



PAYING FOR PARKING
Seremban City Council (MBS) will start charging motorists for parking in several areas under its jurisdiction in Seremban and Nilai from May 2. The areas include Bandar Prima Senawang, Lavender Business Centre, Ixora Business Centre, Pusat Bandar Senawang, Dataran Centrio, Uptown Avenue and Nilai Square. Parking rate is 60sen per hour, from 8am to 5pm on weekdays. Motorists can use Flexi Parking and Setel apps, as well as Touch n' Go ewallet to pay. Call 06-765 4782/4761/ 4789 or email mbseremban.spab.gov.my for details.

HARI RAYA EVENTS
>The Johor state-level Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration will be held on April 18 at Padang Begonia, Angsana Johor Bahru Mall, from 5pm-7pm. There will be various activities including dances and singing performances.
>Melaka's Hari Raya Aidilfitri event will be held on April 22 from 6pm-10.30pm at Pusat Dagangan Antarabangsa Melaka (MITC).

CUSTOMER SURVEYS
>Rapid KL is conducting a customer satisfaction survey until May 5. Commuters can share their thoughts by visiting <https://bit.ly/4aM65b2>
>Selangor Land and Mines Department is asking property owners to take part in its survey to help increase the quality of its services via <https://ls.selangor.my/nRP5H3>

FARMER'S CORNER
Cetdem's Farmer's Corner is happening on April 20 at Organic Farming Community Centre (OFCC), 29, Jln 19/15, Petaling Jaya, from 7.30am-9.30am. For details, call 016-219 5826 (Ms Tan).

READING EVENT
Selangor Public Library Corporation (PPAS) will be organising its "Jom Baca Bersama 10 Minit" programme on April 23, at Pustaka Raja Tun Uda, Shah Alam, from 11am. Register for the event from April 22 at <https://bit.ly/jombaca2024>

BOOK EXCHANGE
The next monthly KL Book Exchange will take place on April 28 at the open carpark, Faber Towers, Taman Desa, Kuala Lumpur, from 8.45am to 10.45am. For details, visit KL Book Exchange Facebook page.

PHOTO CONTEST
Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) is organising its Shah Alam Photography Contest 2024 until Aug 31. Categories include buildings/landmarks, nature and lifestyle. For details, visit www.mbsa.gov.my or call 03-5510 5133 ext 1430/1777.

ONLINE TALK ON CANCER
CanSurvive Centre Malaysia is organising a free online talk on 'Therapeutic Role of Hydrogen for Cancer Patients'. It will be held via Zoom on April 20, from 3pm to 4pm. For details, visit CanSurviveMalaysia.org

WEBINAR ON HIGHLANDS
There will be a webinar titled 'Cameron Highlands: The Making of Malaysia's Largest Hill Station' by Enzo Sim at 11am on April 20. For details, visit www.badanwarisanmalaysia.org/event/



North Butterworth Container Terminal is one of six ports run by Penang Port Sdn Bhd. — Photos: CHAN BOON KAI/The Star

Port forging ahead with RM250mil expansion

North Butterworth Container Terminal poised for bigger role due to increased demand from industrial parks in northern region

By R. SEKARAN
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EXPANSION plans for the North Butterworth Container Terminal (NBCT) will forge ahead.

Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB) chief executive officer Datuk Sasedharan Vasudevan said RM250mil would be spent over the next three years.

This follows the development of new industrial parks in Perak, Kedah and Perlis.

"With industrial parks in Padang Terap, Kota Perdana, Sidam and Kulim in Kedah, there is tremendous demand for port facilities in the northern region.

"The northern Perak development, especially in Kamunting, will bring high demand for cargo services too.

"We are also the gateway port for south Thailand, with transshipment of containers between the Bay of Bengal and the Far East.

"Overall, our performance has improved," he said, adding that the development of NBCT was stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sasedharan said PPBSB was looking at doing 1.55 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent unit) this year compared to 1.44 million TEUs last year, a rise of 11%.

He said the upgrading of infrastructure at NBCT was in line with the 30-year PPC Development Master Plan (2023-2053).



NBCT has been affected by uncertainty over the past few years.

He added that the present infrastructure had a maximum capacity of 2.8 million TEUs, with a trigger point at 2.3 million TEUs, after which, they would need to expand to meet future growth.

On machinery, Sasedharan said two cranes would be bought at a cost of RM40mil each.

"It will take between 18 and 24 months for the cranes to be delivered.

"Another investment will be the purchase of equipment to upgrade the NBCT yard.

"Priority will also be given to IT development, where all port activities are to be seamlessly connected.

"State-of-the-art facial recognition technology was installed at all six Penang ports



Vijayaindiaran: The PPC development master plan has been approved by its board.

Assessment (EIA) report for the NBCT development can only be obtained in 2027.

"Once all the approvals are in order, only then reclamation works will begin.

"Since there is no decision from the state on the undersea tunnel or a third bridge, we need to do the planning for the TEU capacity, with and without the projects.

"We can bring up the TEUs to seven million from four million if both projects do not take off," he said.

When contacted, Penang infrastructure and transport committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari said the state would deliberate on the matter soon.

First proposed in 2011, the

Maiden visits by two ships to Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal

PENANG is hosting the inaugural visits of two cruise ships this month.

Come April 26, *Serenade of the Seas*, with a capacity for 2,500 passengers, is scheduled to dock at Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal (SPCT) in George Town for nine hours.

It will provide ample time for travellers to bask in the beauty and cultural richness of Penang.

Earlier in the month, passengers of *Costa Deliziosa* were offered a glimpse of the cultural heritage, stunning natural landscapes and warm hospitality of Penang during its five-hour stop.

