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Ling-Port

CABINET AGREES TO IMPLEMENT PROPOSALS FOR PORT KLANG

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 4 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet today agreed to implement several proposals, including the setting up of a national feeder company, to promote and improve the usage of Port Klang.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said other proposals included incentive for importers and exporters, a bigger role for the Malaysian International Shipping Corporation (MISC) and promotion of Port Klang through the local electronic media.

"With these proposals we hope to promote Port Klang as a regional load centre," he told reporters at his office here, after the weekly Cabinet meeting.

The setting up of a feeder company and incentive for importers and exporters were among several proposals made at a dialogue with port users last Saturday, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Ling said the establishment of a national feeder company was to bring all cargoes from Malaysia to Port Klang to increase cargo loading in the nation's premier port.

"This company will complement the existing feeder companies in the country," he said.

The equity holders would be the local ports, he said, adding that the government would work out the details such as paid-up capital and structure, later.

"All the ports in the country are rich and strong (to undertake such a project)," he said.

On the incentive for importers and exporters, Dr Ling said it might be in the form of discounts and would be disbursed from the revenue the country would get once more people used Port Klang.

"Once all the containers use Port Klang, this money which we save, will be disbursed, half to the government and half to the users (importers and exporters). We will study how much we lose from all these boxes which are fed to Singapore so that when all the boxes come back we will surely give half of this back to the users," he said.

Dr Ling said although importers and exporters were now enjoying very low tariffs which had been in use for the last 35 years they were not enjoying many other benefits enjoyed by other port users like shipping lines.

Some 40 per cent of Malaysia container traffic totalling 1.2 million twenty foot equivalent units (TEU's) is handled by Singapore Port, resulting in the loss of some RM3 billion to RM5 billion every year.

On a bigger role for the MISC, Malaysia's premier shipping company, Dr Ling said it would be decided later.

On the proposal to promote Port Klang through the electronic media, he said the cabinet had accepted a proposal that the media like televisyen show a weekly programme on port activities to increase the people's awareness of the port.

Dr Ling also said that he would look into reports that ship owners wanted to set up new funds to re-capitalise ailing shipping companies in the country.

-- BERNAMA

RV JK