

08 MAY 2003

Mahathir-Bintulu

DR MAHATHIR ARRIVES IN BINTULU TO OPEN PETRONAS LNG COMPLEX

BINTULU, May 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today to open the RM16.6 billion Petronas liquefied natural gas (LNG) complex.

His executive jet landed at the spanking new Bintulu Airport where he then boarded a helicopter to proceed to the complex. He was met at the airport by Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud.

It was Dr Mahathir's first major official function since returning to work on Monday after a two-month vacation.

Present at the ceremony was Petronas president and chief executive officer Tan Sri Hassan Marican.

The complex, the world's largest LNG production facility on a single location, covers 276 ha, equivalent to 402 football fields.

It comprises three plants -- MNLG 1, MNLG 2 and MNLG 3. They have a production capacity of 8.1 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), 7.8 MTPA and 6.8 MTPA respectively.

The complex is complete with storage tanks and loading jetties for the LNG to be stored and exported to overseas customers via special tankers.

The three plants currently employ about 850 people, 80 per cent of whom are Sarawakians.

Since its inception in 1983, to March 31 this year, some 188 million tonnes of LNG have been shipped from the complex, generating US\$36.1 billion (RM137.18 billion) in revenue.

Most of the LNG are exported to Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, where Malaysia's share of their LNG markets stands at 25 per cent, 49 per cent and 21 per cent respectively.

Malaysia is at present the third largest LNG exporter in the world, accounting for 13 per cent or 15 million tonnes per annum of global exports, after Indonesia and Algeria.

Last year, LNG accounted for 5.6 per cent of Malaysia's gross national product and 3 per cent of Malaysia's gross exports.

Dr Mahathir will later leave for Long Bedian in Hulu Baram to launch e-Bedian and other rural internet facilities for the rural community there.

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