

# Labuan ship registry registers first vessel

## Sohan Das

**LABUAN:** Transport Minister Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat on Saturday presented a replica of the registration certificate to the first ship registered under the 2006-established "Open International Ship Registry" in Labuan and said he was hopeful the registry would be a stimulus to the local shipping industry.

The certificate is for a derrick lay barge, "Puterisime 786", now under construction in China and expected to be completed early next year.

The vessel registered under the Labuan Company Act 1999 is owned by Sime Derby Marine Puteri Offshore (L) Inc.

Ong said the newly-established registry in Labuan is more competitive compared to those elsewhere and he was confident that it would register 10 ships by the end of the year.

He said sea transportation is an important industry with 95 per cent of goods handled by ships while Malaysian participation in the industry is minimal and this leads to loss of foreign exchange through freight payments.

"While conventional registry requires 51 per cent Malaysian ownership of the vessel, the new registry allows 100 per cent foreign equity and the registration fees are comparatively cheaper," he added.

Ong said Malaysia has to increase its capacity to transport cargoes.

"The Marine Department has received a number of enquires about the open registry through phone and e-mail and this augurs well as it indicates the growing interest of Malaysians in the shipping industry," he said.

"Puterisime 786", which has a gross tonnage of 19,902, has an accommodation capacity for 300 people and is capable of undertaking marine-related activities that include installation work and pipe installation.

Ong added that such Malaysian vessel with international certification could also open up new opportunities for Malaysians in the maritime industry.

Among those present at the function were MP Datuk Yussof Mahal, Marine Department Director-General Datuk Captain Ahmad Othman, Lofsa Director-General Datuk Azizan Abdul Rahman, Sime Darby Marine Puteri Offshore CEO Abdul Kadir Alias and Marine Puteri Offshore Director Abdul Rahim Ismail.



Ong (left) handing over a replica of the certificate to Abdul Kadir Alias.

