

**PPSB Protest Penang Government's Undersea Tunnel Project**  
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GEORGE TOWN, April 30 (Bernama) -- The Penang port operator, Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB), today protested the state government's plan to build a 6.5km-long undersea tunnel connecting Gurney Drive and Bagan Ajam, saying that the project will cause PPSB to suffer losses in the long term.

PPSB chairman Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya said the project would also affect the inflow of cargo vessels and jeopardising business transactions at the port.

"PPSB handled 1.1 million of 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cargo last year. This can be achieved because 95 per cent of cargo were brought in to the country through ports, while the rest, through air route," he told reporters after the opening of State Legislative Assembly sitting here today.

Hilmi also rapped the state government for making hasty decision on the matter without studying the possible side effects.

He said the project would be funded through land title exchange between the state government and the developer and that would mean the state government would have to take over more private-owned land.

Hilmi also anticipated that the project would affect Penang development in the future, besides the fact that it would also involve high maintenance cost.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng had recently announced that the state government was planning to build undersea tunnel at the cost of RM8 billion to connect the mainland and the island in a bid to reduce traffic congestion in the state.

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