

Published by: The Brunei Times, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2010

URL:

<http://www.bt.com.bn/news-national/2010/05/26/hm-launches-methanol-plant-opening>

## HM launches methanol plant opening



(Top) His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam (L) greeting staff of the Brunei Methanol Company at Sungai Liang Industrial Park yesterday. (Above) His Majesty looking at the computer screen, while getting briefed on the facilities at the methanol plant in Sungai Liang, where the monarch launched the opening of the plant.

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

HIS Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam yesterday officially launched the opening of the methanol plant of Brunei Methanol Company (BMC) at the Sungai Liang Industrial Park in Belait district.

BMC Chief Executive Officer Kinya Tsuji said the company, a joint venture that was established on March 13, 2006, has the sole objective of building, owning and operating the first methanol plant in Brunei.

Construction works of the plant, he added, was completed in 2009 and successfully manufactured its first methanol product on April 27 this year.

He said that methanol manufactured from Brunei would have its place of prominence in the global methanol industry and domestically and that it would continue to strive to contribute towards the positive enhancement of the country's social and economic landscape.

He further said that the company has sent young Bruneians to be trained as technicians in Japan and South America to equip them with the skills to work in the industry.

Hideki Odaka, chairman of Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Incorporated (MGC), in his welcoming remarks acknowledged the support and assistance provided by the Japanese government, the financial lenders such as Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and its project contractors.

In addition, he said that in terms of production process and plant operations, they constantly improve and develop their technology especially in Central Asia where methanol demand is rapidly growing.

"In the coming 10, 20, 30 years or forever, we are assured that this project will continuously survive in Brunei as another symbol of the strong economic relationship between Brunei and Japan," he added.

Eizo Kobayashi, chairman of Itochu Corporation, said BMC owes its successful operations today to Brunei's other resources such as electricity, water, infrastructure and the Bruneians themselves.

"I strongly believe this BMC's methanol plant would produce competitive methanol products to all over the world, bring added value to the society and contribute to the industrial development in Brunei," he said.

The chairman said that talks on the methanol project began in the early 1990s and they made their proposal in 1994.

As one of the shareholders, Itochu has practised sanpou-yoshi which means good for the buyer, good for the seller and good for the society, since its establishment.

This policy has since been extended and adapted in the current corporate credo of Itochu which is committed to the global good, social, economic and individual benefits.

They also hope to uphold the same spirit of sanpou-yoshi through their participation of this project, he added.

To mark the historic milestone, His Majesty signed the commemorative plaque and received a pesambah.

His Majesty was also taken for a tour of the methanol plant, and visited the plant's central control room where the monarch was briefed on the processes of producing methanol by BMC Chief Executive Officer Tsuji.

The methanol plant project promises exciting opportunities in terms of accelerating the country's efforts towards further industrialisation, bringing in additional foreign direct investments, introducing new business streams for small and medium enterprises, as well as opening up more job and career opportunities for the people of Brunei. Syed Rory Malai Hassan

The Brunei Times