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New Johor port to have latest facilities

Valerie Ng

JOHOR'S second port at Tanjung Pelepas will be an all-weather modern port with the latest facilities and services, capable of handling some of the largest ships in the world.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahahir Mohamad, who is scheduled to inspect the port site today, will be briefed on development in the area, 45 km from Johor Baru.

Phase One of the Tanjung Pelepas port project, costing RM2.8 billion, is already under way. It entails the building of six berths offering 2.16 km of wharf length, with full ancillary facilities and state-of-the-art equipment.

The first two berths, scheduled to be operational by late next year, will be able to handle about 600,000 twenty-foot equivalent units of containers.

The capacity would be increased to 800,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of cargo upon completion of Phase One.

The other four berths are to be ready by the second quarter of 2001.

Among the port's other plus points are that it will be in sheltered waters with no strong currents and high waves, have a short access channel (eight km) from the Malacca Straits one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, ample deepwater (90 metres) at the quayside and land for future development.

Tanjung Pelepas will not only cater to indigenous and regional shipping lines, but will be well-placed to take the spillover of worldwide shipping business from Singapore.

The project is being developed by Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Seaport Terminal (Johor) Sdn Bhd. Seaport Terminal is the parent company of Johor Port Bhd, the operator of Pasir Gudang port.

On March 24, 1995, Seaport Terminal signed a privatisation agreement with the Government and the Johor Port Authority to plan, develop, construct, operate and manage Tanjung Pelepas port.

Under the deal, Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas will undertake the construction on the build-operate-transfer concept.

Under the masterplan, the port will be constructed in five phases on a 783-hectare site in Tanjung Pelepas up to the year 2020.

The area was previously a fishing village. Affected fishermen have been relocated by the developers, with up to RM220 million paid in compensation for the land acquired for the project.

The port will also have a 7.7-km road connection to the new Malaysia-Singapore Second Link expressway and a rail connection to the national network.

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