

21 AUG 2003

Customs-Complex

1,500 CUSTOMS STAFF TO SERVE AT NEW JB COMPLEX

JOHOR BAHRU, Aug 21 (Bernama) -- The new Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Complex in Bukit Chagar here, which will be completed in 2005, will be served by 1,500 Royal Customs Department officers and staff.

Customs Director-General Tan Sri Abdul Halil Abdul Mutalib said its staff would be part of the 3,300 personnel from various Government departments and agencies serving in the complex.

He was speaking at the launch of the 13-storey RM34 million Johor Customs tower by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, here today.

He said the Johor Customs Department was special as it had the highest number of staff, some 2,000 people, at 17 administration offices and the aerial, naval and overland gateways to the State.

With two ports and two overland entries, as well as a 400km coastline, he said the responsibility of preventing smuggling activities, especially of cigarettes via the sea, was doubly hard.

"The situation in Johor also has a high level of sensitivity because of its border with a sensitive country and any delays in Customs dealings could easily damage the country's image," he said.

Abdul Halil thus urged the Customs personnel to provide quality service to customers and said this could also be a show of gratitude for Government amenities.

He said in addition to offices, the Government had also provided 5,486 units of housing nationwide to part of the Customs' 10,126 staff and the number would rise in the future.

"The Government seems to be providing a reward to the Customs Department which contributed RM22 billion to the country's coffers last year, second only to the Internal Revenue Board," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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