

27/06/1997

Ports' throughput set to rise

IF PORT Klang's import/export throughput figures in the first three months of the year is anything to go by, ports in Peninsular Malaysia will be handling more than three million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) by the end of the year.

Container Hauliers Association of Malaysia (CHAM) president Encik Mirzan Mahathir said Port Klang's figures showed that Klang, Penang, Johor and Kuantan ports handled 596,126 TEUs between January and March this year.

In contrast, the ports registered an average of 570,572.20 TEUs in the three-month periods last year. In total, the ports recorded 2.28 million TEUs last year.

"There is a slight improvement for Klang, Penang and Kuantan ports in the first three months of this year.

"I hope with the aggressive approach by the Government to make Port Klang the regional hub and with the full support of all players in the logistic chain, the TEUs for 1997 could achieve more than three million," he said after the association's 7th Annual General and Extraordinary Meetings in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

As of 31 December last year, there were 1,940 prime movers and 10,130 trailers on the road. The ratio of prime movers to trailers for 1996 was 1:5 which was still below the international standard of 1:3.

Mirzan also said representatives from CHAM northern and southern regional offices and CHAM central committee will meet officials from the Works Ministry on July 4 to discuss issues regarding roads in the country.

The association's central region as well as the northern and southern regional offices have forwarded to the ministry a list of roads which urgently need upgrading.

During the meetings, CHAM also raised an issue on inspection of trailers.

Puspakom has agreed to allocate its mobile unit at the respective hauliers' depot for inspection of trailers every 14 days of each month.

This, Mirzan said, will help save hauliers the downtime, costs and increase service levels.

"Recently I was informed that Puspakom has decided to bring their mobile units now stationed at Kuala Krai in Kelantan to the Klang Valley permanently for inspection of trailers to be carried out every month," he said.

A suggestion was made during the meeting to request Puspakom to use the mobile unit to inspect prime movers as well.

The association will also request that the Commercial Vehicles Licensing Board (CVLB) amend Section 43(2) of the CVLB Act 1987 to make the consignee/consignors liable for overweight containers.

The AGM also touched on the shortage of manpower, especially in the form of drivers.

Feedback received from members said the shortage is alarming and will further deteriorate with the coming Commonwealth Games in 1998.

Because of the high wages offered, drivers working with haulage companies will be drawn to work with the Games secretariat to ferry athletes from the Games Village to sports venues.

Mirzan, who is chairman of Konsortium Perkapalan Bhd, was re-elected the association's president. Encik Ali Mohd Nor was re-elected deputy president and Encik Mohd Hussin Ismail was re-elected vice president.

Newly-elected office bearers are Encik Elias Kadir (vice-president), Encik Hamzah Mohamad (secretary) and Encik Baharin Tahir (treasurer).

Its ordinary members include Mr Loo Hooi Keat, Encik Faisal Awab and Encik Hussaini Karim.

(END)