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MEASAT-2 TO REACH ORBITAL SLOT ON FRIDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- MEASAT-2, Malaysia's second satellite launched on Nov 13, is expected to reach its orbital slot on Friday after successfully completing its first post-launch milestone.

Binariang Satellite Systems Sdn Bhd MEASAT Commercial Operations senior manager Abdul Halim Abdul Hamid said today the apogee kick motor (AKM) on board the satellite was fired on Nov 16 from the Hughes Mission Control Centre in El Segundo, California at 9.52 p.m. (Los Angeles time).

The firing of the AKM would take the spacecraft out of its elliptical geosynchronous orbit and enable it to drift towards its designated orbital slot of 148 degree East, he added.

On reaching orbital slot, MEASAT-2 would be reorientated and its solar panel and reflector deployed after which in-orbit testing would begin.

MEASAT-2 had a perfect launch from Kourou in French Guiana witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Binariang Satellite Systems is a wholly owned subsidiary of Binariang Sdn Bhd which is developing a 21st century communications infrastructure in Malaysia.

When completed, the integrated infrastructure would comprise MEASAT and its associated ground systems; Maxis Mobile, Malaysia's first GSM network and Maxis Fiber Network, a fixed wireline infrastructure providing both domestic and international services.

Binariang is a joint venture between Malaysian shareholders and the American Baby Bell, US West International, which has years of experience in the telecommunications industry.

The local shareholders, comprising the interests of Tunku Mahmud Tunku Besar Burhanuddin, members of the late Tun Fuad Stephens' family and trusts associated with the family of T. Ananda Krishnan, collectively hold 80 percent equity in the company while US West holds the remaining 20 percent.

US West International is part of the US West Media Group involved in domestic and international cable and telephony, wireless communications and directory and information services.

US West's other major group, US West Communications, provides telecommunications services to more than 25 million customers in 14 western and midwestern states. -- BERNAMA

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