

INVESTKL

# GLOBAL MNCs GROOMING WORLD-CLASS LOCAL TALENT IN KL

Highly-skilled talent pool will be beneficial to country's journey towards Industry 4.0

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**I**NDUSTRY 4.0 is reshaping economies around the world with rapid technological advancements. By providing an enabling eco-system to thrive in new technologies, the country will continue to attract high-growth investment from various industries, especially in the high-value services sector, providing regional high-paying jobs.

In a recent statement, International Trade and Investment Minister Datuk Darell Leiking said Industry 4.0 or Industry4WRD, will pave the way for enhanced productivity, job creation, high-skilled talent pool and contribute to the economic prosperity and societal well-being.

Two multinational companies (MNCs) with regional hubs in Malaysia are committed to invest in upskilling local talent to help

them achieve global competitiveness and prepare for technological advancement of Industry 4.0.

Feilo Sylvania, international leading manufacturer of lighting products and Air Liquide, world leader in industrial gases, technologies and services are giving back to the Malaysian community through various human capital development programmes.

The firms, known for their technological advancements and Industry 4.0 related activities, said they are grooming local talent to possess qualities that will place them on a level playing field with international peers, especially in the areas of digital technology and automation.

This, they believe, will be beneficial to Malaysia's economy as the demand for highly-skilled talent will increase as the country journeys towards Industry 4.0.

"We will continue to collaborate with talent ecosystem, working with the academia and related parties to build and grow local talent capabilities to face new challenges ahead as we grow our investment in the region,"

said Feilo Sylvania regional general manager for Southeast Asia Walter Hiew in an interview recently.

He said the firm will expand its team to be more technologically innovative as the company cements its position as a leading provider of consumer, industrial and architectural lighting solutions.

"The company's emphasis on human capital development is an important factor to support regional business expansion in the region. We focus on educating, upskilling, re-skilling, training and other professional development initiatives to improve and increase the level of knowledge, skill sets and experience of our employees," said Hiew.



Walter Hiew

Feilo Sylvania launched its regional hub in Greater Kuala Lumpur in 2017 with an initial investment of US\$10 million (RM41 million) while Air Liquide selected Kuala Lumpur from other regional locations early last year to set up its regional Smart Innovative Operations (SIO) centre with a €20 million (RM96 million) investment.

Air Liquide believes in provid-



InvestKL chief executive officer Datuk Zainal Amanshah says Malaysia's local talent is highly-skilled to meet industry demands.

ing more international exposure to local talent in their global operations as well as in senior management levels of the organisation.

"We place much importance on skills and development of our employees. That is one example of how we can contribute to the Malaysian economy and eco-system," said Air Liquid Centre of Excellence director Clement Lix and SIO Transformation director Sebastien Giard.

"Continuous upskilling is important. It will better equip employees with skills as they climb the corporate ladder. For example, we have soft and leadership training and on-the-job training. We are developing local talent so that one day they can lead and manage our operations here.

"They will not be doing repetitive transactional and value tasks in our organisation, but will be exposed to big data and learn how to extract value from it," they said.

Feilo Sylvania and Air Liquide said one of the main reasons they chose Malaysia as their regional services hub is due to the country's highly-skilled talent pool.

Hiew said the firm believes Malaysian skilled workforce is capable to undertake its servicing and manufacturing activities. Currently, almost all its regional employees are Malaysians.

"With a diverse talent pool, we are able to tap into this valuable asset to further expand our services in Malaysia, a regional hub for business growth and development in Southeast Asia," he said.

For Air Liquide, Clement and Sebastien said that they have access to a large pool of talent, top universities and experienced professionals. Air Liquide works on various academic collaboration programmes with the universities.

InvestKL's chief executive officer Datuk Zainal Amanshah said Malaysia was ranked 22nd among 63 countries by the In-

ternational Institute for Management Development last year, ahead of Japan, the United Kingdom and France.

In terms of investment and development of home-grown talent, Malaysia was ranked 17th, ahead of the United States, Japan, France, South Korea and UK.

With the availability of diverse, high-skilled talent, more foreign MNCs are beginning to see the value of setting up and operating their regional and global business services hub in Greater KL.

Foreign direct investments for global and regional establishments last year accounted for RM16.5 billion of approved investments in the services sector.

Zainal said investments in digital technology are growing in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, Big Data Analytics, Internet of Things and Cybersecurity, which is in-line with Miti's national policy on Industry 4.0 or Industry4WRD initiatives.

All these factors have put Malaysia on an elevated platform among global investors.

The value proposition of Greater KL is hard to beat, with our strong business infrastructure and a conducive ecosystem to support investors.

Local talent is highly-skilled to meet industry demands. We facilitate collaboration between multinationals and academia to nurture locals to be global corporate leaders through our Malaysia Global Talent (MGT) programme," said Zainal.

"The MGT programme was launched to set and facilitate initiatives that would help develop and enhance local talent skills to be at par with global standards. The sharing of MNCs' knowledge, expertise and best practices would help prepare Malaysians to work with global MNCs. InvestKL will continue to facilitate the needs of MNCs, to ensure that their regional operations in Greater KL continue to grow," said Zainal.

Air Liquid  
Centre of  
Excellence  
Director  
Clement Lix  
(right) and  
Smart  
Innovative  
Operations  
Director  
Sebastien Giard  
at an interview  
in Petaling  
Jaya recently.

PIC BY ROSDAN  
WAHID

