

Kuantan Port expansion to improve economic ties with China

by [simon khoo](#)



Goodwill gift: Liow receiving a souvenir from the shipmaster of cruise container ship 'MV Bei Bu Wan Zhi Xing' at Kuantan Port.

KUANTAN: The expansion of Kuantan Port into a deepwater port is expected to be completed by next year, said Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

Once completed, the port will be able to accommodate Cape-sized vessels and post-Panamax container ships of up to 200,000 deadweight tonnes (DWT).

DWT is a measurement of how much weight a ship can safely carry, and the container part of the port could only handle ships of up to 35,000 DWT.

"By then, Kuantan Port will be able to handle 52 million freight weight tonnes of bulk and container cargo," said Liow in his speech to welcome the first cruise-cum-container ship from China to dock here yesterday, marking a first for Malaysia as well.

"I am confident that the port expansion will further boost the levels of trade and tourism between Malaysia and China, in addition to strengthening economic, cultural and diplomatic relations," said Liow.

The arrival of *MV Bei Bu Wan Zhi Xing* (The Star of Beibu Gulf) with 284 passengers and crew on its maiden voyage on the "Maritime Silk Route" marked a significant milestone in the history of Kuantan Port as well as economic and social ties with its sister port in Qinzhou, China.

Liow said Kuantan Port Consortium would be investing RM3bil to double the current capacity of Kuantan Port with a new deepwater terminal.

On its part, the Government will invest RM1bil to build a 4.7km breakwater at the port, one of the longest in the world, as well as upgrading external infrastructure to support the port expansion.

“Kuantan Port has made significant progress in its development, with 17 cruise ships making port calls last year.

“Cargo handling has increased from 126,548TEUs to 131,244TEUs, almost a 4% increase,” he said, adding that the port would play an integral role in Malaysia’s maritime industry by paving the way for Malaysia to welcome more cruise ships to dock here to promote tourism.

Liow said the opening of the shipping line signified that Kuantan had become a model city that represented the realisation of partnership between Malaysia and China in building a 21st century Maritime Silk Road.

He said the twinning between the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park and Kuantan Port with Qinzhou in the form of sister ports and sister cities would mutually benefit both nations.

“The cross-border trade between Kuantan and Qinzhou ports will result in rapid transformation and increase in investments for both the East Coast Economic Region (ECER) and China’s Guangxi Region,” he said.