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THE Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) returns for its 24th edition and this time, it is bigger and bolder.

Happening from March 8 to 11, this year's fair spans across 100,000sq m in two venues – the new Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre (Mitec) and Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

With the addition of Mitec, the exhibition space is 25% bigger, with 18 halls spread over two locations.

MIFF 2018 carries a new tagline, "Design Connects People" to inspire greater design and innovative ideas on the trading floor to drive businesses.

MIFF general manager Karen Goi said as the largest furniture trade show in South-East Asia, MIFF will see over 600 exhibitors, of which 70% are local companies while the rest are from 12 countries – China, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Turkey, India, Hong Kong, Vietnam and the United States.

"The home furniture segment makes up 59% of the trade event, followed by office furniture – 26%, materials and fittings – 11%, and the remaining 4% from other segments.

"A third of the exhibitors are participating in MIFF for the first time so trade visitors can expect to see more product variety," said Goi at the press conference held at UBM's head office in Kuala Lumpur.

More than 20,000 trade buyers from 140 countries and regions are expected, including 40 delegations from Japan and for the first time, American Society of Interior Designers and Interior Designers of

Furniture fair expands

Largest trade show of its kind in the region to be held at two venues



Chin Huat (centre) and Goi (in blue) with (from left) BSL Furniture Sdn Bhd marketing manager Nick Wee, Adela, Melissa, Getha project manager Shai Yurkevich, Forest Contemporary Design Sdn Bhd marketing manager Claire Chow, director Logan Lim and Mobilia Design Sdn Bhd marketing executive Ervin Quek at the MIFF 2018 pre-event press conference.

Canada.

"As of January, the number of attendees recorded a 10% increase and 34% of the total figure are new buyers," added Goi.

Among the new highlights at MIFF 2018 are designRena, an exclusive 15,000sq m space curated for 80 top Malaysian manufacturers to showcase their products in lifestyle settings.

MIFF Office will feature the largest office solutions exhibition in South-East Asia with 120 exhibiting companies while MIFF Timber offers a one-stop wood and wood-related materials sourcing and trading platform for global buyers and suppliers.

FDC in Action will showcase product design, booth styling and presentation by past winners and finalists of MIFF Furniture Design Competition (FDC) led by creative director Philip Yao, who is also chief judge.

Millennials@Design (MAD) highlights ready-to-market furniture by young designers from FDC in Action, Pattern Banyak, Tanggam Design Centre by Malaysian Timber Industry Board and Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation.

Several activities have been lined up throughout MIFF, including the buyers' night for business networking opportunities and free

seminars by industry experts.

This year, MIFF strategic partner Muar Furniture Association, which accounts for 60% of Malaysia's furniture exports, returns with a bigger group of exhibitors under Muar Hall.

Trade visitors can also expect a comprehensive selection of products from the China Hall, Taiwan Hall and a South Korean group of companies supported by the Korean Federation of Furniture Industry Cooperatives (KFFIC).

MIFF founder and chairman Datuk Tan Chin Huat said this year's trade show is targeting a 5% increase in sales.

First-time exhibitor, Getha,

Malaysian natural latex bedding brand, will be unveiling a new mattress at MIFF 2018, one that was developed using Compass Blocare electromagnetic shield technology.

"We strongly believe that Malaysia holds great advantages in terms of quality and service when it comes to competing in the international market, as buyers will look for reliable suppliers here.

"This is our target group to help us expand our business internationally," said the brand's export manager Melissa Tan.

Another first-timer, Kedai Bikin Sdn Bhd, which offers a curated range of home and living products, will be showcasing its best-selling String Family collection.

"Our products have the right design appeal, and will provide a fresh and affordable addition to the current repertoire of furniture available there," said its chief executive manager Adela Askandar.

Representatives from BSL Furniture Sdn Bhd, Forest Contemporary Design Sdn Bhd and Mobilia Design Sdn Bhd agreed that MIFF was an ideal platform for their companies to expand internationally and gain international exposure.

MIFF 2018 is organised by UBM Malaysia, endorsed by International Trade and Industry Ministry and Plantation Industries and Commodities Ministry.

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