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West Port

MALAYSIA'S PREMIER PORT SET TO BECOME A GARDEN PORT

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PORT KLANG, April 20 (Bernama) -- Ports have always been regarded as dull, dirty and uninteresting, dotted with huge warehouses and giant machinery.

However at West Port it is a different story.

In the midst of bustling cargo handling activities, West Port, already a customer-friendly port, is now turning into a garden port.

The move to become the world's first garden port was mooted by G.Gnanalingam, vice-executive chairman of Kelang Multi Terminal, the operator of the port.

Work on the landscaping began early last year with a substantial allocation. It will be a continuous effort to turn Malaysia's premier port into a unique one in the region and also in the world.

To be really environmental friendly, the landscaping also includes the planting of trees, notably flowering ones like the flame of the forest, yellow flame and raintree.

If one drives into the port now, the garden atmosphere can already be felt. Leafy colourful shrubs, pots of precious and calming bonsais and green pastures are already there to give that welcome feeling.

And, in another five years time, driving into West Port is going to be like entering into a garden trees majestically lined with matured canopy trees.

"It's going to be a garden port in every aspect," said Gnanalingam, adding that West Port wanted to be recognised not only as the most modern port but also the prettiest port.

It will be like a cherry topping on the ice cream in the country's aspiration to become the hub of the region as visioned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We want to make a difference not only logistically and statistically but also aesthetically," said Gnanalingam.

Among the finished man-made aesthetics are the waterfall which heralds the main entrance of the port bidding a warm welcome to visitors, resplendent multi tiered gardens and a corner stone basking in the vanity of hybrid plants.

A masterpiece of a clay art and flora ikebana beautifies the Main Avenue, manicured gardens that grace the main street of the Business Centre, and delicate plants and petite shrubs bloom along wharf edges.

Gnanalingam said West Port has managed to "glamourise" the port industry by strutting itself in bold beautiful blue and aquamarine colours and its gardens are as pretty as a picture.

According to him, landscaping is a holistic part of infrastructure development as progress does not mean defacing the Earth but harmonising buildings and structure with the beauty of nature.

He said business associates of West Port could now soak themselves in the serenity of its gardens instead of standing and staring at awesome structures and equipments.

West Port is not alone in this endeavour. The road leading to the Star Cruise Terminal adjacent to West Port is also lined with palm trees while the terminal itself has been planted with hybrid plants and shrubs.

The terminal with the longest dedicated passenger cruise berth in the Asia-Pacific region is being developed at a cost of RM100 million to cater for the booming tourist industry.

West Port, poised to serve the increasing demands of port users up to the 21st century, is being developed in three phases at a cost of RM1.5 billion.

Once completed in 1998, its cargo handling area stretching five km will comprise seven general/container berths, four dry bulk berths, eight container berths, two liquid bulk berths and one LPG dolphin.

Phase one and two, consisting of seven general/container cargo berths and two dry bulk and liquid bulk berths respectively, are now in operation.

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