

Towards smart investing

Lorena Binisol

KOTA KINABALU: Rotary Clubs here have come together to organise seminars and talks in an attempt to better educate members and the public on the Securities Industry Dispute Resolution centre (SIDREC).

Sidrec, an affiliate of Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) engages with retail investors in Sabah in dispute resolution.

This initiative, according to Luyang Rotary President Stephen Siaw, is a lead-up to SC's big inaugural event - Bersama InvestSmart @ Borneo 2019 at Imago Shopping Mall on June 29-30.

"We are very happy to collaborate with SIDREC to promote this initiative because awareness of the good work that SIDREC does for retail investors is almost unheard of in this part of the country.

Much as investment in the capital market is a regulated activity.

There are still investors who would get into trouble with their brokers, unit trust consultants and fund managers. When they do, they don't know where to go or who to turn to for help. In short, they are stuck for lack of knowledge of the availability of a platform for redress. SIDREC plays a critical role here.

"To date, most people are only familiar with going to court to resolve their disputes, and this is more often than not a costly affair and extremely time consuming.

Many retail investors may not have the financial muscle to afford such an avenue to resolve their disputes with market intermediaries. Hence, Sidrec," said Siaw.

He also added that the collaboration with SIDREC falls nicely within one of the Rotary Club's six focus areas - Peace and Conflict Resolution. The other five focus areas are Water and Sanitation, Basic Edu-

cation, Maternal & Child Care, Disease Prevention & Treatment, and Community Development.

Siaw said, conflict resolution does not necessarily arise in political conflict, but encompasses economic, social and emotional conflict as well.

"All of these conflicts need redress and resolution and Sidrec leads in capital market dispute resolution.

Steven KC Poh, Sidrec's Head of Corporate Communication, said this strategic effort, in addition to being part and parcel of what Sidrec does to promote public awareness of its services in the marketplace, also serves as a of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative.

"Sidrec has always been looking for opportunities to reach out to communities all over the country and we are delighted to establish this connection via the Rotary Clubs in Sabah as our services are meant for the investing public nationwide - not just for folks in Kuala Lumpur or in the peninsula. We hope that this will be the first of many fruitful collaborations to come," Poh stated.

"Sidrec plays a critical role under the SC's investor protection framework in that we ensure retail investors, particularly the smaller ones, have access to an independent body for redress outside the courts," Poh added.

"In this regard, Sidrec's definite, non-partisan stance in managing any financial claim against capital market intermediaries is key as our process fosters fact finding without blaming any party and contributes towards identifying and explaining legal and procedural issues with the sole objective of reaching resolution of disputes based on facts, appreciation of issues and cooperation between the disputing parties."



During the courtesy visit to Datuk Lui (2nd right) office. 2nd left is Kenneth Tan of RC Luyang, 3rd left is Poh of SIDREC and on right is Lewis Fong of RC Tg Aru.

Poh said Sidrec operates on the principle of what is fair and reasonable in all circumstances of the case, providing the disputing parties fair airtime and support throughout the process. He added that confidentiality of this process allows parties to ventilate constructively without needing to be concerned of the information being shared or misused.

"Sidrec provides protection through investor empowerment," Poh added. "And by empowerment, we mean empowering investors to take accountability for their investments and seek proper redress where they feel it is due.

"However, this does not mean they are

absolved from their own accountability for their investment decisions," he pointed out, "but they will be provided with an independent and impartial expert avenue of help to resolve their dispute with the assurance of a definitive outcome.

"It is unfortunate that there are still many investors out there who are at the risk of losing their hard-earned money due to being misinformed or not making the effort to understand the terms and conditions of the products before committing to the investment. We hope that with Sidrec's help, fewer investors will get into trouble through greater awareness and capital market education," said Siaw.

Honest Intentions Not Always Enough

Single mother of five gets help