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BUSINE

Strong foreign interest in Port Klang Free Zone

■ By **GOH THEAN EU**

THE Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ), Malaysia's first fully-integrated free commercial and industrial zone managed by Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority (JAFZA) International, is getting encouraging response from foreign investors.

JAFZA International director of international operations, Chuck Heath, said it received hundreds of enquiries since its global marketing campaign started in November.

JAFZA International, which also designs and markets PKFZ, is the consulting and management division of JAFZA.

"Now, we are in active negotiations with 33 companies from all over the world. Several of them are in final stages of discussion. We hope to sign a European multinational company soon," Heath said during a media briefing in Petaling Jaya yesterday.

He added that the response is very encouraging.

"There were only 50 companies operating from the JAFZA after five years of operations. For PKFZ to have active negotiations with 33 companies six months prior to operation, is very encouraging," he added.

Today, after 20 years in operation, JAFZA



HEATH: 'We are targeting the global market'

has 5,000 companies from 120 countries.

On JAFZA International's target, Heath said it expects 2.3 million sq ft of land to be leased out by end of next year.

To create the global awareness on PKFZ, JAFZA International has embarked on a

global marketing campaign. Heath said it has so far participated in two trade shows, and another seven to eight events are lined up for next year.

"We are targeting the global market ... we will be going to US, Europe, Asia-Pacific, West Asia as well as Africa and others. We want to bring in as much foreign direct investment as possible," he added.

PKFZ, which is currently under construction, will be operational in June next year, one month ahead of its schedule.

PKFZ chairman Low Chew June said the appointment of JAFZA International showed the Government's commitment to make PKFZ a successful catalyst for economic growth not only in Port Klang but also in the entire Selangor coastal region.

Besides PKFZ, JAFZA International has helped Governments develop free zones in Morocco and Djibouti.

The 404.69ha PKFZ is situated next to West Port in Pulau Indah. It offers, among others, 512 light industrial units for factories and warehouses, four blocks of 8-storeys each of business complex, as well as prepared industrial sites.

An exhibition and trade centre, multi-storey carpark, food court, as well as a Custom centre will also be available in the PKFZ.