

Westports Q2 Profit Advances to RM160mil

PETALING JAYA: Westports Holdings Bhd net profit jumped to RM159.9mil in the second quarter ended June 30 from RM122.1mil a year ago due to an increase in container volumes.

Correspondingly, revenue also climbed to RM522.6mil from RM405.3mil last year.

For the first six months, the port operator's net profit stood higher at RM330.9mil from RM242.3mil in 2015.

Revenue for the first half of the year chalked up to RM987.3mil against RM804mil in corresponding period last year.

Westport announced its first interim single tier dividend of 7.3 sen per ordinary share in respect of the current financial year ending with entitlement date on Aug 11, 2016. Westports' container operations achieved another milestone by handling 4.9 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) in the in the first half of this year.

Transshipment containers increased to 3.6 million TEUs while the group handled 1.3 million TEUs of gateway containers.

"Our first six months volume has been very encouraging and resilient given the modest regional economic growth during the period as we achieved another milestone by handling our highest ever interim container volume of 4.9 million TEUs.

"Westports also benefited from accommodating our shipping clients' ad-hoc handling requirements as they introduced larger vessels into their existing container shipping services" said Westports chief executive officer Ruben Emir Gnanalingam.

Ruben pointed out that there would be realignment in the container shipping industry next year as key liners in existing container shipping alliances form new and different alliances next year.

As a terminal operator, Westports will continue to support our shipping clients' regional transshipment requirements with cost competitive, world-class productivity level of services and also expanding container terminal facilities. "Our Phase 1 of CT8 expansion with 300-metre of wharf has commenced operations with the additional of four units of new state-of-the-art 52-metre high ship-to-shore cranes and six units of energy-efficient rubber tyred gantry cranes.

“The entire CT8 expansion will cost a total of RM1.1bil and when completed, would raise Westports’ total container terminal handling capacity to 13.5 million TEUs with our extended contiguous linear berth of 5.2 kilometers, thereby allowing the group to also support requirements of new and larger shipping alliances from 2017 onwards,” he said.