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STIDC: S'wak to produce, export value-added furniture under TITP

KUCHING: Sarawak will develop the wood-based downstream sector to produce and export value-added products particularly furniture under the Timber Industry Transformation Plan (TITP), said Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) general manager Datu Hashim Bojet.

This, he added, would boost income for the state because concerted efforts were made by STIDC to accelerate the development of furniture industry in Sarawak.

He said this was evidenced by the engagement session between STIDC and the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC), Malaysian Timber Council (MTC), furniture industry players and potential investors in the Peninsular Malaysia recently.

"The aim was to attract investors particularly the prominent furniture companies to become anchor companies in our furniture industry and the planned furniture parks in Kuching and Tanjung Manis by leveraging on raw materials from planted forests and home-grown world-class furniture designers," he said in a statement yesterday.

Describing the engagement session as fruitful, Hashim said it was jointly organised by MPIC and MTC following the visit of Deputy Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities Datuk Willie Mongin to STIDC Licence for Planted Forests (LPF) area 43 in Bintulu in April.

The visit was aimed to facilitate STIDC in meeting investors from Malaysian Furniture Association and other associations to promote and develop Sarawak furniture parks.

He added the initiative augured well with Sarawak Post Covid-19 Development Strategy as well as the STIDC Timber Industry Transformation and Reformation Plan to produce more value-added wood-based products to generate RM8 billion in export earnings by 2030 in which the furniture sector is poised to contribute RM4 billion.

"STIDC is also focusing on other value-added products such as engineered-wood products as well as plywood-based and bamboo-based products.

"Sarawak aims to certify 4.5 million hectares of long-term licensed areas and 178,000 hectares of forest plantations under the Malaysian Timber Certification Council's (MTCC) initiative.

"This is to ensure sustainable supply of raw materials to



Datu Hashim Bojet

support the local furniture industry," said Hashim.

In accelerating the development of furniture parks, Hashim said the government was also looking into human capital and infrastructure development.

He also revealed that the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (Mida) was offering several incentives such as the Pioneer Status and Investment Tax Allowance for companies investing in the manufacturing sector as well as the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Reinvestment Allowance.

"STIDC will continue to work closely with other agencies such as MPIC, MTC, MTCC, Mida, Sirim Bhd, Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB), Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), Furniture Industry Technology Centre (Fitec), Forest Department Sarawak, Sarawak Timber Association (STA), and Sarawak Furniture Industry Association (SFIA).

"We will also work closely with Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), University of Technology Sarawak (UCTS) and Swinburne University of Technology to accelerate the development of downstream industry to produce and export value-added products," he said.

Following the collaboration, he said STIDC would pursue engagements with foreign investors to promote investments in wood-based and bamboo-based products such as Glued Laminated Wood (Glulam Wood), Laminated veneer lumber (LVL), furniture and many more in realisation of the aspiration to generate RM8 billion in export earnings by 2030.

Hashim also revealed that STIDC was in the process of constructing two furniture parks in the state as one of steps to generate RM8 billion in export earnings by 2030.

"Through these furniture parks, we hope to assist the local furniture manufacturers by marketing their products," he said.