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Haulier to set up distribution centres

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KONSORTIUM Perkapalan Bhd is venturing further into the haulage business by setting up distribution centres nationwide to facilitate the transportation and movement of cargo more efficiently.

The network will involve existing lorry and truck owners, who will make use of KPB's distribution centres to pick up and unload cargo.

"There is no structure in the industry currently, and consequently, everyone is working for himself, resulting in duplication and inefficiency," KPB group executive chairman Mirzan Mahathir said yesterday.

He added that KPB would co-operate with other companies in the business so that it could source for goods that required distribution to help increase the load factor. This would eventually result in better turnaround time.

Currently, lorries will send goods to a destination but will return without any cargo.

Mirzan said under KPB's distribution network, the lorries would have a place to go to source goods and would not face any problems in getting payments.

This will improve the utilisation of trucks and make it more worthwhile for lorry operators.

KPB had been running a pilot programme with some 40 trucks in Shah Alam and the feedback had been positive, he said.

"We have identified some customers and will be able to build the transit points soon. They will be located within a radius of 20km to 30km from each other.

"The lorries provide the service, we provide the cargo," Mirzan added.

The main locations identified are in Shah Alam or Klang in Selangor, Seberang Perai, Johor Baru, Pasir Gudang, Batu Pahat, Kuantan, Ipoh, Parit Buntar, Alor Star and Sungai Petani in Kedah, Ayer Keroh in Malacca, Kuala Terengganu, Kota Baru.

The entire programme is expected to begin in March.

On the need for standards of the lorries, Mirzan said the trucks would have to be in good working order, and that KPB would take over the administrative function of providing cheaper tyres, fuel and other maintenance services.

Fresh from the restructuring exercise involving Diperdana Corporation Bhd, Diperdana Kontena Sdn Bhd, PNSL Bhd, and Pacific Basin Bulk Shipping Ltd, Mirzan said the group of companies would now have to focus on boosting its information technology and logistics capabilities.

"KPB is fast becoming a regional company. We have some ongoing projects which will put us in a better position to achieve the objective of meeting the communications and effective logistics service within the region.

"It is an area that is synonymous with logistics. Certainly, this is an area we need to bolster," he said, adding that the group would try to source the expertise through joint ventures or acquisitions.

He added that KPB's aim was to help its customers manage their inventory better.

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