

Govt to help timber industry

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Programme will provide upgrades to ensure field meets IR4.0

KUALA LUMPUR: In an effort to transform the timber industry, the government's Factory Transformation Programme (FTP) aims to help the industry upgrade its factories to meet the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0).

Deputy Primary Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Jeck Seng, who launched the programme, said the FTP grant valued at RM1.4mil will benefit 14 timber companies in the furniture industry sector.

The FTP, implemented in December last year, will last for a year.

"Sirim STS Sdn Bhd will pay 80% of the participation fees for those who join the programme while the remaining 20% will be funded by

Malaysian Timber Council (MTC)," he said at the Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) office in Menara PGRM here yesterday.

The FTP memorandum of understanding was signed by MTIB, MTC and Sirim STS.

Wee said the programme will support and help timber industry companies to be involved in conducting plant evaluations and diagnostic studies to identify inefficiencies and wastage through Green 5S tools and techniques, and lean management.

(The 5S method is a management tool to implement safety health, quality productivity, green environment and energy efficiency.)

The programme, Wee added, will

also identify and develop guidelines and practices that can be adopted by companies, and guide them to identify relevant information technology platforms and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies in collaboration with solution providers.

He noted that the furniture industry in the country has a lot of potential as its products are not only sold in the domestic market but are also exported overseas to more than 100 countries.

"The industry can no longer rely on conventional methods and has to shift towards digital in its production systems.

"Apart from being able to reduce labour dependency, the usage of high technology can also help com-

panies manage operating costs more efficiently and effectively," he said, adding that digital transformation enables the industry to remain competitive in the global market.

Wee hailed the strategic cooperation among MTIB, MTC and Sirim STS as timely to enhance the usage of automation and innovation in the timber industry, in line with the government's efforts and the development of IR4.0.

Also present at the event were MITB director-general Mohd Kheiruddin Mohd Rani, MTC CEO Muhtar Suhaili, Sirim Bhd president and group chief executive Datuk Dr Ahmad Sabirin Arshad and Sirim STS CEO Raja Yahya Raja Ariffin.

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Datuk Seri Dr Wee Jeck Seng