

BERNAMA

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## **Budget 2020 to fast track logistics industry growth - Industry players**

MANCHESTER, Oct 16 — Industry players say the 2020 Budget tabled last Friday clearly reflects the government's commitment to developing the domestic logistics sector by addressing overdue key issues such as rail lines and road repairs, while the huge sum allocated to improve port infrastructure calls for clarity in terms of the bigger plan to set Port Klang as a regional maritime centre and logistics hub.

Westports group managing director Datuk Ruben Emir Gnanalingam said Budget 2020's allocation would improve the country's transportation ecosystem and network, which augurs well for the overall logistics industry, including for Westports Holdings Bhd.

"These latest initiatives reflect the importance of the logistics sector as an integral part of the economy as the government seeks to make Malaysia the preferred destination for investments.

"With regards to Pulau Carey, the government's latest study would be able to hopefully discover when or how Pulau Carey may help in Port Klang's growth and hopefully it would be proven a viable option that could offer Port Klang even more capacity in the longer term," he told Bernama when contacted via email.

To recap, the government has allocated RM50 million for the repair and maintenance of roads leading to Port Klang, while the Transport Ministry will commence feasibility studies on the Serendah-Port Klang Rail Bypass for cargo shipments and the Klang Logistics Corridor — a dedicated privatised highway connecting Northport and Westport — with both projects estimated to cost RM8.3 billion.

An additional RM50 million was allocated to stimulate public-private partnerships for the Kota Perdana Special Border Economic Zone at Bukit Kayu Hitam.

Thought Partners Group Consulting (TPG) founder and group managing partner Abi Sofian Abdul Hamid said the government is currently addressing the overdue need of rail bypass, a study for which was carried out years ago.

TPG is a management consultant on logistics and transport infrastructure and operations, port planning, development and operations. Abi Sofian is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Malaysia (CILT) international management committee which oversees all CILT branches worldwide.

He said looking at the demand for rail services would clearly identify the need for rail services and operations, in particular for cargo movements to the ports as part of the total Budget 2020 package.