

Free port to reach new heights

NBCT aiming to play bigger international role after achieving free trade zone status



Tan: The free trade zone will create many local employment opportunities

THE ports in Penang will grow internationally and become the first choice for foreign exporters with the North Butterworth Container Terminal (NBCT) gazetted as a free trade zone on Feb 1, yesterday.

Penang Port Commission (PPC) chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng said the free trade zone would be divided into several more zones, including industrial, commercial and special zones.

“With the effort of Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong, Finance Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz has finally agreed to gazette the NBCT as a free trade zone under the Free Zone Act 1990.

“The free trade zone will create many local employment opportunities and drive the domestic manufacturing industry.

“PPC and Penang Port Sdn Bhd will strive to improve port services to attract more foreign exporters to use the ports in Penang as well as attract foreign companies to set up factories in Penang.

“Foreign companies can import raw materials from foreign countries and process them in the free trade zone before exporting them overseas.

“As they can enjoy duty free, their products can be exported at a lower price,” he said in a statement on Friday.

Tan promised that the free trade



A view of the North Butterworth Container Terminal overlooking Penang island in the background. Tan (in red shirt) visiting NBCT to ensure that cargo clearance runs smoothly. — Filepic

zone would take comprehensive measures, introduce investment incentives and see to prompt treatment with one-stop centres to attract foreign exporters who are keen on expanding export, production and processing trade sectors in the zone.

“As the free trade zone provides a variety of industrial and commercial facilities, including efficient delivery, storage services and incentive policies, we believe that exporters from all over the world will come here to hold various product exhibitions; and processing and re-exporting activities among others,” he added.

