

# KERATAN AKHBAR

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## NCER creates 5,000 jobs since last August

*Among the job creations through the programme are from the manufacturing, services and agribusiness sectors*

by AFIQ AZIZ

THE Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) created almost 5,000 jobs since last August and about half of them have been filled within the past six months.

The Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) said up to 2,000 semi-skilled and fully-skilled jobs were taken up at the region through its JomKerja@NCER programme in collaboration with Jabil Circuit Sdn Bhd and Inari Amertron Bhd — the two key electrical and electronics (E&E) companies in NCER.

NCIA CEO Datuk Seri Jebasingam Issace John said a total of RM21 million of incentives were committed by NCIA to over 100 businesses operating in the NCER zone through the programme.

This, he said, was to generate job opportunities comprising the sectors of manufacturing, services and agribusiness.

"The advanced semiconductor



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and E&E ecosystem in Penang and Kulim are well poised to capitalise the global shortage of microchips critical for the production of automobiles, household appliances, medical devices, telecommunication equipment and IT products.

"I hope with the global rise in demand for semiconductor microchips, leading E&E players such as

Jabil Circuit and Inari Amertron will take advantage of this surge in demand and play a bigger role in addressing unemployment in the northern region," Jebasingam said at the JomKerja@NCER letters of offer handing over ceremony held online yesterday.

NCIA forecasted the NCER economy to grow by RM300 billion

through initiatives outlined in the newly-launched Strategic Development Plan 2021-2025 (SDP) last September.

Through the SDP, the northern region is projected to create more than 160,000 new jobs and over 42,000 entrepreneurs, while the cumulative investment is forecast to grow to RM146.5 billion.

However, the target is expected to be delayed by two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nonetheless, NCER managed to attract RM15.6 billion in investments in 2020 and surpassed its initial target of RM7 billion for the year despite the outbreak.

Jebasingam said NCIA has pledged a total job creation target of 14,487 for the region this year.

Meanwhile, Inari Amertron ED and group CEO Lau Kean Cheon said the initiative has helped the semiconductor company's expansion plan in establishing more facilities in the country.

"In Malaysia, we have around 3,500 workforce and with the expansion, we need more local talent, especially during the pandemic because we cannot count on foreign workers right now," he said.

He said for the last five years, the company has invested up to RM1 billion to support the local ecosystem.

Local talents, who registered with the JomKerja@NCER pool, are semi-skilled and fully-skilled workers from various manufacturing industries, such as E&E and machinery and equipment, who were recently retrenched, as well as fresh graduates and school leavers, said Jebasingam.