

Opportunities galore for Sabah at Dubai Expo

KOTA KINABALU: A Sabah delegation's visit to the Expo 2020 Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) later this month is expected to launch Sabah onto the global network of logistics.

State-owned POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd is set to sign up a Framework Agreement which entails POIC's port to become a member of the World Logistics Passport (WLP), thus linking it to an expanding membership of global companies and leaders in logistics.

The signing will take place on 23rd December 2021 at Malaysia Pavilion, Expo 2020, Dubai.

"WLP's intentions in increasing trade between emerging markets is the kind of global alliance that fits into our plan of developing our POIC Lahad Datu as a regional processing and logistics

hub in the east region," said POIC Sabah Chief Executive Officer Datuk Fredian Gan.

POIC Lahad Datu, developed since 2005, aims to leverage on its strategic location within BIMP-EAGA, the Lombok-Makassar Shipping Route, deep harbour and comprehensive set of port infrastructure to grow as a regional aggregation hub for raw materials and downstream value-adding.

Gan revealed that WLP is a new trading global freight and logistics loyalty programme launched in 2020 under a directive of the ruler of UAE at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Since then, Sony, Johnson & Johnson, UPS, Pfizer are among global companies which have signed up.

"It (WLP) aims to combine the strengths of national trade organisations, logistics leaders and multi-nationals to form a close knit alliance focused on trade growth.

"It hopes to supercharge supply chain development and bridge the gaps between manufacturing hubs that are expanding across emerging markets, particularly in South East Asia and Africa," Gan added.

Among the first countries to join WLP were Brazil, Colombia, South Africa, India, Indonesia and Thailand. Malaysia (through Johore Port) and China were among countries that signed up in recent months. They included Ethiopia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Kenya, Paraguay and Ecuador.

Meanwhile, Gan believed that BIMP EAGA's global reputation as a 'Global Basin of Natural Resources' such as palm oil, petroleum, minerals should make it a subject of interest in the WLP network.

"WLP is part of Dubai's Silk Road strategy which, according to its Ruler, is an initiative reflecting UAE's vision to shape a brighter future for the world through innovative programmes which foster global trade cooperation."

Dubai Expo 2020 opened in the UAE on October 1, 2021, and will continue to March 31, 2022. Its theme is 'Connecting Minds, And creating The Future'.

A total 192 countries are participating. It has registered about three million visitors since the October opening.