underscore my conviction that there is tremendous potential and opportunities for further co-operation between our two countries," he said.

Among those present dur-

ing the ceremony were Minister of Veterans and War Victims Mr Philippe Mestre, Prefect of Loire Atlantique Mr Alain Ohrel, Mayor of Montoir Mr Hubert Bouyer and Chantiers de L'Atlantique president Jean Noel d'Acremont.

Members of Dr Mahathir's delegation included Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, Law Minister and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Syed Hamid Al-

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE TWO, COL 1 ✓

Learn from expertise of French, says PM

FROM PAGE ONE

bar, Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Chua Jui Meng and businessmen.

The Prime Minister said the naming of the two tankers after precious stones was most appropriate.

He said: "The tankers incorporate the most modern and sophisticated technology available in the LNG tanker industry today. When delivered, they will undoubtedly be the jewels in Malaysia's fleet of LNG

tankers."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysian shipbuilders still have some way to go before they are capable of building such sophisticated LNG carriers but they can gain from the experience and expertise of the French. He hoped the Petronas project team, which was present at the Chantiers de L'Atlantique shipyard through all phases of the construction, had learned their lesson well so that their knowledge and experience could be passed on to others back home.