

BUYERS THROG TO MALAYSIAN INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR 2012

KUALA LUMPUR, Mar 6: Thousands of buyers from around the world thronged the 18th Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) which opened its doors here today with 500 exhibitors offering their latest and extensive range of contemporary and classic furniture designs for interior and exterior lifestyles.

The annual five-day trade show which is a top 10 global industry fair filled a combined 75,000 sq metres of exhibition space at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) and the nearby Matrade Exhibition and Convention Centre (MECC).

Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok opened the fair at PWTC.

Despite concerns over the Eurozone crisis and U.S. economic uncertainty, the fair organiser MIFF expects more buyers and sales to equal, if not surpass last year's record of US\$778 million because of the exceptional value and superior quality of Malaysian furniture.

Domestic manufacturers have begun shipping to new markets in the Africa, South America and South Asia in recent years to add to their base of traditional buyers in the United States, Japan, Europe and neighbouring Southeast Asian countries.

Last year, MIFF drew the attendance of 20,000 including 6,800 overseas buyers from 140 countries. Office and dining furniture were among the strong performers.

MIFF is the largest platform for Malaysian furniture which is reputed for its timber products made from hard rubber wood. The fair also attracts exhibitors from China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Korea, Timor Leste, Australia and the United States.

Buyers will be kept busy this week with the exciting selection of products in a wide variety of furniture - bedroom and bedding, dining table and chairs, living room,

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office, sofas and settees, children, kitchen, occasional, outdoor and garden , accessories, etc.

Expressing his confidence of another successful round, MIFF Chairman Datuk Tan Chin Huat said: “Through the years, buyers and exhibitors have discovered the strength and opportunities in MIFF. Apart from being a robust one centre hub for a wide range of furniture, MIFF is the springboard to acquire new furniture sources and new customers in Asean, Asia and other regions. “

“In recent years, MIFF has found more markets in the CIS Countries, South America and within Asia itself, to add to our traditional export destinations of the United States, Europe and Japan,” he added.

He reiterated his call to Malaysian furniture makers to make innovation the core of their design, production and marketing strategies.

In 2010, Malaysia was ranked the world’s 8th largest furniture exporter with a value of RM8 billion or accounting for 3 per cent of global exports. The furniture is exported to over 160 countries with 82 per cent made of hard rubber wood.

In other highlights of the fair, the winners of the Ideation Award 2012, Best Presentation Award (BPA) for the top booth and Furniture Excellence Award (FEA) for most innovative product and quality will be presented on Thursday (Mar 8).

The Ideation Award to discover young designers heads for an exciting finish with 10 finalists vying for the top prize to be determined by a jury of seven international and local industry experts. The prototypes of the finalists are on display at Hall B of MECC.

The BPA and FEA awards presented to exhibitors seek to instill greater awareness of creative design and innovation among furniture makers.

To keep MIFF visitors abreast with trends in the industry, four seminars are scheduled at PWTC on Thursday and Friday:

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March 8 (Thursday)

10am – 12 noon Design Drivers for Malaysian Furniture Manufacturing Industries
Mr Klaus Kummer, Founder, KDT International Co Ltd, Thailand

2pm – 4pm Green Technology in Furniture Industries
Dr Jegathewasran Ratnasingam, Associate Professor, UPM

March 9 (Friday)

10am-12 noon Designer and Entrepreneur (Mandarin session)
Mr Chen Neng Xin, General Manager, Ason Design Studio, China

2pm- 4pm MTC's Furniture Promotion Programme 2012/2013
Ms Noraihan Abdul Rahman, Deputy Director, Malaysian Timber
Council (MTC)

ABOUT MIFF Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) is an award-winning MICE event. Started in 1995, MIFF has become the country's top trade show today and a leading global industry show recognized by UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.

MIFF has won several awards including Best MICE Exhibition of the Year 2004/2005/2006 from the Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism; Best Brands in Furniture Trade Exhibition 2007 from The Brand Laureate; The 8th Asia Pacific International Honesty Enterprise from Keris Award 2009; The 9th Asia Pacific International Entrepreneur Excellence Brand Award 2010; Corporate Partner Award 2010 from Furniture Leadership Award; Industry Excellence Award 2011 from Malaysian Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (MACEOS), Outstanding Malaysian Brand, Silver Award from Star Outstanding Business Award (SOBA) 2011.

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