

Decision to privatise a good move by govt, says Najib

NST - 22/3/2007

KUALA LUMPUR: The government's decision to privatise several of its agencies many years ago has been proven right, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

He said the privatised entities had helped the country compete in the world economy.

At the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre last night at a dinner to commemorate the 21st anniversary of the privatisation of Northport, Najib said: "The port is a good example on the success of the privatisation policy. We realised then that if ports were run by the government, they would not succeed.

"It is not a slight against the government. But the government's business is to govern and not conduct businesses."

He said privatisation had also led to a successful partnership between the private and public sectors and many improvements in policies.

Earlier, NCB Holdings Bhd chairman Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid said Northport was grateful that the government planned to deepen the North channel in Port Klang from 11.3m to 13m.

He said this would allow the port to receive bigger container vessels.

Ahmad Sarji said Northport would spend RM500 million over the next three years to upgrade its services. "The investment aims to improve the port's container handling facility and services."

Northport is the nation's largest operator of a multi-purpose port, handling over 60 per cent of the nation's trade in the form of 2.6 million 20-foot equivalent units, and 8,000 ship calls annually.