



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SMEs JOURNEY TOWARDS EFFICIENT AND DIGITAL MANUFACTURING

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 January – SME Corp. Malaysia in collaboration with Embassy of Sweden and Business Sweden (The Swedish Trade and Invest Council), hosted the Seminar on Digital and Efficient Manufacturing at its Headquarter office in Platinum Sentral, Kuala Lumpur close to 100 participants today. The Seminar focused on guiding SMEs, particularly in the manufacturing sector, on how to increase productivity and integrate the value chain by implementing innovative solutions and processes. YB Datuk Ahmad Maslan, the Deputy Minister (Industry) of International Trade and Industry (MITI) was the Guest of Honour and graced the Seminar officially.

In conjunction with the Start-Up and SME Promotion Year 2017 and in tandem with the digitalisation of SMEs, the Seminar was timely and beneficial for SMEs that are eager to learn about digital and efficient manufacturing. The Seminar also served as an eye-opener to the SMEs as they had the opportunity to learn from the Swedish experts on how they innovate and improve their productivity and product quality in manufacturing.

YB Datuk Ahmad Maslan in his opening remarks during the Seminar highlighted that MITI is supportive of innovative ways of doing business which could lead to robust economic growth. MITI had also consolidated feedbacks from the industry on how best the Government could facilitate the transition of Malaysian manufacturers towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution. He also called for all Malaysians to equip themselves with the latest knowledge and skills in order to remain relevant to the current and future job needs.

The Government is committed in creating a conducive business environment, which could propel further economic growth and create more high income jobs to the people. To this effect, SME Masterplan (2012-2020) was written as the basis in implementing the SME development programmes in the 11th Malaysia Plan which focuses on four key areas namely in productivity, innovation, entrepreneurship and inclusiveness.

In an online survey conducted by Business Sweden in November-December 2016, based on 72 respondents from the manufacturing sector, the findings indicated a positive outlook on the future business in Malaysia. About 74% of companies have grown their turnover during the last 3 years and 90% expect to grow in the next 3 years. Besides that, the findings also showed that Malaysian manufacturers are eager to invest. Eight out of ten companies plan to invest in local production in the next 3 years, either investing in factory or machinery and equipment. More than 60% of companies plan to invest in competency enhancement programs for their companies. In the coming years, 47% of companies responded are planning to invest in Production Management System specifically in Plastic Products, Machinery & Equipment and Metal & Metal Products industries.

More SME's are moving towards higher automation levels. In terms of equipment, the Malaysian SME manufacturers have invested quite well and are relying less on pure manual labour. 42% of the manufacturing companies surveyed are using integrated system to manage their production.

Other than YB Datuk Ahmad Maslan, among others that were present during the seminar were H.E Dag Juhlin –Dannfelt, Swedish Ambassador to Malaysia, YBhg. Tan Sri Ir. (Dr.) Mohamed Al Amin Hj Abdul Majid, Chairman of SME Corp. Malaysia, YBhg. Datuk Isham Ishak, Deputy Secretary General (Trade) of Ministry of International Trade and Industry, YBhg. Datuk (Dr.) Hafsah Hashim, Chief Executive Officer of SME Corp. Malaysia and Mr. Carl Malmqvist Trade Commissioner of Sweden.

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About SME Corp. Malaysia

SME Corp. Malaysia is a Central Coordinating Agency that formulates overall policies and strategies for SMEs and coordinates the implementation of SME Development Programmes across all related Ministries and Agencies.

It acts as the central point of reference for research and data dissemination on SMEs, as well as, provides advisory services for SMEs in Malaysia. SME Corp. Malaysia also assumes the role of the Secretariat to the National SME Development Council (NSDC) which is chaired by YAB Prime Minister of Malaysia. For more information on SME Corp. Malaysia, kindly visit www.smecorp.gov.my

About the Embassy of Sweden

Embassy of Sweden in Malaysia task is to promote and strengthen the relations between Sweden and Malaysia. Our activities are focused on trade promotion but we do also contribute to further cooperation in other areas such as defense, culture and education. Furthermore, we provide consular services to Swedish citizens living in or visiting Malaysia. Diplomatic relations between Sweden and Malaysia were established in 1958

The Embassy monitors and reports on political, economic, and social developments in Malaysia and ASEAN. It promotes trade and cultural exchanges and it is involved in promoting knowledge about Sweden in Malaysia. In addition to Sweden's Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Sweden have 2 other representations in Malaysia. These representations include consulates in Kota Kinabalu, and Penang.

About Business Sweden

Business Sweden's aim is to promote Sweden internationally and enhance the image and awareness of Sweden as an attractive, innovative and competitive business partner.

With offices in 55 countries and in every Swedish region, Business Sweden is well placed to identify business opportunities for Swedish companies abroad and create interest in Swedish competence clusters. Business Sweden's offices in Indonesia,

Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam are working closely together to support Swedish companies in the ASEAN region.