

Jonathan Asherson
Regional Director, South-east Asia
Rolls-Royce

THE manufacturing sector has seen a gradual shift into more advanced high-value manufacturing (HVM), a move that has strong government support and commitment. It brings a positive ripple effect to the economy by enabling sustainable growth, knowledge transfer, enhanced skilled jobs, high value exports and longer term investment in R&D.

Industries like aerospace, offshore, semiconductor and electronics will continue to play an important role in strengthening Singapore's position as a regional hub for high-value manufacturing.

Rolls-Royce has introduced advanced high-value manufacturing technology in aerospace through establishing the Rolls-Royce Seletar Campus, and for us, access to the right talent with the right skill-sets is vital.

As other industry sectors move up the manufacturing value chain, there will be increasing pressure to grow the right talent pool here to support industry growth.

Success stories suggest that developing top-level education takes years of focused effort and must be an integral part of industrial policy. We welcome the government's approach in continuing to work with organisations in high-value industries to address this challenge.

Jim Li Hui Hong
CEO/Founder
JSB TECH Pte Ltd

THE electronic manufacturing sector in Singapore is still a relatively high value-added activity and a sizeable contributing factor to GDP.

Limiting labour supply, intended to speed up productivity improvement, could potentially drive this sector to become more relevant in this fast changing market structure. However, it could risk weakening this sector when significant shrinking of manufacturing scale and scope occurs.

It is important to keep a critical cluster size of production activity at home to maintain supply chain competitiveness and responsiveness in supporting local R&D activities, as well as be capable of mitigating any sudden fallout or temporary supply cutoff resulting from, say, a regional epidemic or political incidents.

For example, aggressive outsourcing by developed countries for over two decades resulted in unsustainable manufacturing job losses. These countries are currently in a "hard" swing of reversing outsourcing as part of a larger directive for rebalancing their economies.

Hence, some words of caution: pushing away manufacturing activities may be a "shortcut" in reacting to current pressing issues, but when we need to get them back in the future this would likely be a difficult task!

Assoc Prof Annie Koh (PhD, Finance)
Vice-President, Business Development
and External Relations
Office of President
Singapore Management University

I BELIEVE that it's a brave new world for

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC:

How should Singapore's manufacturing sector evolve to remain a pillar of the economy, and what industries do you see playing a key role? How will an evolving manufacturing sector affect your area of business, and Singapore generally?

The future of manufacturing

