

# KERATAN AKHBAR

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### Phee: Penang to send back 106 containers with plastic waste

By N. TRISHA  
trishang@thestar.com.my

**GEORGE TOWN:** A total of 106 cargo containers with plastic waste will be returned to their countries of origin according to the Basel Convention, says state Environment Committee chairman Phee Boon Poh.

He said they had already shipped out 10 containers in August.

The Basel Convention is an international treaty that controls the movement of hazardous waste between countries.

Phee, however, said that another

255 containers were still being kept at the Customs Department courtyard in Butterworth.

"Based on reports by the Penang Port Sdn Bhd, until Sept 30 this year, the 255 containers with plastic waste were placed at the North Butterworth Container Terminal (NBCT) and Customs Detention Yard.

"From that number, 130 containers were not declared and will be handed over to the National Solid Waste Management, while 125 containers which were declared but do not have approved permits will be compounded by the Customs Department.

"The 255 containers of plastic waste are from various other sources.

"They are not part of the original 116 containers that are in the process of being sent back to their point of origin," he said at the state assembly at Dewan Sri Pinang yesterday.

To address the problem of "import" of containers with plastic waste to Penang, Phee said the state had taken pro-active steps by sending a formal letter to the Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change Ministry and the Urban Well-being, Housing and Local Government Ministry to pro-

pose the implementation of control measures on industries involved in recycling of plastic.

"The suggestions submitted are for an approved permit to be granted to operators recycling plastic from the state government, local authorities and the state Department of Environment.

"When importing the goods, the approved permit and certificate of Clean Goods from the place of origin must also be required before the container is allowed to dock at the port.

"Only pre-consumer plastic waste (clean plastic) should be allowed to

be imported for recycling purposes," he said adding that this is one of the conditions.

On May 31, it was reported that 265 cargo containers filled with rotting food, organic matter and plastic waste were stranded at the NBCT.

On June 15, Penang Customs uncovered another 132 containers filled with plastic waste at the same terminal.

The containers were shipped in from various countries such as Britain, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Hong Kong and Japan.