

MALAYSIAN INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR 2018

Opens!

DESIGN CONNECTS PEOPLE

Malaysian International Furniture Fair 2018, the biggest furniture fair in Southeast Asia, opened 8th March. This year, MIFF will be held by 11th, for four days, at both Putra World Trade Center and Malaysia International and Exhibition Centre, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. The promoter is UBM Malaysia. MIFF has been held since 1995, and at the 24th anniversary, the exhibition area became 100,000 square meters, bigger than that of last year by 25 percent. On 8th, at the opening ceremony, Chairman Datuk Dr Tan Chin Huat said, "The bigger exhibition space brings greater advantages. MIFF can now provide more innovative ways to our exhibitors to showcase their products and engage buyers in greater comfort",

MITEC is Also Used for MIFF This Year!



The opening ceremony was held for the first time at the new venue MITEC.

The catchphrase of MIFF2018 is "Design Connects People". In Southeast Asia, design is getting focused as national strategies. About choosing design as a concept, Chairman Dato' Tan said, "MIFF connects exhibitors to buyers by design and creativity, and deepens their communication", and he started the new strategy for developing the industry.

MIFF General Manager Karen Goi said, "Good design is a key to catch up with competitions in the market. MIFF has a network and creative solutions and is useful for companies which try to develop business in digital era", considering the expanding of e-commerce.

In Malaysia, electronic payments are rapidly increasing, for instance, Alibaba, the biggest EC company in China, is growing by offering its services. For supporting MIFF exhibitors to enter the EC market, UBM Malaysia, the organizer of MIFF, started collaboration with Alibaba in 2016. Japanese buyers who handle EC business are also increasing.



Japan's FranceBed exhibits Cloudia, among other products with the perspective of targeting the whole South East Asia region. Cloudia is a bed that utilizes [refres] which has a moisturizing function.

New Plans are Continuously Revealed

As a new plan for focusing design, "designRe-na" is getting attention. In the area, about 1500 square meters, 50 companies are holding exhibitions and all of the companies are well-known in Malaysia.

Another new plan "MIFF Timber Mart" is a first trial to connect timber suppliers and makers.

Furniture fairs like Miff, which exhibits a lot of furniture for offices, are rare in Southeast Asia. "MIFF Office" represented the advantage of MIFF, and this year, the space was as large as that of last year. It exhibited creative office solutions.

According to UBM Malaysia, MIFF of this year could be expected that the European Design, which had been popular last year, was getting more unique and minimal.

"We foresee modern classic and Scandinavian trend will still be shining in 2018 with colors more focused on smoother and comfortable hues," said Mr. B.K.Aw, marketing executive of Deesse Furniture which makes stylish and modern furniture.

Ms. Chua Yew Ting, marketing manager of Ivorie International said more consumers are looking for environment-friendly furniture with natural colors and Scandinavian designs are a winner with new home owners and young people, also in



Malaysia International and Exhibition Centre

part because of the affordable prices.

Economy Goes Strong

Malaysia's nominal GDP per capita was 9,300 dollars in 2016. Among ASEAN countries, Malaysia got second highest position, next to the Singapore, the economic giant of the area and its nominal GDP per capita was 52,900 dollars. Malaysian economy is going strong, and the real GDP of the half year of 2017 was increasing by 5.7 percent, which was the highest since 2014. The strength of personal consumption was worth of attention, and the external demands also contributed the growth of Malaysia.

MIFF of this year has been held at PWTC and MITEC, the latter one was added for the first time. Reflected the strong economy of Malaysia, all of the 18 halls are occupied completely. Companies which join every year enlarged their booths, and exhibited new products with much variety.

Eurochair and Wegmance, which represent Malaysia, also held their booths. In 2017, MIFF got more than 20,000 participants from 140 countries. This year, the exhibitors were increasing and more participants could be expected. This year will be an epoch making for the history of MIFF.

