

Penang to be first one-stop tuna centre

> Target to land 3,000 tonnes worth RM60m at state port this year, says minister

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BUTTERWORTH: The federal government is eyeing the lucrative tuna industry and plans to tap the business by making Penang the first state in Malaysia to have a one-stop terminal for the landing and processing of tuna.

Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek said this is in line with ministry's objective of having a comprehensive tuna industry.

He said the terminal at the deep sea berth of the Penang Port is one way to grow the industry.

He said the terminal is to be supported by a tuna processing centre at Bukit Minyak, which will start operating soon.

"The ministry is also drawing up a plan to develop the downstream industry and aims to have 10% of tuna landed here sold in the local market," he said when visiting the terminal yesterday.

Ahmad Shabery and Penang Port Commission chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng earlier attended the landing ceremony of *Kha Yang 333*, which brought



Ahmad Shabery (third from left) showing the tuna aboard *Kha Yang 333* vessel yesterday.

on shore a total of 520 tonnes of tuna.

These included the Albacore, Yellowfin and Bigeye tuna.

Ahmad Shabery said the ministry is aiming to land a total of 3,000 tonnes of tuna worth about RM60 million at Penang Port this year, adding that 1,100 tonnes have landed to date.

It targets to harvest a total of 30,000

tonnes of tuna worth about RM300 million by 2020.

Malaysia has two designated tuna ports, one in Penang and the other at the Tanjung Lembung Port in Langkawi.

"The federal government has issued 135 licences to tuna vessels on the condition that tuna caught must be landed at Malaysian tuna ports," he said.

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