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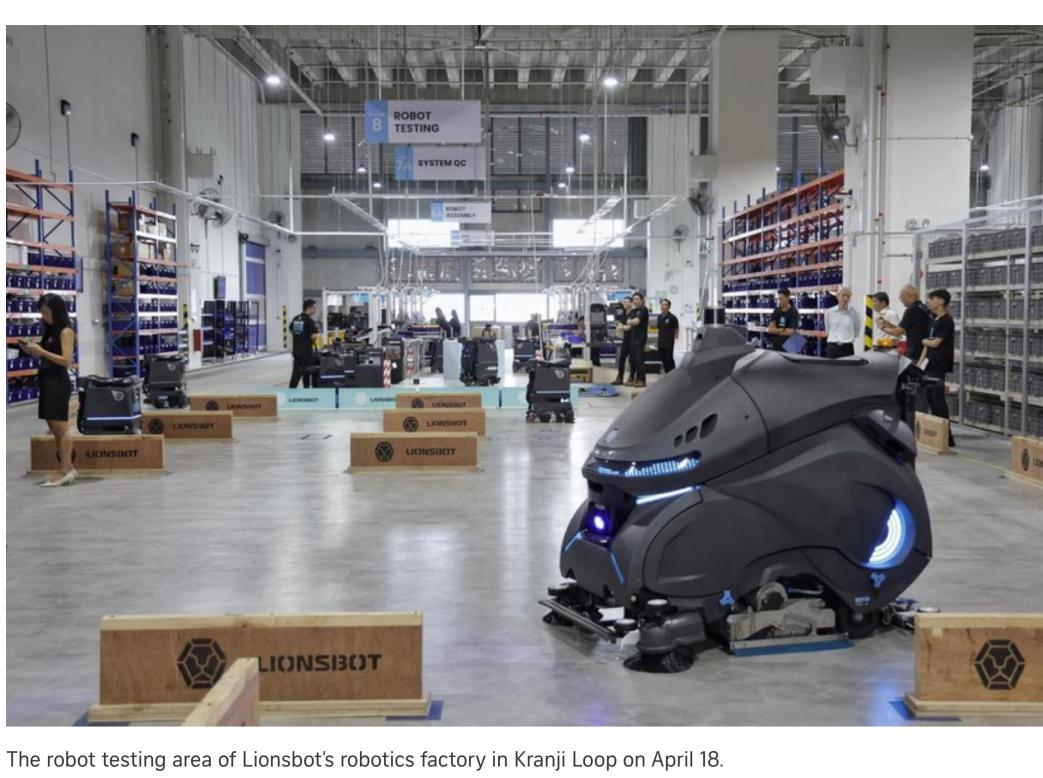
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National Robotics Programme receiving \$60m to help spur robot adoption in industry

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healthcare sectors to adopt robotics.

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SINGAPORE – A total of \$60 million will be invested in the National Robotics Programme (NRP) to develop robots and push more companies in the manufacturing, logistics and

The NRP is a national platform that oversees the research and development (R&D) of robotics

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Agency for Science, Technology and Research.

The investment, which was first announced during the Budget debate in March, aims to help Singapore nab a slice of the growing global robotics market, which is worth roughly \$50 billion

in Singapore. It is funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and hosted by the

today and is estimated to grow beyond \$60 billion by 2028, the NRP said on April 18.

Pixar animation movie Wall-E.

The \$60 million fund will support the RoboCluster initiative, an R&D collaboration platform for the NRP to work with industries – starting with the facilities management sector – by offering forums, workshops and other platforms, backed by its network of researchers and experts.

The authorities aim to spur the adoption of robotics here through investment and encouraging

collaboration to help research find a market, Minister of State for Trade and Industry Alvin Tan

The company is known for its floor-cleaning robots – which trawl shopping malls, warehouses

and schools - including its line of blue-eyed cleaners, LeoBots, which look like Eve from the

said at the opening of the new Kranji factory of Singapore-based robotics company Lionsbot

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It will soon extend to healthcare, logistics and other sectors, said Mr Tan.

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on April 18.

To start with, it will focus on researching and developing robots that specialise in cleaning building exteriors, which have not been as well adopted as floor-cleaning robots, said a spokesman for the NRP, adding that collaboration with industry players will help pinpoint ideas to invest in.

Its first session will be held at the Singapore University of Technology and Design in July.

