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Mahathir-Thai

MALAYSIA AND THAILAND SET EXAMPLE IN RESOLVING TERRITORIAL DISPUTE

ALOR SETAR, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Thailand today sealed two agreements in a landmark treaty that could serve as a role model to the international community on how to resolve territorial disputes between two neighbouring countries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said: "We have just signed the two agreements which will enable us to together exploit the joint development area, which is an overlapping area in the Gulf of Thailand."

Both governments had reached an agreement that the exploitation should be done together and the products shared on a 50:50 basis, he said at a joint press conference with Thai Prime Minister, Chuan Leekpai, here.

The signing of the two agreements at Wisma Darul Aman was witnessed by both prime ministers.

Chuan said: "There are many areas in the world where neighbours have territorial disputes but this is the first time that two neighbouring countries have been able to agree on sharing the benefits.

"This is a good moment for others, the benefits will accrue not only to the two countries but can serve as a model for the international community to try to resolve all the territorial disputes that exist around the world in a practical and beneficial manner."

The two agreements were signed by Petroliam Nasional Berhad (Petronas) and the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT). One was a gas sales agreement with the developers of Block A-18 in the Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area (JDA) to jointly purchase natural gas from the offshore block in JDA.

The other was a shareholding agreement for the development of the Trans-Thailand-Malaysia (TTM) Gas Pipeline system and two gas separation plants at Chana, near Songkhla, in Thailand.

On his meeting with Chuan before the news conference, Dr Mahathir said they discussed the fishing industry, peacekeeping troops in East Timor and rail and other communications between the two countries.

Generally, both parties were very positively about the prospects of closer cooperation, he added.

Chuan said they felt that the fishing industry was another potential area to cooperate for mutual benefit.

-- BERNAMA

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