State tourism and creative economy committee chairman Wong Hon Wai said Penang continued to be a preferred destination for Royal Caribbean International, Resort World Cruises, TUI Cruises, Costa Cruises, AIDA Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line, Celebrity Cruises, Princess Cruises and Cunard Line.

"With its rich tapestry of offerings, Penang caters to every traveller, whether they are history enthusiasts, culinary aficionados or nature lovers.

"Penang promises an enriching and captivating experience for all who visit," Wong was quoted as saying by state publisher Buletin Mutiara.

"SPCT is providing facilities and services tailored specifically to meet the needs of cruise tourists.

"Following a recent expansion, the terminal has significantly increased its capacity to accommodate up to two quantum-size cruise ships and cater to 12,000



Cruise passengers of Costa Deliziosa outside Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal in George Town.

passengers simultaneously. "The simultaneous berthing of both *Genting Dream* and Royal Caribbean's *Spectrum of the Seas* showcases the terminal's newfound capability and efficiency," said Wong.

He said international vessel berths nearly doubled from 84 to 156 between 2022 and 2023, reflecting growth of 85.71%.

International passengers increased during the same period from 439,012 to 573,178, up by 30.56%, he noted.

"In January and February, international vessel berths surged from 31 (in those two months) last year to 45 this year while passenger numbers rose from 100,803 to 131,208," he added.



Serenade of the Seas, with a capacity for 2,500 passengers, is scheduled to dock at SPCT on April 26.



Sasedharan: The EIA report for the NBCT development can only be obtained in 2027.

tunnel project links Gurney Drive on the island with Bagan Ajam on the mainland.

The project is part of the Penang Transport Master Plan to ease traffic congestion in the state.

Penang Port Commission (PPC) general manager Vijayaindiaran R. Visvalingam said its development master plan was approved by the board following a presentation to the new PPC chairman Datuk Yeoh Soon Hin.

"We are waiting for a date from the state to make a presentation," he added.

The development master plan prepared by international consultants Roland Berger states that the entire land available is needed for the expansion of NBCT.

It proposes two new berths and container yards to cater to the expected increase in demand.

It also states that three berths



The facial recognition digital pass launched in Penang was the first of its kind in an Asian port.

will be needed by 2033, with 10 cranes and a container yard of 56ha.

Any expansion of NBCT beyond Phase 2 would intrude into the existing proposed location for the 'Penang 3rd Link'.

"As such, agreement from various stakeholders would be required prior to the expansion," the master plan stated.

PPSB is licensed by PPC to

operate, manage and maintain all port facilities and services as well as undertake present and future development projects.

The dedicated container terminal at NBCT was completed in 1995.

From a 350m wharf, it expanded to 600m in 1999.

An additional 100m wharf was completed in 2001, followed by another 200m wharf in 2005 including a 520m second access bridge.

STAR METRO INFO BASE

PENANG EMERGENCY	
POLICE & AMBULANCE	999
FIRE	999
TELEPHONE DIRECTORY	103
ENQUIRIES/FAULTS	100
INTERNATIONAL OPERATOR	101
RESCUE	999

FIRE & RESCUE DEPT	
PENANG (BATU KAWAN)	04-504 7222

PUBLIC SERVICE	
PUBLIC WATER PIPES BUREAU	04-262 5321
STATE SECRETARIAT	04-263 6893
CUSTOMS	04-262 2300
IMMIGRATION	04-250 3419
FLIGHT INFORMATION	04-643 0373
WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR CHANGE	04-228 0342
POSTAL SERVICES (OFF)	04-333 7480
JPJ	04-656 4131/656 4151/398 8809
EPF	04-226 1000
SOCSO	04-238 9888
REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT	04-226 5161

POLICE STATIONS	
PENANG HQ	04-222 1522

STATE HOSPITALS	
PENANG	04-222 5333
BALIK PULAU	04-866 9333
SEBERANG JAYA	04-382 7333
BUKIT MERTA JAM	04-549 7333
KEPALA BATAS	04-579 3333

OTHERS	
TOURIST INFO CENTRE/ AIRPORT	04-261 4461
TOURISM M'SIA INFO CENTRE	04-643 0501
PENANG BOTANICAL GARDENS	04-227 0428
KEK LOK SI TEMPLE	04-828 3317
PENANG MUSEUM	04-261 3144
RECLINING BUDDHA TEMPLE, BURMA LANE	04-226 8503
BURMESE TEMPLE, BURMA LANE	04-226 9575

PENANG HILL RAILWAY	
	04-828 8880/828 8839

FERRY (GEORGE TOWN) (BUTTERWORTH)	04-210 2363
PENANG BRIDGE	04-310 2377
RAILWAY STATION, BUTTERWORTH	04-398 7419

TAXI WELD QUAY	04-261 0290
BEFRIENDERS	04-262 5721
CANCERLINK PENANG'S SUPPORT & INFORMATION CENTRE	04-281 5161
CHILDREN'S PROTECTION	012 457 4912

SOCIETY COMMUNITY AIDS SERVICE	
	04-829 4046

CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION	
	04-659 1554

PENANG FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC	
	04-262 2225

INFORMATION DEPARTMENT	
	04-262 2123

LABOUR DEPARTMENT	
	04-262 5536

PENANG LIBRARY	
	04-229 3555/397 1058

PENANG DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	
	04-634 0111

PENANG ISLAND CITY COUNCIL	
	04-263 7637 / 263 7000 (24 HOURS)

SEBERANG PRAI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL	
	04-5497 555

#OPBANTU WHATSAPP	
NORTHEAST DISTRICT	010-4082070
SOUTHWEST DISTRICT	011-33012414
NORTH SEBERANG PRAI	011-12424846
CENTRAL SEBERANG PRAI	013-8382102
SOUTH SEBERANG PRAI	012-4179931