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"Many small and medium-sized enterprises may be interested in robotics, but they may not know how to adopt them, so that is something we need to discuss. In Lionsbot's case, you can deploy the robots for cleaning. But can you do so for other aspects like food or facilities

Mr Tan said: "The (RoboCluster) initiative is aimed to catalyse and foster stronger

collaboration, and to translate R&D into enterprise.

like inspections and toilet cleaning, which can be supported by robots.

"There is a lot of opportunity for robotics to play a part in the facilities management sector," said Mr Teo, pointing to toilet-cleaning robots and inspection bots that can check for defects in a facility and consolidate reports.

Mr Terence Teo, president of trade association AutomationSG, said members have expressed

concerns over a shortage of manpower, and that staff were often held down by mundane tasks,

First formed in 2016, the NRP initially focused on robotics, but it has now ventured into R&D projects for standardised machines that are fit for a wide range of users, to drive adoption.

Minister of State for Trade and Industry Alvin Tan (third from left) touring Lionsbot's robot factory on April 18.

poured into the robotics programme.

Recent projects backed by the NRP include robots that scout for rodent infestations in false ceilings and the use of drones to clean Gardens by the Bay's Supertrees, tipped as a safer, more

The \$60 million investment will add to more than \$450 million in funding that the NRF has

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Robots assemble! Meet Singapore's robotic workforce

Lionsbot factory Lionsbot's \$12 million factory in Kranji aims to quadruple the company's production output compared with its older facility in Changi. It will develop robots, from assembly, testing phases

revenue annually.

achieving this milestone.

efficient way to clean large structures.

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comprises a warehouse to store robot components and a production area where employees assemble and calibrate the robots before sending them for deployment.

The company said in a statement that the factory is the largest cleaning robot factory in South-

and quality checks, to finally packaging them for delivery, all under the same roof.

east Asia, with an area of 5,000 sq m, or about the size of a football field. The facility

The quality control and robot assembly areas of the Lionsbot robot factory on April 18.

environment, without the need for humans to configure, said Mr Ng.

With the new plant, which has added 55 new roles to the company's workforce, Lionsbot aims to manufacture up to 4,000 robots each year to deliver to its growing pool of clients across more than 30 markets. It estimates the new facility will drive up to \$40 million in sales

Lionsbot chief executive Dylan Ng said the company aims to double its sales revenue to US\$30

million (S\$41 million) in 2024 and turn a profit by 2025, adding that the new facility is key to

The company is making headway into a new generation of smart robots that use artificial

intelligence in decision-making, such as planning the best times for cleaning based on the

Among Lionsbot's robots is the Rex series, its largest machines priced around US\$80,000, which are designed to clean large venues like warehouses and malls, and can clean up to 100,000 sq ft per charge.

The company, which has around 200 employees worldwide, has sold more than 2,500 robots

since 2018, and has expanded overseas to the Netherlands and the US, among other markets.

