

Vitrox eyes land in Batu Kawan

HOME GROWN test equipment manufacturer Vitrox Corp Bhd will be seeking shareholder approval to acquire land for a new campus at Batu Kawan on mainland Penang.

The company, which designs and produces automated vision inspection equipment for the semiconductor and electronic packages industries, is looking to purchase an 8ha land to house its corporate headquarters and also host its business partners and suppliers at the same site.

"We will need to obtain shareholder approval first for this proposed expansion plan which will see the company's existing headcount increase tenfold to 3,000 by 2020," the company's chairman Datuk Seri Kelvin Kiew Kwong Sen told reporters.

He said the move is to cater to Vitrox's growth plans and ride on the back of the semiconductor industry's recovery.

"Vitrox's shipping revenue was RM100 million last year and the first half of this year has seen of the same amount."

Chew was speaking after Malaysian Investment Development Authority chairman Tan Sri Amirsham A. Aziz officially opened Vitrox's RM10 million Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Machine Vision at the company's premises in the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone.

The centre is partially financed by the Domestic Investment Strategic Fund, which is managed by Mida to accelerate the shift of Malaysian-owned companies in targeted industries to high value-added, high technology, knowledge-intensive and innovation-based industries.

Also present was Vitrox president and chief executive officer Chu Jenn Weng.

Chu said subject to shareholder approval, the new facility is expected to break ground by next year and be completed by 2016.

"The new facility, which will be known as the Vitrox Campus 2.0, will also house a research and development centre," he added, without disclosing the proposed investment for the project.

Amirsham, in his speech, said there are currently 100 companies producing automated equipment for the semiconductor industry.

"With the current trend of increasing demand for semiconductor products resulting from the global recovery of the electrical and electronics industry as well as higher export demands from China, emerging from new funding facility aimed at encouraging its microchip industry, we foresee that there will be many more new business opportunities that should be leveraged by Malaysian manufacturers of specialised process equipment," Amirsham added.



Mida chairman, Tan Sri Amirsham Abdul Aziz (left) with ViTrox Corp Bhd chairman Datuk Seri Kelvin Kiew Kwong Sen (right) and ViTrox president and CEO Chu Jenn Weng at the opening of the Centre of Excellence in Bayan Lepas yesterday. Pic by Amir Irsyad Omar

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