

17 FEB 2004

Satellite-RazakSAT

MALAYSIA'S SECOND MICROSATELLITE "RAZAKSAT" ALMOST READY

JOHOR BAHRU, Feb 17 (Bernama) -- The country's second microsatellite "RazakSAT" has successfully completed the "Flight Model-Manufacturing Readiness Review (FM-MRR) in Daejeon, South Korea last week.

Managing Director of Astronautic Technology (M'sia) Sdn Bhd (ATSB), Dr Ahmad Sabirin Arshad said the success of the FM-MRR process meant that RazakSAT could now enter the final phase which is the construction of the flight model to be launched into outer space.

Formerly known as MACSAT (Medium Aperture Camera Satellite), it was renamed RazakSAT by the then Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 7 last year in honour of the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, Malaysia's second Prime Minister.

RazakSAT is the result of a collaboration between ATSB and SaTReci of South Korea.

"After discussions and planning via the FM-MRR, part of the manufacturing and component installations of RazakSAT will be done in Malaysia.

"The final integration process for all of the satellite's components will also be fully done in Malaysia," he said in a statement to Bernama here today.

RazakSAT would be the country's second earth-imaging satellite after TiungSAT-1 which was launched by ATSB from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan on Sept 26, 2000.

Ahmad Sabirin said before the FM-MRR phase, RazakSAT which weighs less than 200kg had already undergone two phases -- the engineering model and qualification model.

RazakSAT had the capability to produce panchromatic images with a 2.5-metre resolution and also a five-metre multi-spectral image. Both features would among others, be used to do infrastructure mapping, monitor shipping routes, do geology mapping and marine ecosystem monitoring.

He said 16 Malaysian aeronautical engineers have been working with their South Korean counterparts to construct RazakSAT which was expected to be launched into orbit in the second quarter of next year.

On the satellite's position in orbit after the launch, he said RazakSAT would be placed 600 or 700km from earth in a Near Equatorial Orbit (NEO) position.

-- BERNAMA

MHI RBZ