



Maritime

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Northport adds more super cranes >B27



Bulk shipping market to remain 'tight' >B26

Smaller freight forwarders network to compete >B27

CSR supports port growth

Community development work for welfare and environment protection

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THE Malaysian port industry's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have supported the sector's growth sustainability as well as helped in nation building.

Not lagging behind other types of businesses, major ports in the country have carried out CSR programmes such as workforce development, societal welfare and environmental protection.

This has helped them retain skilled employees, attract the younger generation to join the sector and improve the living standards of the surrounding community.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines CSR as the continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, their families and the local community and society at large.

Westports Malaysia Sdn Bhd, located in Pulau Indah, Port Klang, has spent about RM2mil on the Poverty Eradication Programme for Pulau Indah residents since 1995.

This bodes well for the port, as 60% of its 2,500 employees are from Pulau Indah.

Executive chairman Tan Sri G. Gnanalingam said that as Westports was located in Pulau Indah, it was only natural that priority was given to the island's residents. "It is our company philosophy to provide a better lifestyle for these residents and eliminate poverty," he told *StarBiz*.

He added that profit, passion and compassion should be the pillars of any company.

"At Westports, profit means business sustainability, the ability to control and expand, as well as satisfactory shareholder returns.

"We do not want to see Malaysians possessing very little money, little education, little or no skills for the marketplace, and a multitude of health problems and without much opportunity to improve their lives," he said.

As a result of Westports' efforts, poverty level on the island dropped from 62% in 1995 to below 5% last year.

He said as an organisation, the port was also passionate about its people, especially in creating total employee satisfaction.

The port ensures employee training at all levels, and 80% of its staff participated last year.

Westports has also come up with the garden port concept where it has done landscaping over 10ha of its vacant land, developing six themed gardens which feature 300 varieties of trees and flowering plants plus three waterfalls.

For Northport (M) Bhd, also operating in Port Klang, CSR activities are extended to its stakeholders, employees and their families as well as the community of Port Klang.

Chief executive officer Datuk Basheer Hassan



Tan Sri G. Gnanalingam



Datuk Basheer Hassan Abdul Kader



Datuk Mohd Sidik Shaik Othman

»Our priority is to provide a better lifestyle and to eliminate poverty«

TAN SRI G. GNANALINGAM

Abdul Kader said as a company with a good sense of ethics in its investments and earnings, the port believed customer service was an important component of CSR.

"Our CSR is inclusive of customer relationship management which aims at keeping our customers happy and loyal," he said in an interview.

He said Northport had a dedicated division to address the needs of its customers on a consistent manner. "These also include organising recreational events to allow greater interaction and networking," he said.

Basheer said its CSR also involved creating greater awareness on safety.

"We held a highly successful Zero Accidents Safety Campaign in February," he noted.

"The campaign, involving our staff as well as our vendors, contractors and suppliers, has resulted in reduction of accidents by 85% since its launch."

Northport has launched several safety aware-

ness campaigns over the years.

Basheer said Northport also helped to keep the environment clean via the Adopting Port Klang programme initiated by the Klang Municipal Council (MPK) in September.

"Later this month we will participate in the Keep the Beach Clean Awareness and Tree Planting programmes organised by MPK," he said.

Regarding employees, he said Northport's recent Family Day attracted more than 10,000 people, including staff and their families.

"Next year we will be extending our CSR programme to schoolchildren and education-related activities. We will also be launching the Northport UiTM Book Award 2008 to recognise excellent UiTM transport and logistics students as part of Northport CSR Education Programme," he said, adding that Northport was the founding member of Institute Corporate Responsibility Malaysia.

Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) and the Malaysian Nature Society in Johor (MNSJ) have recently agreed to collaborate for the betterment for the Sungai Pulai estuary.

The collaboration saw PTP donating RM60,000 to MNSJ.

Among the first projects for the partnership is a study on the unique bio-ecology system of the Sungai Pulai estuary and the publication of the findings in a coffee table book.

PTP chairman Datuk Mohd Sidik Shaik Othman said that as the port was one of the major components of the Iskandar Development Region (IDR), the development of

the area surrounding the port was crucial.

He said PTP's development was done in a sustainable and responsible manner.

"We believe that our development should be balanced and should co-exist with the environment. Our company culture is driven by five main pillars, one of which is promoting sustainable development."

The development of Sungai Pulai into a world-class maritime centre catering to supporting industries is a good strategy to compete with other regional maritime hubs.

From its inception, PTP has kept in mind the welfare and livelihood of the fishermen who used to occupy its land.

PTP compensated these fishermen with up to RM300,000 per acre for their land, RM500,000 for the construction of a new fishing jetty for the fishing community to replace their old jetties and RM3.5mil to the fishing association (Persatuan Nelayan Johor Selatan) to be distributed to all their registered members.

The port also spent about RM90mil to resettle them in a new township.

Since 2000, the company has been awarding the contract for waste management of the port to the fishermen's association there.

In terms of education, PTP has embarked on a long-term English Language Awareness programme to help students sitting for the UPSR exam and donated computers to schools in the surrounding area. PTP and the local state assemblyman also provided aid to single mothers and orphans from the local community during the fasting month recently.

Marine dept urges awareness of safety measures

THE Marine Department of peninsular Malaysia is urging ferry passengers to be aware safety measures and equipment aboard ferries.

It launched the *Ambil Tau* campaign last week to make them understand their rights and responsibilities to ensure their safety.

Deputy director general Baharin Abdul Hamid said both passengers and boat operators must work together in ensuring safety on board.

"Through the campaign, it is hoped that the current lackadaisical attitude of passengers and some operators towards safety will change," he said in a speech on behalf of director general Datuk Capt Ahmad Othman.

He said the passengers of a ferry had to be alert at all times to ensure their safety.

"They have the right to ensure that all regulations stated on the passenger safety certificate on the ferryboat are complied with."

Baharin said passengers had the right not

to ride on a ferry if they felt that the safety level did not meet the regulations laid down by the Marine Department or Peninsular Malaysia.

The *Ambil Tau* campaign is being organised by the Marine Department of Peninsular Malaysia in collaboration with the ferry operators in Langkawi and Ship Classification Malaysia.

Among the activities that were carried out during the launching ceremony were safety

jacket wearing procedure demonstrations as well as a briefing on the campaign and its objectives.

On behalf of all ferry operators in Langkawi, Feri Express Bahagia operator Wong Sie Kiong said ferry owners were supportive of the *Ambil Tau* Campaign.

"We hope that after this campaign, the passengers will be more conscientious and aware about safety regulations onboard a ferry," he said. - **By SHARIDAN M. ALI**