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~~\$50b to be spent on port projects~~

HONGKONG port facilities will expand westward in the next decade as container-handling capacity is increased five-fold.

North Lantau and the west coast of Tuen Mun were potential sites for new container ports, the Governor, Sir David Wilson, said in his annual address.

New transportation links to the Chek Lap Kok airport would be able to service the new ports.

To cope with immediate pressures, the northwest of Stonecutters Island would be reclaimed for container terminal No 8, to be operational by mid-1993.

Terminal 9 would be built on reclaimed land at the southeast of Tsing Yi.

Port facilities currently handle 80 million tonnes of cargo a year.

Sir David outlined Government aims for port expansion up to the year 2006:

- A five-fold increase in container-handling capacity.

- The provision of additional land for lorry parking and container storage.

- The provision of on-shore facilities to eliminate the need for unloading in the harbour itself.

- The development of space to cater for larger vessels and the industrial activities a modern port requires.

The Governor said a Port Development Board would be set up to co-ordinate developments and give advice on the detailed planning and management of the port's expansion.

This move drew criticism from the chairman of the Hongkong Liner Shipping Association, Mr Gavin Needes, who said he would continue to push for the establishment of a fully-fledged port authority.

Sir David also revealed two more major developments to expand the western harbour: the construction of a large breakwater between Lantau and Lamma and the dredging of a new shipping channel to the west of Lamma.

The Governor said port expansion would cost \$50 billion over the next 16 years, with many opportunities for private-sector participation.