

Asian countries should have power

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■ From Ramlan Said in Islamabad

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THERE should be power interconnection among Asian countries to help support one another in times of power crisis, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister suggested firstly, it could be between neighbours and ultimately involving all nations in the region.

"Hopefully, we can one day see the whole of Asia connected by power lines, helping each other in the true

spirit of camaraderie and friendship towards uplifting the quality of life."

Malaysia, he said, has established power interconnections with its closest neighbours and is currently spearheading an Asean interconnection.

"Electrical energy, a vital ingredient in infrastructure development, knows no boundaries. This energy has the power to heal the socio-economic woes of those in need of it," he said in a message in conjunction with the inauguration of Tenaga Nasional Berhad's wholly-owned power plant in Pakistan today

The plant, operated by Liberty Power Ltd, cost US\$450 million (RM1.7 billion) to build and was awarded to Tenaga Nasional in 1995. It is the company's sole investment overseas.

Tenaga Nasional, through TNB Power Daharki, was the major stakeholder of Liberty Power Limited with minority interest held by AI-DEC (10 per cent), Liberty Power Holdings (20 per cent) and Thames Road (8 per cent).

However, in 1999, TNB Power Daharki became the sole owner after buying over the minority interests.

interconnection, says Dr M

The construction of the first phase with an installed capacity of 235MW commenced in 1996 and was completed for commissioning tests in April last year while commercial operations began in September of the same year.

Currently operating at 80 per cent capacity, the plant is feeding 210MW into the national grid owned by Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority.

On the success of the Liberty Power plant, Dr Mahathir said it would not have materialised without the support, trust and confidence of

the people and the Government of Pakistan in Malaysian entrepreneurs.

"It has now been proved that Pakistan has a conducive environment for foreign investment and I hope the successful implementation of this plant will be the forerunner for various other investments from Malaysia in the near future."

In his message, President Pervez Musharraf hoped Malaysia would continue to take advantage of the good economic climate in Pakistan and help the country's transition into a developed nation.

He described the successful completion of the plant as an important landmark in the annals of cordial and harmonious relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia.

"Malaysia and its people have always rallied behind Pakistan when in need in the true spirit of Islamic brotherhood.

"They have always shown great concern in our efforts to progress and develop to be in tandem with developing countries."

Musharraf said Malaysia had taken positive steps to answer Pakistan's call for investment.