

Timber industry must embrace digitalisation



Monday, April 12th, 2021 at [News](#)



The use of high tech is the best solution for the industry to remain competitive locally and internationally, says deputy minister

by S BIRRUNTHA / pic by BERNAMA

THE government, through Sirim STS Sdn Bhd, has allocated a RM1.4 million grant for the Factory Transformation Programme (FTP), specifically for timber companies, to help the industry go digital.



Deputy Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Jeck Seng said this is because the timber industry can no longer rely on conventional methods and must embrace digitalisation in factory production systems.

He added that the use of high technology is the best solution for the timber industry to remain competitive locally and internationally.

“In addition to reducing dependence on labour, the adoption of high technologies can also help companies manage operating costs more efficiently and effectively.

“Tackling the new challenges to the country’s timber industry requires change,” he said after a signing ceremony at Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) in Kuala Lumpur last Friday.



Wee witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between MTIB, Sirim STS and Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) for the FTP implementation.

Wee said the MoU was forged to empower the development of the timber industry in Malaysia through the utilisation of automation and innovation technology related to IR4.0 by providing incentives to encourage automation and mechanisation.

The FTP is a one-year programme, which began in December last year, and will benefit 14 selected timber companies in the furniture industry.

“The timber industry stands to benefit from the FTP initiative, which is fully geared to meet IR4.0 demand.

“The programme will support and help timber companies get involved in conducting plant evaluations and diagnostic studies to identify inefficiencies and waste through Sirim’s Green 5S tools and techniques, as well as Lean Management.

“It will also identify and develop guidelines and practices that can be adopted by companies, and guide them to identify relevant IT platforms and the Internet of Things technologies in collaboration with solution providers,” he said.

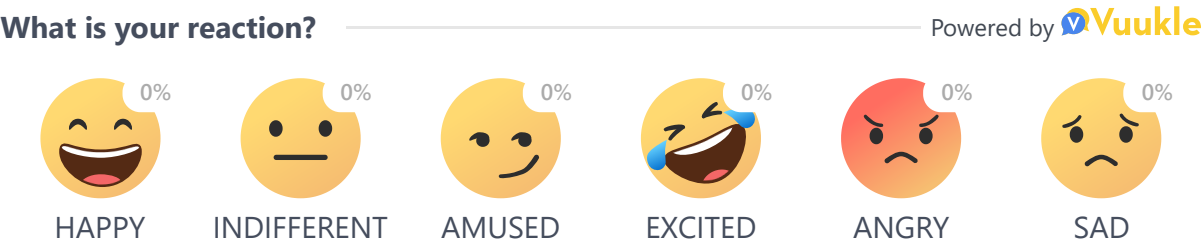
Wee added that Sirim STS will finance 80% of the participation fees for the programme, while the balance will be funded by the MTC.

The previous “Lean and Green 5S” management programme by MTIB from 2014 to 2019 had benefitted 171 companies, with savings of RM89.6 million recorded in the timber industry.

Hence, Wee said MTIB will continue with these activities this year with a reference book on “Lean Application” in the timber industry.

“I hope participating companies can commit and take full advantage and learn about the use of technologies, automation and innovation.

“This efficiency and productivity will definitely empower our country’s timber industry in the face of today’s increasingly fierce and challenging environment,” he noted.



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