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RMN-Ship (Pix)

RMN IN DISCUSSION ON BUILDING SAILING SHIP FOR TRAINING

PORT KLANG, April 22 (Bernama) -- The Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) is discussing with local company Naval Dockyard Sdn Bhd (NDSB) on the proposal to build a sailing ship specifically for training, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Tun Razak today.

He said the proposed vessel measuring about 100 metres and weighing 3,000 metric tons would be bigger than the present RMN training ship, Tunas Samudera.

"The (proposed) ship can train 100 youths and carry a crew of 72," he told reporters when visiting the Spanish navy's sailing ship "Juan Sebastian de Elcano", which is berthing at the South Port, here.

The Spanish ship is on a five-day training visit to Malaysia. The ship has a complement of 242 crew including 21 officers and 43 trainee cadets.

Najib said the ship would be constructed based on a foreign design and built at the NDSB dockyard in Langkawi.

"We are still negotiating (the cost). But it is estimated to be in the range of between RM100 million and RM150 million," he said when asked on the actual cost of the proposed vessel.

He said the proposal to build another sailing ship for the RMN was on the instruction of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad earlier.

Najib said that under the initial plan, the Malaysian-made sailing ship would be built under the 9th Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) allocation.

-- BERNAMA

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