

16 MAY 1996

MALAYSIAN-MADE TV ASSEMBLER PINNING HOPES ON LOCAL MARKET

By: Salbiah Said

KUALA LUMPUR, May 16 (Bernama) -- Anggun Permai Industries Sdn Bhd, the assembler of a Malaysian-made television and home theatre system which made waves in Russia and Uzbekistan, is now pinning hopes on the local market.

"We hope to get some credit facility from Malaysian banks to enable us to expand and market our products aggressively both overseas and locally," executive director Tengku Ngah Putra bin Tengku Ahmad Tajuddin told Bernama in Zagreb, Croatia, recently.

Anggun Permai was one of 28 Malaysian companies which took part in the five-day Malaysian Products '96 Exhibition in Zagreb from April 16, organised by the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade).

In Zagreb, Anggun Permai signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Niva Trgovina for the assembling and distribution of the "Nikom" system in Croatia, witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his one-day official visit to the republic.

Under the MOU, Anggun Permai will supply components and transfer technology to Niva which has a factory in Zagreb. Initially, Anggun Permai will despatch 2,000 TV sets of various sizes - 14", 20", 21" and 29" - and the home theatre system to Niva.

However, this depended on approval of its loan application from Malaysian banks, Tengku Ngah Putra said, adding that he would follow up with Matrade on the latest development.

Following the MOU, he hoped to sign a joint venture agreement with Niva but, for the moment, it was finalising some terms and conditions for the project in which Anggun Permai would hold a majority stake.

He said the company, which had been operating largely from internally-generated funds and partly from bank loans, would have to secure further financial support from Malaysian banks and tax exemption from the government to embark on a more aggressive expansion campaign.

In the Klang Valley, the company's Nikom brand is known to consumers of electronic goods, supplied direct to dealers from its factory in Klang.

The Nikom TV sets and home theatre system were comparatively cheaper than other brands, he said.

The company has been receiving orders from Sabah, Pahang, Pulau Pinang but had to decline due to financial constraints.

"I have big plans in Malaysia, to introduce my brand name to Malaysia now that I have gone to Croatia, Russia and Uzbekistan," Tengku Ngah Putra said.

Enquiries have also been received from Iran, Kuwait, Slovenia, Macedonia, Germany and Bosnia.

For the moment, Anggun Permai, would concentrate on the markets in Croatia, Russia and Uzbekistan and participate in trade promotions organised by both Matrade and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to promote the company's TV sets and home theatre system.

Anggun Permai was originally a dormant company when Tengku Ngah Putra, 28, and his younger brother acquired it in early 1992 and turned it into a trading firm, selling Malaysian-made chocolate wafers and candy to the Russian market.

His entry into Russia was made possible through an official from the Russian government whom he knew in Singapore in 1992 when he started his feeder business in Pasir Gudang.

Eight months after trading with the Russians, Tengku Ngah Putra was

invited to Siberia by which time he had ventured into assembling Nikom products. A contract was signed with Nizhl Tagil of Russia that year for technology transfer.

He said: "When we sent our TVs to Siberia, we didn't know that the triple A-size battery, used in our remote controll unit, was unavailable there. By then, our Russian partner had already sold the TV sets to its customers.

"As the air freight was expensive, we decided to hand carry 10,200 batteries (300 kg) from Malaysia."

It was a bad start for him and his technical engineer. Both of them were injured when they fell down some steps made slippery by the snow in Siberia.

Tengku Ngah Putra said the going was indeed tough but within three months he succeeded in selling the TV sets and technology to the Russian company with the first export shipment of 420 units.

Anggun Permai has also received orders for 50,000 sets worth RM10 million from Nizhl Tagil of Russia and another 10,000 units worth RM1.3 million from its Uzbekistan partner, Photon Ltd of Tashkent, following the signing of sale and purchase agreements last year. -- BERNAMA

SS LDB