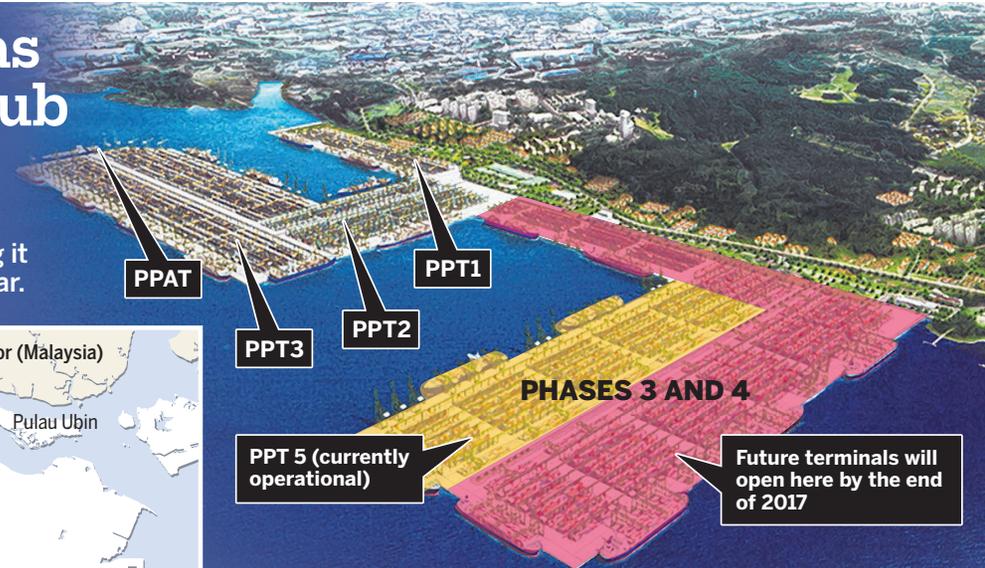
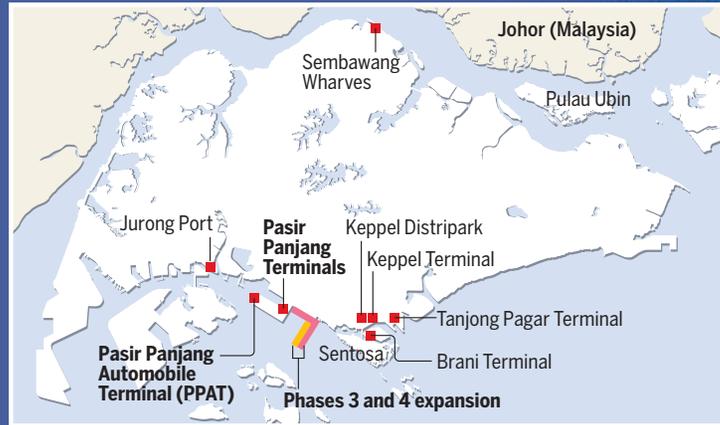




PSA Institute trainer Martin Verghese, seen here in a crane simulator, was among the first group of quay crane operators. PM Lee Hsien Loong paid tribute to workers like him yesterday. PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

Shoring up status as leading shipping hub

The Phases 3 and 4 expansion of Pasir Panjang Terminal (PPT) will add 15 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) to Singapore's handling capacity, boosting it by 40 per cent to 50 million TEUs each year.



FEATURES OF PHASES 3 AND 4

- Cost: \$3.5 billion
- Quay length: Almost 6km
- Berths: 15
- Draft: Up to 18m
- Container yard with automated rail-mounted gantry cranes
- Handling capacity of 15 million container units per annum

Source: PSA SINGAPORE TERMINALS

ST GRAPHICS PHOTO: PSA SINGAPORE TERMINALS

Port's success anchored on workers' tireless efforts: PM Lee

By ADRIAN LIM

SINGAPORE has come a long way to achieve its status as a shipping hub, but could not have done so without the efforts of pioneers and generations of port workers, who "worked tirelessly, 24/7" to keep the port running efficiently.

At the official launch of Pasir Panjang Terminal's Phases 3 and

4 expansion yesterday, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong paid tribute to this group of workers in a speech.

Of particular mention was Mr Martin Verghese, 71, who was among the first group of quay crane operators. Mr Verghese unloaded the first container off the first-ever container vessel to call at Singapore, the MV Nihon,

which arrived from Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on June 23, 1972.

Mr Lee also mentioned Mr Toh Kok Tia, 70, who was a work supervisor when the MV Nihon arrived.

Both men are now trainers at the PSA Institute and mentor the next generation of port workers.

Mr Lee also credited good leadership – such as the foresight of

founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and the PSA's first chairman, Mr Howe Yoon Chong, to start Singapore's first container terminal in Tanjong Pagar. It was commissioned in 1972, when the idea of containerisation was still new.

Mr Lee said: "We didn't know whether it would be a success because, with the MV Nihon, the first ship which came, it was just

300 containers – not a game changer in itself, but it was the beginning of a game change."

Today, Singapore handles ships with more than 18,000 containers, turning them around and sending them back out in about a day.

Mr Lee also cited Mr Lim Kim San, for leading the PSA to grow to become one of the world's busi-

est ports, as well as Dr Yeo Ning Hong, a former chairman, and Mr David Lim, a former chief executive, for expanding PSA's footprint internationally.

Mr Lee also recognised the close cooperation that existed with the port workers' unions and acknowledged the staff of the Maritime and Port Authority.

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