

# 'A strong emphasis on peace'

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Focus on the future: Wee delivering his special keynote address at Istana Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. — AZMAN GHANI/The Star

PETALING JAYA: It is unnecessary for the world to feel intimidated by how strong China is, as the Chinese put a strong emphasis on peace, says Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong.

He cited Admiral Cheng Ho's visit to Melaka where he had forged friendships between Malaysia and China, including the people from both nations.

Admiral Cheng Ho, or Zheng He, made Melaka one of his maritime bases during his epic expeditionary voyages between 1405 and 1433.

He traversed Asia, Africa and 30 other countries. His journeys took place 87 years before Christopher Columbus; 94 years earlier than Vasco Da Gama and 114 years prior to Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigating the world.

He also said the world needed to have better understanding, support and collaboration post-pandemic.

“We need to let go of our prejudice and look out for one another by living in peace.

“The pandemic has caused unprecedented damage to our public health and education systems.

“It is more important to ensure that everyone receives the vaccine and for us to protect the right to education than to treat the Chinese with hostility. If we continue to be ignorant of these issues, it will have a greater impact on us than imagined,” he said in his keynote address at the World Chinese Economic Summit 2020 yesterday.

On another matter, Dr Wee said political stability remains a vital part in nation-building on top of government efforts in ensuring a “vibrant and dynamic” economy.

“No one, especially foreign investors, will be interested to invest in our country when the political situation is unstable.

“What our business community hopes for is to have more certainties in the political arena and a conducive environment that attracts foreign investors,” he said.

Wee, who is also MCA president, said the government has a post-pandemic plan, noting that under Budget 2021, the government is providing and extending many policies that benefit foreign investors.

“It is hoped that increased investment returns will attract more forward-looking hi-tech companies to invest in upgrading the country’s basic infrastructure and improving the business environment.

“This will help firms in and outside Malaysia to cultivate better development conditions and increase competitiveness,” he said.

Dr Wee said the Transport Ministry had been planning the construction and upgrading of public transport infrastructure, including airports, ports and rail tracks.

As such, he said this would strengthen Malaysia’s trade channel advantage and spur the country’s economic growth to create more job opportunities for people.

For the aviation industry, Wee said once the Kuala Lumpur Air Traffic Control Centre Complex (KL ATCCC) is fully operational, it will be able to greatly improve the efficiency of the country’s aviation and logistics industries and enhance aviation safety and security, adding that it has the world’s most advanced communication, navigation, monitoring and air traffic management technologies and systems.

China Kuantan Industrial Park.

“The logistics industry is regarded as an indispensable part of the digital economy. Not only is shipping the core of our logistics industry, it also plays a significant role in our import and export activities.

“The development of our ports will affect the operation of our logistics industry and determine the success of the manufacturing sector. We can easily judge the country’s economy by just looking at how busy our ports are,” he said.

With land transport, Wee said the government was currently developing an extensive rail network that includes the ECRL, RTS, LRT3 and MRT projects.

These projects would provide convenience and efficiency to the logistics and travel industries as well as to resolve traffic congestion.

“It will also benefit the delivery services that are closely linked to online businesses,” he said.

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