MIFF Starts New Trends of Asian Furniture A Good Base for Advancing to Global Market

MIFF2018 starts "A counterattack of furniture from Asia". It opened on 8th with a much larger space and got attention from all over the world, especially from industry of furniture-interior.

At the beginning, MIFF was a fair for Malaysian furniture. However, it eventually became an international fair for furniture from surrounding ASEAN countries, China, Taiwan, and all over the world. The expansion of this year must get more attention from buyers from all over the world as a platform of Asian furniture.

Malaysia can be a hub of trading. It is easily accessible from European countries, which are the centers of furniture, and near to China and India, which are the big two markets of the world. It is also an advantage that the country is located in ASEAN area, where middle class is rapidly increasing and the growth of consumption can be highly expected. Malaysia can produce timbers with a good quality, and its furniture industry improves the design and the quality year by year, listening to opinions of the excellent buyers who visited MIFF from all over the world. The expansion of MIFF2018 was a reflection of expectation for Malaysian furniture, and evidence that MIFF was admitted by the world as the stage for publishing trends.

Many companies, which had not exhibited due to the lack of capacity, appeared MIFF of this year.

It is regrettable that not so many companies joined from Japan. Japan is ranked highly as the number of participants, but as for the number of exhibitors, it is not as high as that of participants. In Japan, the society is aging and the population is shrinking, so more consumption of furniture cannot be expected. There is no future for Japanese furniture but going to the global market.

It is prospect that China becomes the largest economy in the world by 2030, overtaking the US. India will go ahead China as for population.

If you are thinking the producing furniture for the large global market, it is highly recommended that you investigate the needs by joining MIFF.

The Gorgeous Welcome Party

Welcomed by Gorgeous Events such as Dance Show "Buyers Night", Invited More Than 1,000 People

"Buyers Night", the welcome party is held at the night of 9th. At the ball room of Sunway Putra Hotel which is next to PWTC, the main hall of MIFF, more than 1,000 buyers, exhibitors and journalists are invited and many gorgeous events are held.

It is wonderful that the promoters of MIFF, such as Chairman Dato' Tan and his staff, concentrate on entertaining the participants through singing, dancing, and lottery. It will be a heartwarming night which is unique to Malaysia which welcomes buyers from all over the world enthusiastically.



MIFF2018 Has 622 Exhibitors The First Opening Ceremony in MITEC

SPEECH BY DATO' DR TAN CHIN HUAT



Greetings by the Chairman Dato' Tan

Good morning. It is a great pleasure for me to stand here today to welcome all of you to the biggest ever Malaysian International Furniture Fair. MIFF is now 24 years in business.

We have a very special guest joining us, he is none other than the federal minister leading the furniture industry, YB Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities. Thank you Datuk Seri.

This is the first time that our opening ceremony is held here, in MITEC. As you can see, this is a very modern and spacious exhibition centre. The show is 25% bigger, covering 18 halls here in MITEC and PWTC.

I am happy to announce we have 622 exhibitors from 13 countries and regions, this is the largest turnout at the show, and buyers from 135 countries and regions have registered to attend the show.

The bigger exhibition space brings greater advantages. MIFF can now provide more innovative ways to our exhibitors to showcase their products and engage buyers in greater comfort.

Ladies and gentlemen At this point, let me share some highlights of the show including what's new.

MIFF has a new theme, "Design Connects People" to drive design-thinking as a strategy for product innovation and business. There are many new design-centric elements to support existing business, generate new opportunities and add value to the furniture supply chain.

For the first time, 80 top Malaysian companies will share an exclusive floor called designRe-na to showcase their

products in lifestyle setting. I invite all of you to visit designRe-na which is located on the second level of this building, just one level below our opening ceremony.

Next is MIFF Timber Mart - wood is a timeless material in furniture making and Malaysia is a well-known producer of wood furniture. This timber mart will serve as a one-stop platform for global wood suppliers and buyers. In MIFF alone, there are hundreds of furniture manufacturers who are always looking for new wood materials.

