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Interview to our CEO was posted in Hong Kong's newspaper "South China Morning Post-Japan Country Report (April 8<sup>th</sup>)".

## SOLDER-RESIST LEADER TAIYO EXPANDS TO SOLAR ENERGY, PHARMACEUTICALS

Even the most hi-tech gadget can only be as good as its components. Whether it is a smart phone, laptop, in-vehicle electronics or digital household appliance, every device begins with a printed circuit board (PCB) that enables power and signal transmission.

"To ensure proper functionality and durability of any device, the PCB must be protected from oxidation and accidental electrical connection between components – a crucial task carried out by the little-known but essential ingenuity called solder-resist," says Eiji Sato, CEO of Taiyo Holdings.

Taiyo commands more than 60 per cent of the global solder-resist market. Starting with printing-ink manufacturing in the 1950s, the company developed into a pioneer in the solder-resist field and obtained the dominant patent for the technology in the 1980s. It still retains the loyalty of nearly all industry leaders that use PCBs, even after years following the patent's expiry.

Applied in a wide variety of equipment, the company's expertise in solder-resist technology has launched products as far as the outer space – in rockets. It also positioned Taiyo as a global

market leader and allowed it to expand to other chemical materials for the electronics industry, including flat-panel plasma display materials.

"The key is to think not only how our

customers do, but how they will think in the next three years or so," Sato says. "It is a challenge because even they often do not foresee the trends that far ahead, but Taiyo's intense research and development

efforts ensure that we keep a finger on the pulse of the market."

With about 100 developers – or nearly a third of its Japan personnel – constantly working on new and improved products, Taiyo plans to further build its portfolio in the next five years. This includes advanced flexible solder masks and interlayer insulating materials, for which it aims to raise its market share.

The publicly listed company also looks forward to meeting new investors, particularly from China, where it has two factories and two sales offices supporting local and regional clients. It targets a broader presence throughout the rest of Asia, eyeing potential hubs including Thailand and Vietnam for manufacturing expansion.

Aspiring to replicate its success in other industries, Taiyo is also pursuing opportunities in solar energy, food and pharmaceuticals. It seeks to partner with small- or medium-sized companies in the pharmaceutical industry, particularly in strategic markets starting with Singapore, then Southeast Asia.

"Innovations never stop, and neither should our growth," Sato says.



**Eiji Sato, CEO**

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