
Mombasa Port privatization starts with a rocky start

Friday, 06 Nov, 2009

It is reported that Kenya's plan to privatize the port of Mombasa is off to a rocky start with a group of members of parliament from the coast province calling for its stoppage. They claim that transport minister Mr Chirau Ali Mackerel is pushing it on behalf of a few individuals intent on robbing the coast of its only resource.

Sources said that the privatization of some berths at the port of Mombasa is interpreted in some quarters as a ploy to scuttle plans for the construction of the second container terminal that is funded by the government of Japan to a tune of USD 302 million.

It may be noted that the cabinet approved privatization of the port in December 2008 and a Kenya Gazette notice published on August 14th 2009 endorsed the plans.

According to the notice, the government intends to fully privatize stevedoring services and development of berths 11 to 14 at the port and the Eldoret Container Terminal.

The Privatization Commission of Kenya is expected to select a firm that will develop and implement the privatization proposal. Four firms have so far tendered for the consultancy job, including local audit firm PricewaterhouseCoppers, CPCS Transcorn, HPC Hamburg Port Consulting and Maritime and Transport Business Solutions.

Details have now emerged that the planned privatization of berths 11 to 14 could just be a ploy to secure control of containerized cargo by a section of industry players before the construction of the second container terminal that is expected to be ready by 2012.

A source privy to the activities who did not want to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter said that there are plans to hand over the four berths to a single player.

(Sourced from www.cargonewsasia.com)

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