

# CM reminds Penang Port on need to dredge navigation channel

**GEORGE TOWN:** The state government wants Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB) to deepen the navigation channel from the current 11m to 15m for bigger ships to enter.

Reminding the concession holder that the deepening was a condition in the agreement, Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng said the state exco insisted on it.

He said state secretary Datuk Seri Farizan Darus, who sits in the Penang Port Commission (PPC) board, would point out the state's stand on the matter to the board.

"It is straightforward. If you don't do it, you cannot keep the concession. Your contract may be terminated," he said at a press conference in Komtar yesterday.

The depth of Penang's navigation channel has been a concern since 2009, before PPSB won the concession. It was estimated then that the dredging would cost RM353mil.

Public-listed MMC Corp recently announced that it would acquire all remain-

ing shares of PPSB, giving it full control of the company.

Lim raised the matter again in response to an article in *The Edge* dated April 10, which quoted PPSB chief operating officer V. Sasedharan as saying the company would "put on hold plans to dredge the channel as there is no need to accommodate bigger vessels for now."

The article also quoted PPC chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng as saying that there were no plans to restore Tanjung City Marina in Weld Quay and instead, the godown and areas surrounding Swettenham Pier would be redeveloped.

Lim, however, expressed hope that the marina would be restored.

Built in 2005, it sank in 2009 during a storm and design flaws such as the lack of a good breakwater was blamed.

Lim asked why no action was taken against those involved in building it.