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#### Showa Aluminium to diversify

HARDLY a year after Showa Aluminium (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd started producing its aluminium memory disk substrates, the Japanese multi-national is already planning to diversify its activities to produce components for electronic and electrical appliances.

Its managing director Tanzaburo Uchida said the proposed diversification was based on the company's confidence in the country's economic recovery efforts.

"It is as simple as that. We expect a rising demand for home and office electronic and electrical appliances as the country recovers from the economic doldrums.

"And we want to participate actively in efforts toward improving Malaysia's economic activities," he told reporters after the opening of Showa Aluminium Corporation's first off-shore plant at the Kulim Hi-Tech Park by Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid yesterday.

The components include high-purity aluminium foils for electrolytic capacitors, photosensitive drums used in photocopy machines and laser beam printers, and transistors for controllers.

Also present at the ceremony were Japan's Ambassador to Malaysia Hideki Harashima, its Consul-General Yishihiro Nose and the Japanese Chamber of Trade and Industry (Malaysia) president Tan Sri Kazumasa Suzuki.

According to Uchida, Showa Malaysia has already drawn up its plans to produce the components.

"We will start producing them full-scale in two or three years," he said.

On the substrates, he said Showa Malaysia's current capacity was one million units per month. Ninety-five per cent of substrates are exported.

The projected annual turnover for the units this year was about RM72 million and the company, bullish about Malaysia's economic recovery efforts, anticipates a 50 per cent increase in sales of its aluminium substrates next year.

Earlier, Sanusi said Malaysia, under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would continue to provide conducive investment climate to attract new investors.

Dr Mahathir was continually making Malaysia famous and attractive to get more investors and tourists, he said.

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