

29 OCT 1996  
Germany-Railway  
GERMAN HELP FOR TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY PROJECT

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- Germany, a major European player in the railway-related industry, has expressed its willingness to help Malaysia coordinate and implement the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

Its Transport Minister Matthias Wissmann said today that Germany was open to "consultation and exchange of ideas" to see to the success of the project.

"We offer our expertise, support in terms of technological cooperation and financing studies because most importantly it is to link both Asia and Europe with the railway network," he said after meeting Malaysian Transport ministry officials here.

Also present was Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek, who is acting Transport Minister.

The Asia-Europe rail link was proposed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the first meeting of Asian-European leaders in Bangkok last March.

Wissmann said Germany had helped in developing the Trans-European railway and it hoped both the Asian and European sides would be able to link the two networks step-by-step.

On his five-day visit to Malaysia, Wissmann said following the expansion of the maritime and railway industries in Malaysia, this country has the potential to emerge as a major player in the two sectors.

He said Germany was ever willing to cooperate with Malaysia by offering technically reliable and operationally efficient solutions in the rail sector.

He hoped the Maritime Shipping Agreement would be formulated the soonest possible and that both sides could create the appropriate framework conditions and legal bases for shipping operations and to adapt them to the present situation.

The first round of negotiations of the shipping agreement took place here last month and follow-ups would be carried out by the officials of both sides, he said.

In a joint press statement, Malaysia and Germany said they agreed that the proposed shipping agreement shall be based on principles of mutual benefit for shipping services and reciprocal recognition in the technical aspects of shipping and related maritime matter.

"It is also noted that the agreement will promote maritime transport services and trade between both countries and that the officials of the respective government agencies continue the negotiations with a view to concluding a mutually acceptable agreement," it said.

It also said both sides recognised that the bilateral exchange of goods should be accompanied by an effective exchange of maritime services and endeavour to develop their relations in maritime shipping.

It added that Malaysia and Germany had agreed to take note of the result of the negotiations on the agreement which took place in Kuala Lumpur last month.

-- BERNAMA  
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