

## MTC HITS HIGH NOTE WITH EXPO SUCCESS

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With sales of about RM140 million, Malaysian Timber Council adds another feather to its illustrious cap with the debut of its Malaysian Wood Expo 2019, an international wood and woodworking machinery event.

KUALA LUMPUR (26 NOVEMBER 2019): It was an all-round success for the Malaysian Timber Council as it chalked up sales of about RM140 million when it had only targeted RM25 million at its inaugural exhibition – the Malaysian Wood Expo (MWE) 2019.

Held at the Putra World Trade Centre from 19-21 November, MWE was the first international wood and woodworking machinery event organised by MTC in partnership with Panels & Furniture Group. The three-day expo attracted 135 renowned exhibitors from 22 countries and over 3,000 visitors. The expo served as a pivotal convergence point for every segment of players from the timber industry.

Spanning across 8,000 square metres, the exhibitors showcased a wide range of products such as tropical hardwoods, temperate softwoods, wooden flooring, sawntimber, wooden pallets, door and door frames, cutting tools, abrasives, adhesives, coatings, combined machines, dust collecting equipment, edge banding materials and machines, handling equipment as well as timber, woodworking and furniture production softwares.

Most of the exhibitors were from Germany, Italy, Australia, France, Belgium, Gabon, China, Chile, New Zealand, Taiwan and Singapore while the trade visitors were from France, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Singapore and Maldives.

“We are extremely happy with the outcome of the Malaysian Wood Expo. It was a commercial success with brisk sales, literally. The expo was well-attended by a broad spectrum of visitors and buyers from day one. And to our great surprise, our sales far exceeded the initial target of RM25 million,” said MTC Chairman Dato’ Low Kian Chuan.

To boost business at MWE, MTC had organised two business matching sessions – the Overseas Suppliers-Malaysian Importers/Manufacturers Exchange Programme and the Incoming Buying Mission (IBM). MTC also offered special incentives for the purchase of machinery under its Financial Incentive for Purchase of Machinery Programme (FIPM) as well as importation of raw materials under its Import Assistance Programme (IAP).

The Overseas Suppliers-Malaysian Importers/Manufacturers Exchange Programme facilitated the augmentation of raw materials from nine countries - New Zealand, Chile, Gabon, France, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine, Canada and the United States. A total of 55 companies placed their orders worth of RM6.10 million of raw materials under this programme.

As for the IBM, which was conducted in collaboration with the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and MTC’s regional offices, it generated an estimated sale of RM118.93 million.

MTC had only targeted a sale of RM3 million from IBM, however, the interest for Malaysian-made products and the reputation of Malaysian timber-based manufacturers who are well-known to supply high-grade products promptly has held them in good stead once again. A total of 64 foreign buyers from 14 countries had over 470 meetings with 93 Malaysian suppliers during the IBM.

“Despite the rather sluggish economy, the Incoming Buying Mission has demonstrated that there are many strong investment plans in the timber sectors overseas and this creating a huge demand for our Malaysian timber-based products,” added Low.

MTC’s FIPM programme also served as a major boost for buyers as 86 Malaysian companies purchased machinery worth RM20.77 million. Most of the machinery exhibitors were also pleasantly taken aback by the sales they had garnered even on the first day of the expo.

“We are actually amazed by the volume of business we have generated. We have sold all our machinery that were brought to MWE,” said Wood-Mizer Asia Manufacturing Co. Ltd Regional Director-Asia Robert Moxham.

MWE was officiated by the Minister of Primary Industries YB Pn Teresa Kok on 19 November 2019. Also present at the opening ceremony was the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Primary Industries Dato’ Dr Tan Yew Chong, MTC Chairman Dato’ Low Kian Chuan, MTC Board of Trustees and MTC CEO Mr Richard Yu. Among the dignitaries who also visited the expo was Deputy Minister of Primary Industries YB Datuk Seri Shamsul Iskandar Hj Mohd Akin.

"I applaud MTC for organising this expo as it is a holistic exhibition which showcases not only products made from tropical hardwoods but also what we can do with temperate hardwoods and softwoods. We can use these foreign timber species to produce furniture and other timber-based products which will increase the value of our exports. This will also reduce our reliance on local raw materials," said Kok, adding that the exhibits at the woodworking machinery and tools sections were impressive.

MTC had also organised a series of pocket talks where industry experts shared their insights to a full house on market trends, e-trade, timber products and timber grading rules, among others. The Council also launched its e-guidebook titled Schedule of Maintenance for Timber in Construction. The e-book is a manual on how to care and preserve timber-based materials used for construction purposes for both indoor and outdoor use.

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