



Chia is looking forward to a better year for the group

Mulpha eyes HK listing for unit

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PROPERTY developer Mulpha International Bhd aims to list unit Manta Holdings Co Ltd on the main board of the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong (SEHK) by next month.

Mulpha chief executive officer Chung Tze Hien said it expects to hear from the listing committee in Hong Kong in the next few days.

"We still have to secure shareholders' approval. I'm waiting to hear from the listing committee in Hong Kong whether our proposed listing is successful within the coming two days.

"I met up with them yesterday (Thursday), but they may need to ask more questions or requirements. If they had approved (the proposal), the listing would have been done by the middle of July. I'm waiting for some outcome," Chung told reporters after Mulpha's annual and extraordinary general meetings in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

In April, Mulpha applied to Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Ltd to list its subsidiaries involved in the sale, rental and servicing of construction equipment on the SEHK.

Chung said the listing will enable Manta to raise money from the capital market to fund the group's business activities and expansion plans.

"Being accorded listing status will allow the Manta group, which comprises four companies, to have greater financial flexibility in pursuing its growth plans."

The listing of Manta will involve Manta Engineering and Equipment Co Ltd, Manta Equipment Rental Co Ltd, Manta Equipment Services Ltd and Manta Equipment (S) Pte Ltd.

According to Chung, Mulpha owns 88 per cent of Manta. Pan Ocean International Ltd, which holds the remaining 12 per cent via Ku Sze King, will sell its stake to Mulpha prior to the listing.

As part of the listing exercise, Mulpha will undertake internal restructuring and reorganisation, after which it will issue 50 million new Manta shares representing 25 per cent of the enlarged issued and paid-up capital of the company. The new shares will comprise five million issue shares available to the public in Hong Kong and 45 million shares by way of placement to professional, institutional and other investors.

None of the directors in Mulpha and

Manta will be offered shares in Manta pursuant to the proposed listing.

"We hope to raise about HK\$50 million, or about RM25 million, from the proposed public issue," Chung said.

He added that the proceeds will be used to buy tower cranes and construction equipment for rental purpose, general working capital, expansion and improvement of storage facilities, service and maintenance workshops.

"Singapore is booming. Market price in Singapore is shooting up. So is the situation in Hong Kong and China. Construction of high-rise buildings needs a lot of cranes. This augurs well for our business."

Chung expressed confidence that Mulpha's financial performance will improve further this year in tandem with economic recovery here and in countries where it operates.

"Last year was a bad year. We are now going out of the 2008 and 2009 crisis. Last year also, we had impairment, but not this year. As we move on, things will be better. In fact, our first quarter results look pretty good. We are on the road to recovery," he said, adding that Mulpha registered a net profit of RM48 million in the first quarter ended March 31 2010.