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# Petronas to consider request by Turkmenistan

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**PARTNERSHIP:** Nation wants Petronas to boost participation in downstream activities

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday acknowledged Turkmenistan's interest in Petronas to boost its participation in downstream activities, especially in petrochemical plants.

He said visiting Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov also wanted Petronas, which had invested some US\$10 billion (RM42 billion) in Turkmenistan since 1996, to consider participating in the Afghanistan-Pakistan pipeline project.

"I have expressed my appreciation to President Berdimuhamedov for

giving us the opportunity to showcase our commitment to Turkmenistan through the involvement of Petronas.

"Petronas has invested US\$10 billion since its involvement in 1996," he said, adding that Malaysia would consider participating in the Afghanistan-Pakistan pipeline project.

The development of gas facilities in the Caspian Sea, Najib said, was a prime example of Malaysia's commitment to Turkmenistan.

The pipeline will transport Caspian Sea natural gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and India.

"There is a sense of pride that we are able to develop such high tech-



**Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak** signing a document with **Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov** following a bilateral meeting at Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday. Bernama pic -

nology in Turkmenistan to show our commitment and Petronas's capability as a company to develop oil and gas resources around the world," he said in a joint press conference with Berdimuhamedov.

Najib, who is also finance minister, said Petronas was committed to being a good corporate citizen in Turkmenistan, particularly by providing jobs in the oil and gas industry.

To date, 85 per cent of the positions in Turkmenistan are held by locals, he said.

Petronas has also provided training to 230 technicians and gave out 50 scholarships to the people of Turkmenistan to participate in the

oil and gas industry, he said.

The Petronas scholarship programme in Turkmenistan, introduced in 1998, allows recipients to further their studies at the Universiti Teknologi Petronas.

Berdimuhamedov said Petronas Carigali (Turkmenistan) was an impressive example of a long-term successful operation in Turkmenistan for a mutually beneficial bilateral partnership.

"We welcome more Malaysian companies to establish an active participation and will provide other assistance in our country," he said, adding that areas with potential for joint activities were energy, communications, banking, construction,

urban management, oil and gas processing, chemicals, high technology and tourism sectors.

In a joint statement, both leaders agreed to strengthen, promote and develop comprehensive cooperation in the oil and gas industry as well as in petrochemical production, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

"Both sides, recognising the need to encourage foreign investment to accelerate the economic prosperity of both countries, noted Petronas's positive, long-lasting experience in the oil and gas sector of Turkmenistan and agreed to further develop mutually beneficial cooperation," it added.