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MIRZAN INTERESTED OF GOING INTO PORT MANAGEMENT

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 21 (Bernama) -- Mirzan Mahathir, who successfully built Konsortium Perkapalan Bhd into a dominant player in the country's shipping and haulier industry, is now looking at port management.

"Certainly, port management is an area of great interest for us as it will complete our network that links all the different components in the logistics chain together," he said.

He was asked whether he was interested in acquiring a stake in Westport Holdings Sdn Bhd, the operator of Port Klang's West Port located in Pulau Indah, Port Klang.

"If there is an opportunity that arises, we would evaluate it. And, if the price is right, we would go forward," Mirzan, the chairman of Konsortium Perkapalan told reporters at the two-day National Conference On Mergers And Acquisitions here today.

The conference, officiated by International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, was organised by the Asian Strategic and Leadership Institute (ASLI) of which Mirzan is the president.

Mirzan said the Konsortium Perkapalan group was at present involved in the development of a vehicle transit centre at West Port and it was looking at developing a distribution park or "distri-park" - a kind of transshipment centre.

To promote Port Klang as a transshipment centre, a joint venture between the group and Westport Holdings was formed to create value within the port's vicinity which include building a distri-park.

He added, however, nothing had been concluded so far in the development of the proposed distri-park as negotiations were ongoing with prospective users, mainly multinational corporations.

Mirzan also said while the group was mainly involved in the shipping and haulier business, "I am not looking at shipping as our overriding business.

"It is part of the whole network. Shipping is a very important part of that network in the region. With that in mind, when we look at the opportunities (of buying other companies) we look at what will it bring to our strategy."

The group was concentrating in the region only and would not acquire companies that were far away from the region or companies that have no relationship with what the group was doing, he added.

However, if the company had the technology or management expertise that would benefit the Konsortium Perkapalan group, he would look at the company for possible alliances such as partnerships rather than buying it, he said.

"We are only looking at regional companies that have their own niche market and fit into our logistics plan," he added.

He said he was also looking at venturing into the air cargo business which he described as a "strategic business."

"We do want to be able to go to our customers and say that we can offer a total logistics solution and, certainly, air cargo is a very important part," he added. -- BERNAMA

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