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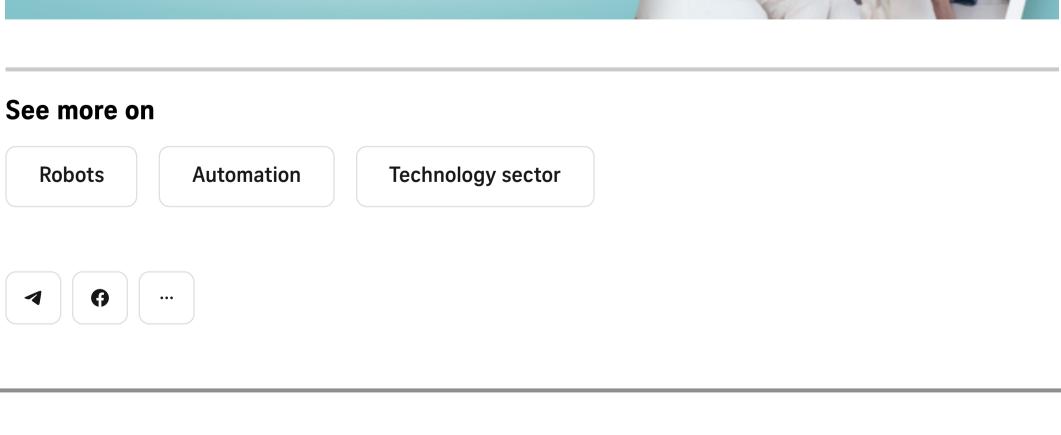
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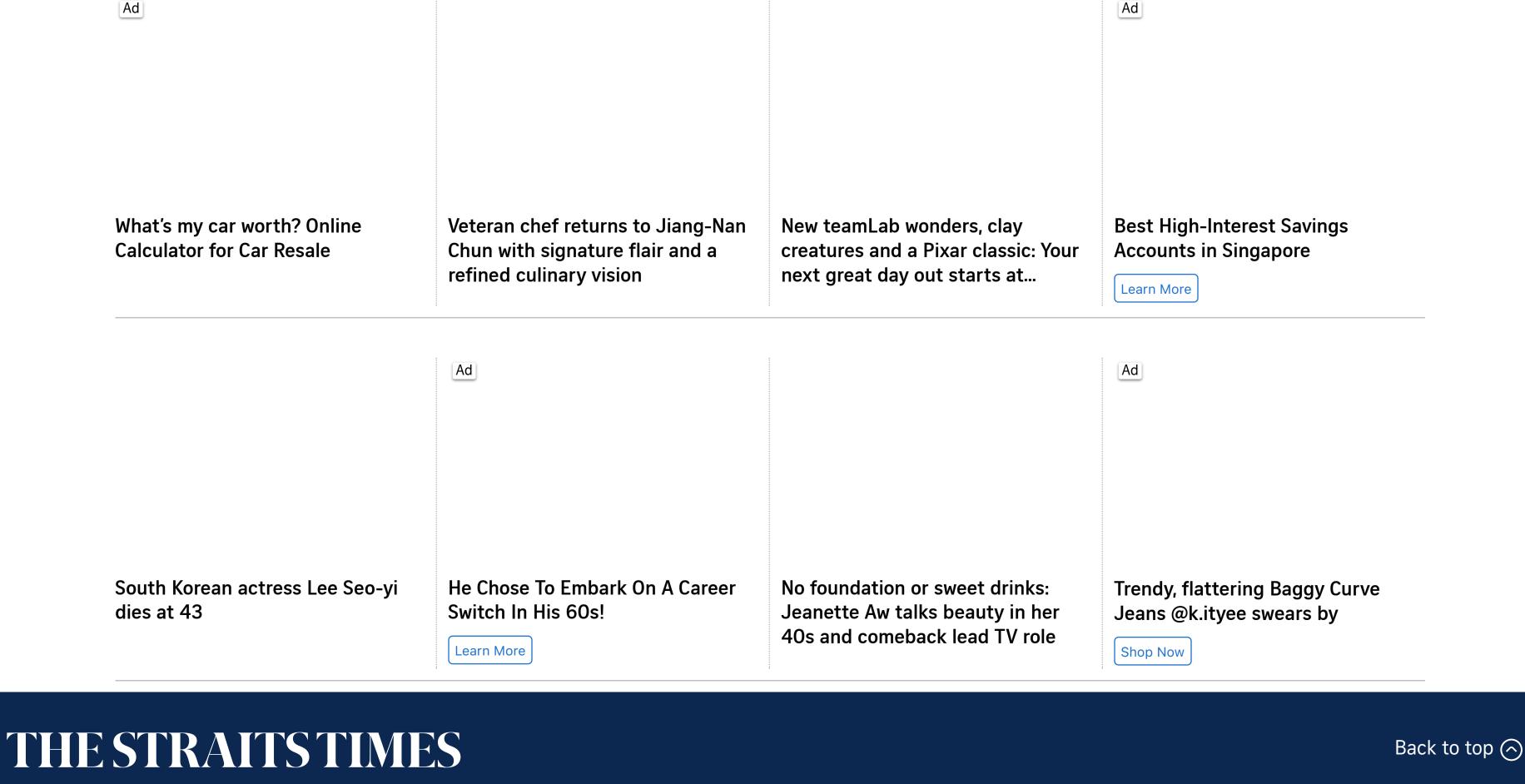
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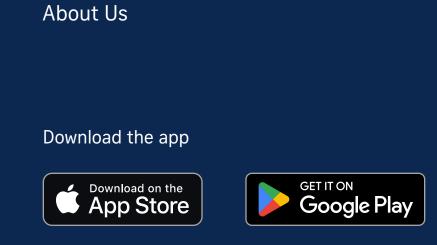
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