

# Mini-Circuits to invest RM380m to expand plant

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■ By S. SHANKAR

MINI-CIRCUITS Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd, the newcomer to Penang, Malaysia's "Silicon Island", will invest RM380 million in next three years to expand its manufacturing facility.

The US-based company has already invested RM120 million since July 2000 in its present facility at Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone Phase Four.

Mini-Circuits Corp president Harvey Kaylie said the future expansion is crucial to the growth of the Mini-Circuits group.

"The Penang plant is the corporation's service centre for reliability, research and development and physical analysis, which are important elements in chips industry.

"It is important to continue our investment to maintain our position as one of the leaders in the industry," he said at the opening of the Mini-Circuits Technologies plant by Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

Mini-Circuits Corp has 11 manufacturing facilities in six countries, including Malaysia. The company makes mainly blue cells, power splitters, attenuators, and adapters.

Mini-Circuit Technologies plant in Bayan Lepas will also be the corporation's research centre for new products in the wireless communications industry.

Kaylie said among the main reasons Penang was chosen for investment is the island's strategic location that suits

the company's global supply chain for materials and finished goods.

Meanwhile, *Bernama* reports that Koh said he fully supports the proposal to give honorary citizenship to foreign experts and investors so that they can have a long stay in the country. He said the move will boost Malaysia's competitiveness worldwide where the country will be able to attract talents, investors and quality human resources to help Malaysia in its technology growth in the information and communication technology (ICT) era.

However, the status should only be accorded to real investors, and experts, he added.

Koh said the concept of honorary citizenship as mentioned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is a very good one as those conferred such status can contribute to nation-building and economic development.

On Thursday, Dr Mahathir said the Government is studying the possibility of conferring honorary citizenship on people who are willing to contribute to the Malaysian economy.

"By doing so (conferring honorary citizenship), you commit them to Malaysia. They will actually contribute even more to Malaysia and develop Malaysia into a world-class ICT hub, including multimedia and a whole range of products and services," Koh said.

He said that high-quality high-tech people could train Malaysians and help them to advance.