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Westports to benefit from 9th Plan emphasis on transport

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WESTPORTS Malaysia is bullish about growth and is confident of playing a significant role in the country's development into the next decade, said its executive chairman Tan Sri G. Gnanalingam.

He said the port is poised to benefit from the emphasis placed by the Government on the transport industry under the Ninth

Malaysia Plan.

Westports expects growth of containers from 12 million TEUs to 18 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) in the next five years. "We are ready to achieve this target," Gnanalingam told delegates at the Fourth Asean Ports and Shipping 2006 conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said Westports has done well by growing to 2.91 million TEUs last year from about 500,000 TEUs eight years ago. Westports, which

now handles more than half Port Klang's cargo, aims to handle 3.5 million TEUs this year.

Gnanalingam optimism was based on Malaysia's economic competitiveness as the 17th largest trading nation and the seventh largest country for containers in the world. He also noted that Malaysian ports offers the lowest tariffs in the world and the fastest connectivity to other developing and fast growing markets.

For the next decade, Westports

will continue to grow by leveraging not only on its world-class facilities and services, but also through the development that is taking shape within its vicinity.

Westports will play the role of logistics enhancer due to its location in the vicinity of the Selangor Halal Hub and the development of the halal hub currently taking shape at the Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ).

Both these facilities, located on Pulau Indah, mark a significant

development in making the country as a centre for the manufacturing and exporting of halal products. "There's a great opportunity for Malaysians to spearhead the Halal Hub to serve two billion Muslims with consumption valued at RM500 billion," he said.

He said that Westports stands to gain by the soon-to-be-opened PKFZ, which will pave the way for the emergence of many industries that will be a boon for the future growth of the port.