

By Presenna Nambiar
presenna@nstp.com.my

PORT Klang, the home of Westports and Northport terminals, remained the leading port in the country last year, holding a 48.5 per cent share of the total number of containers carried by all Malaysian ports.

It handled 7.97 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) last year, against the 16.4 million TEUs handled by all Malaysian ports last year.

Westports led the way with a 15.2 per cent increase in container volume from 2007, handling some 4.96 million TEUs, while Northport saw a 7.1 per cent increase to three million TEUs last year.

Conventional cargo movement for last year saw a 0.2 per cent increase to 22.2 million tonnes for Port Klang.

In terms of numbers carried by individual terminals, however, Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) in Johor remained the top port, handling 5.6 million TEUs last year.

PTP was followed by Westports and then Northport.

Of all Malaysian port terminals, only one, Kuantan Port, registered a contraction in container volume last year.

Kuantan Port recorded a 0.4 per cent decline in container volume, from 127,600 TEUs in 2007 to 127,061 TEUs last year.

All ports in Sabah and Sarawak recorded positive growth in container volume, with Miri registering the biggest jump, growing by 30 per cent to reach 28,094 TEUs from 21,618 TEUs in 2007.

Bintulu Port managed to record robust growth last year, increasing to 286,013 TEUs from 251,800 TEUs in 2007.

For 2009, the local port industry is expected to experience a drop in cargo volume handled as import and export activities fall, amid slowing demand for goods.

Last week, Port Klang Authority (PKA) general manager Lim Thean Shiang had said that this year's contraction would see Port Klang's container throughput fall to levels experienced in 2007 to 7.118 million TEUs.

Port Klang keeps position as Malaysia's leading port



'Certain developments are necessary to cater to continued growth'

Lim Thean Shiang, GM PKA



Northport handled three million TEUs of containers last year.

Northport may delay wharf-upgrading work

NORTHPORT is considering to delay the upgrading of one of its wharfs due to the economic slowdown.

"I understand that Northport is considering holding back the upgrade but whether they should hold it or not is another question," Port Klang Authority general manager Lim Thean Shiang said

during a briefing in Port Klang last Tuesday.

He said certain developments were necessary to cater to continued growth even though there may not be an immediately need for it.

"During recession one can only position oneself to be ready for the up and coming growth cycle, and

if we do not have the adequate facilities available, how do we capitalise on such opportunities?" Lim said.

He said Port Klang would monitor the situation and hold consultations with ports on issues involving the development of the ports.

Northport managing director

and chief executive officer Datuk Basheer Hassan Abdul Kader was quoted as saying in November last year that it would keep its RM500 million expansion plans on track.

The plan includes the development of a 350m container berth, bringing the container quayline at the port to a total of 3.4km.