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Incentive for using local ports

PULAU INDAH, Sun. - Port users currently using Singapore could save up to 50 per cent in costs if they switch to local ones.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the Government would provide the savings through incentives.

This, he said, would mean reduced charges for local businessmen.

The idea, he said, was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to encourage local businessmen to switch to local ports.

"Officers at my Ministry are currently carrying out a study to determine the monetary loss sustained by the country due to the high number of local businessmen still using the port in the republic.

"The study covers everything from actual port fees paid by local businessmen when they use Singapore and opportunity loss," he told reporters after chairing a dialogue between 50 members of the North Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the management of West Port yesterday.

The study would quantify the opportunity loss which covered freight forwarding, shipping, bunker services and shipping calls.

However, the proposal could only be implemented when the majority of those still using Singapore switched to local ports.

Dr Ling said he would also call for dialogues with forwarding agents, freight forwarders and others providing auxiliary services to local ports to thrash out the problems.

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