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PM to receive award at special ceremony

MIRI, Tues. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will receive the state's highest award, the Darjah Satria Bintang Sarawak (DSBS) (First Class) at a special investiture ceremony to be held at the Dewan Suarah Miri on Friday.

The Prime Minister is the sole recipient of the award which carries the title Pehin.

He heads the list of 308 people being conferred awards and honours by Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Abang Muhammad Salahuddin in conjunction with Sarawak's 40th anniversary celebrations today.

Dr Mahathir will also open the newly-completed RM220 million Miri Airport extension project which includes a brandnew terminal building and the lengthening of the runway.

The new terminal, which resembles the main terminal building of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, is the latest landmark here.

The extended airport, which is now the pride of Miri, is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and can handle up to 800 passengers during peak hours.

With a 2,745-metre runway and 1,669-metre taxiway, the new airport will be able to cater to wide-bodied aircraft such as the Airbus and Boeing 747.

Work on the airport, which was undertaken by Ekran Bhd, started in November 2001 and was completed in May this year - 10 months ahead of schedule. It has been operational since June 30.

The airport will become an important gateway to north Sarawak.

While in Miri, Dr Mahathir will also open new classrooms and an administrative block at the Sekolah Kebangsaan Chung Hua at Jalan Temenggong Oyong Lawai Jau here.