

New marina in the pipeline

SUN 14 JAN 2002

Church Street Pier gets RM20m facelift

By Fatimah Hassan

PENANG. Sun: The Penang Port Commission (PPC) will transform the century-old Church Street Pier into a marina to bring seaborne passengers to Penang.

PPC general manager Datuk Capt Abdul Rahim Abd Aziz said paperwork on the fast-track project costing RM20 million has commenced and it will be submitted to the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) for its go-ahead.

"The project will give a facelift to the dilapidated image of the pier's waterfront by changing it into a marina.

"It is expected to be completed by the middle of next year," he said after attending the PPC's Hari Raya open house held at the Penang Caring Society Complex yesterday.

The pier which was set up in the early 1900s when Penang became a port has been left idle for some 20

years, he said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had asked EPU to identify areas along the coast to build a marina and Penang was chosen for the northern region, Abdul Rahim added.

He said the marina will be able to accommodate about 90 sailing boats at any one time while their owners and crew could service the boats and also tour the island while they are here.

The idea is to attract the sailing boat market, he added.

Abdul Rahim also said PPC will be developing its centralised tankage facilities for the northern region at the North Butterworth Container Terminal (NBCT).

This is to centralise the storage of all petrochemical products which are to be imported and exported by the related industries.

He said PPC is cooperating with the state government on the transfer of the reclaimed land title and

the facility will be built on a build-operate-transfer basis.

"This has to take place soon as 300,000 tonnes of liquidified cargo are expected from South Thailand when its project starts running in 2004."

PPC is also contemplating whether to continue with its next 200m extension of its NBCT berth, he said.

So far, 100m have been completed last August while the rest will depend on the economic situation and demand, he added.

He said PPC is working closely with the EPU and the Transport Ministry on the development concept of the RM65 million Swettenham Ocean Terminal expansion project and an agreement is expected by middle of the year.