

MOU Paves Way for Timber Industry's Shift to Automation and Digitalisation



The timber-based manufacturing sector needs to shift its business strategies towards automation and digitalisation to strengthen its operations in the long term, says Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Dr Mohd Khairuddin Aman Razali. He said the move could help reduce dependency on foreign workers, create new job opportunities and maintain itself as an important sector.

For this purpose, he said the industry had to obtain the services of trained engineers who would be able to digitally analyse any problem pertaining to operations in ensuring effective management decision-making.

“The ministry supports the Higher Education Ministry’s initiatives to intensively absorb the use of technological applications among

undergraduates in facing Industrial Revolution 4.0 challenges, as it is timely and should be supported by industry players,” he said.

To mark the cooperation between both ministries with support from the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) and selected institutions of higher learning, Dr Mohd Khairuddin and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad jointly launched the 2021 Timber Industry Engineer Placement and Internship Programme in Putrajaya.

The programme was organised by MTC.

At the event, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between MTC, six timber associations, eight universities and Polytechnic and Community College Education Department (JPPKK) was signed and witnessed by both ministers.

The eight universities are Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (TAR UC), Universiti Malaya (UM) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

“The programme will boost

graduates’ marketability and strengthen the timber industry’s development and innovations,” said Khairuddin.

“The timber industry is a sub- sector of the third highest commodity after oil palm and rubber, with RM22.1bil in export performance in 2020.

“The ministry welcomes MTC’s initiatives to empower human capital through the involvement of trained professionals in the timber industry.

“The ministry also hopes for the involvement of industry players and the full support of timber associations to ensure the industry’s continuous growth, while boosting the people’s income and country’s economy,” he concluded.

