



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **PRIME MINISTER INTERACTS WITH SMEs DURING SMIDEX 2017**

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**KUALA LUMPUR, 16 November** – A Townhall Session with YAB Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato 'Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak was organized for the first time by SME Corp. Malaysia in conjunction with the Opening Ceremony of the SME Annual Showcase (SMIDEX) & SME Conference 2017 at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Center (MITEC) today. The Townhall Session provides SMEs with an opportunity to better understand the current situation of the Malaysian economy, budget allocation 2018 for SMEs and increase awareness on Government's efforts to prepare SMEs as we are moving towards Megatrend, Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Digital Free Trade Zone (DFTZ).

SMIDEX 2017 which was officiated by YAB Prime Minister, marks its 20th year since it was first introduced in 1997. Themed "Embracing Change, Enhancing Gain", it indicates the resilience and competitiveness of local SMEs to remain strong in overcoming the everchanging economic environment. Despite challenges, local SMEs are expected to contribute about 37 per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by end of this year and as Malaysia's economy is expected to grow between 5.2 per cent and 5.7 per cent, Malaysian SMEs are able to remain strong and resilient.

The 3-days event that started from yesterday to November 17 also serves as a platform for SMEs to show their ability and readiness to penetrate regional and global markets. More than 300 exhibitors comprising SMEs, Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) as well as local & international Government agencies participated in the exhibition this year. During SMIDEX 2016 last year, the business matching sessions generated a total of RM528.8 million of potential sales throughout

the three days. This year SME Corp. Malaysia targets to achieve potential sales of RM555 million for business matching sessions. Among well-known companies involved in the business matching session at SMIDEX this year are Tesco, Mydin, Lulu Hypermarket, Celcom, Digi, MRT Corp, MRCB, TM and Pos Malaysia.

For SME Conference 2017 which were held on 15 & 16 November, participants were exposed with an interactive knowledge sharing sessions as well as the opportunity to build business networks. Prominent and influence speakers such as YB Dato 'Sri Mustapa Mohamed, MITI Minister; YB Khairy Jamaluddin, KBS Minister; YBhg. Dato' Hj Ameer Ali bin Mydin, Managing Director of Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd.; Malaysia's two leading entrepreneurs, Fadzarudin Anuar and Vivy Yusof, Founders of FashionValet will share their experiences and knowledge at the SME Conference 2017. The Conference also featured DYAM Tunku Mahkota Johor who shared his experiences and views with the participants at the Royal Luncheon Talk Session yesterday.

Apart from product exhibitions and conference, SMIDEX also features other activities such as Pocket Talk sessions, WhaddaHACK competition, Meet and Greet Sessions with Chor & Chah casts and as the highlight of the event, the Enterprise 50 Awards Dinner will be held on November 17, 2017. Opening ceremony of SMIDEX, SME Conference 2017 and the Townhall Session with YAB Prime Minister was also attended by YB Dato 'Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry; YB Datuk Ahmad Maslan, Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry; YB Datuk Chua Tee Yong, Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry; YBhg. Tan Sri Ir. (Dr.) Mohamed Al Amin Haji Abdul Majid, Chairman, SME Corp. Malaysia; and YBhg. Datuk (Dr.) Hafsa Hashim, Chief Executive Officer, SME Corp. Malaysia.

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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.