

NORTHERN REGION TRANSPORTATION

KTMB EYES CROSS-BORDER TRADE BOOST

Rail services only handling some 240,000 TEUs between northern Malaysia and southern Thailand annually

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THE government wants Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd (KTMB) to further tap into the vast opportunity in cross-border trade transportation in the northern

region as 20 per cent of the rail services are now utilised for the business segment.

The rail services are only handling some 240,000 twenty-equivalent units (TEUs) between northern Malaysia and southern Thailand annually, from the total 400,000 TEUs.

As such, Deputy Finance Min-



Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Othman Aziz (third from left) with (from left) Northern Corridor Implementation Authority chief executive officer Datuk Redza Rafiq and Trili Maju chairman Mohamed Ali Abdul Samad at the charter train service launch yesterday. PIC BY RAMDZAN MASIAM

ister Datuk Othman Aziz has urged KTMB to seize the opportunity by re-looking into their existing business model.

"There is a lot of potential for us to increase the carrying capacity of the TEUs by more than double.

"The government will give its fullest support to make this possible," he said after the launching ceremony of the 200th intermodal chartered train services of Trili Maju Sdn Bhd (TMSB) at a hotel, here, yesterday.

Introduced last May, the chartered train is a premium round-trip cargo service which facili-

tates cross-border trade between Malaysia and southern Thailand.

TMSB also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with CMA-CGM Logistics towards agency appointment, signifying yet another milestone for TMSB in its engagement with the world logistics giant.

Othman said the rail services, with the completion of the electrified double-tracking project in 2014, would complement the similar services offered by Penang Port Sdn Bhd services, which handled some 1.5 million TEUs

last year.

Othman said another problem was the backlog of cargo movements at the border, adding that the government was in the midst of building a new ICQS (Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security) complex in Padang Besar, Perlis.

Meanwhile, KTMB chairman Datuk Nawawi Ahmad said the company was looking into expanding container storage area in Padang Besar from the existing 3.23 ha to 7.28 ha, which will be able to store up to 350,000 TEUs, from 120,000 TEUs a year now.