

VESSEL GIFTED BY PPC

PENANG TO DISCUSS ALL FERRY OPTIONS

Factors to consider include restoration and maintenance costs, says exco member

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WILL the iconic Penang car-carrying ferry be back in operation? This is being deliberated by the Penang government after it was gifted one of the iconic ferries by the Penang Port Commission (PPC) on Wednesday.

Asked if there were plans to restore the ferry back to its original use, state Infrastructure and Transportation Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari told the *New Straits Times* that the Penang government would discuss all options and scenarios.

"The state government appreciates the gift of an iconic ferry from PPC.

"Our next step will be to deliberate what we should do with it. We will discuss all options and scenarios.



State Infrastructure and Transportation Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari says the Penang government will consider all options and scenarios with regard to the ferry gifted by the Penang Port Commission.
BERNAMA PIC

"Factors include restoration and maintenance costs," he said.

On Wednesday, PPC chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng said Zairil had informed PPC of the Penang government's intention to take over one of the ferries about a week after a discussion with him.

"Taking into account the good relationship between both parties, and that both have the same intention, PPC has agreed to gift the Penang government one of

the ferries," Tan was quoted as saying.

After nearly a century of service, the car-carrying ferries ceased operations on Dec 31.

Beginning Jan 1, Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB), which took over the ferry service from Prasarana Malaysia Bhd, began operating fast passenger boats between the mainland and the island, while one of the iconic ferries, *Pulau Angsa*, was used to transport only

motorcycles and bicycles.

This is only in the interim before PPSB introduces passenger-only water buses and vehicle transporters by July 2022.

On Wednesday, Tan announced that PPC would call for a Request for Proposal (RFP) to turn the century-old car-carrying ferries into floating museums, floating restaurants or tourist ferries.

He said the 10-year lease would come with an option to extend for

a further five years.

He had also said that the RFP was to implement Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong's decision, taking into account the cultural and heritage sentiments of Penangites towards the car-carrying ferries.

The RFP document, which will be on sale beginning today, will be advertised on PPC's website, www.penangport.gov.my, its social media accounts and in the mainstream media.

Companies interested in purchasing the RFP document must do so by Feb 15.

Due to the implementation of the Movement Control Order, the RFP document will be made available only online. The closing date is March 19.

On Jan 8, the Penang government said it would consider taking over the ferry service if the federal government had no plans to continue with it.

Zairil had said that the state government fully understood the sentiments of Penangites who were against stopping the ferry service.

He had said that the state exco had decided that if the federal government was not interested in proceeding with the ferry service, the state government would consider taking over the ownership of the said ferries.