Buyers will find more choices from the bigger number of exhibitors in Muar Hall, which is organised by our strategic partner, Muar Furniture Association, and also in MIFF Office, the biggest office solutions showroom in this region.

Ladies and Gentlemen Eight years ago, in 2010, MIFF decided the trade show must step up to nurture young talent to sustain the local industry and launched MIFF Furniture Design Competition or FDC, in short.

Today, not only do we continue to champion young designers, we have deepened our commitment.

A new gallery has been established, called Millennials @ Design or MAD. This is to showcase the designs of the Malaysian young designers including 20 finalists of FDC 2018 and also, to display export-ready furniture by young designers from past FDC, and also from Malaysian Timber Industry Board and the Sarawak Timber Development Corporation.

And there is more. MIFF Creative Director Philip Yap is leading a group of seven of the most exciting FDC talents to provide product design and presentation at MIFF. As part of their training, the designers visited several major cities and trade shows in China, from Guangzhou to Shanghai. I want to thank exhibition services company Inogen Malaysia for coming forward to be the Platinum Sponsor of this programme known as FDC in Action.

Ladies and gentlemen In closing, I wish all exhibitors and buyers every success this year. I am confident MIFF 2018 will not only be a productive experience for them, but it will set the benchmark even higher as the most visit furniture marketplace every year in Southeast Asia and the biggest export platform for Malaysian furniture.

Once again, I thank Datuk Seri Mah for making time to join us. Thank you very much.

For the Opening of MIFF2018

The memory of MIFF's Birth and the Future

Mr. Hiroe Tonegawa, President of Tokyo Interior



It is my pleasure that MIFF2018, the 24th of MIFF, added MITEC and expanded much larger than that of last year.

My company has been participating MIFF since the 1st. I remember that the first fair was a representative one of Malaysia, and there were many participants. At that time, most of the local makers intended to export to the US.

These days, there are many products which are for Japan.

However, it is not so easy for the makers who were targeting the US to enter the market in Japan. Furniture makers from Malaysia are having business not only with the US but also with the other countries, such as Middle East. In Japan, a very high level is expected for the design and the quality. The present level is not enough, I am afraid, but growth of Malaysia can be highly expected due to its rich resource and timber.

The Design Reflected its Rich Forests Can Be Expected

Mr. Shinichi Mitsuki from Mitsui Design Tec, the director of Design Management Department



As one of the judges of FDC, I felt that young designers from Malaysia have very fresh ideas through judging their design. To evolve the design, it is important to get the trends of the world while mixing your own originality.

Malaysia has rich timber resources. It has both an urban face and rich nature. Watching the current trends of the world, you can understand that the utility of the design of indoor and out-

door is requested. It is questioned how you can design the both faces of urban and the countryside in Malaysia.

I expect the possibility of MIFF as one of the biggest events among the furniture-interior fairs in Southeast Asia. Until now, there was an image that most of the products were cheaper and casual furniture for middle class. This year, I would like to see luxury offers for high-end at the new hall MITEC which has the advanced facility.

The Most Developed Exhibition in Southeast Asia

Mr. Ikuzou Abeno, Representative Director of Asian Furniture Forum



For most buyers, MIFF in every March is becoming the beginning of the furniture exhibition season in Asia. My relationship with MIFF has started since 2002. At the beginning, I organized MIFF for the furniture industry in Japan, and then I organized the visitors group from Japan and visited MIFF every year.

These days, I participated into MIFF as a player for increasing the export of Japanese furniture. In my opinion from the experience with MIFF for many

years, MIFF can be said the most developed exhibition in ASEAN. Mr. Datuk Tan, the founder, has a distinguished leadership and he is building the personal network in many countries. MIFF is the exhibition that people gather from all over the world and that they can send information for the world.

We also founded the General Incorporated Association Asia Furniture Forum, began our activity at the stage in Asia. I believe the collaboration with AFF and MIFF would activate the furniture industry in Asia.