$12.1m funding for two maritime sector projects

Initiatives are part of roadmap for R&D unveiled by SMI

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[SINGAPORE] The maritime industry's research and development (R&D) efforts are being given a $12.1 million boost and the amount will be spread out over two key initiatives, the Singapore Maritime Institute (SMI) announced at its third annual forum yesterday.

Of the sum, $4 million will go towards the new SMI Maritime Fellowship Programme that will start in January next year. This programme, which will involve maritime industry experts and members of academia, will last for an initial period of three years.

Another $8.1 million will be spent on setting up the Maritime Energy Test Bed Facility at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), which will be operationally ready in 2015. This facility will help get technological innovations from the laboratory to large-scale application.

"The facility will be a significant component in demonstrating and raising Singapore's maritime R&D capabilities and expertise," SMI said.

SMI will contribute $4.7 million to the facility, while NTU will come up with the remaining $3.4 million.

These two projects are part of an overarching roadmap for R&D that was also unveiled at the SMI forum yesterday. The roadmap sets out a framework for R&D developments across the maritime, marine and offshore fields up until 2025.

According to SMI, five key R&D focus areas have been identified for the maritime sector, while another five have been determined for the marine and offshore sector.

"These initiatives are indeed exciting developments not only for SMI, but Maritime Singapore as well. I hope these initiatives further facilitate collaborations between SMI, the industry players and our partners in academia," said S S Teo, chairman of SMI's board and governing council, during his opening address at the forum.

Since SMI's inception, about $33 million in funding has been committed to 20 projects for the industry.

"SMI will also set aside significant funding to support R&D activities as per the R&D roadmap," Mr Teo added.