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110 confirm participation in three-day Franchise Asia '99

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WITH more than two months to go before the start of Franchise Asia 1999, the organisers of this three-day exhibition and conference have already managed to receive confirmation from 110 participants, occupying more than 91.5 per cent of the available exhibition space.

Describing this as a success, Deputy Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Idris Jusoh said the organisers are offering a total of 1,300 sq m of exhibition space to participants of Franchise Asia, formerly known as the Malaysian Franchise Exhibition and Conference (Mafec) held since 1995.

"A total of 700 sq m of exhibition space were offered during the exposition last year, which was then called Mafec," he told reporters after receiving a memorandum of understanding from some 30 confirmed participants of the exhibition in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Franchise Asia 1999 exposition and conference is being organised by the Ministry and Malaysian Franchise Association.

Idris said the event, which is scheduled for October 15-17 has also attracted a total of 37 foreign exhibitors.

"This is very encouraging from the fact that they were less than 20 foreign exhibitors at the then Mafec 1998. So far, 48 locals and 25 supporting institutions, besides the foreigners have indicated their intention to take part in the exposition.

"With the event only scheduled to start more than two months from now, we are expecting a total of 130 participants to take part in Franchise Asia 1999," he said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to officiate the exposition and deliver a keynote address entitled "Exploring Opportunities in The Emerging Markets", at the conference.

Idris said the organisers expect 23 key experts and industry leaders to speak at the conference.

They include European Franchise Federation president Manfred Maus, British Franchise Association executive director Brian Smart and International Franchise Association president Don Debolt.

Local speakers will include Franchise Technology Sdn Bhd managing director Siew Pak Kheong, Credit Guarantee Corp Bhd chief executive officer Wan Azahar Wan Ahmad, and Perbadanan Nasional Bhd chief executive officer Mat Hassan Esa.

A charity golf tournament will kick off the Franchise Asia's week on October 12 which offers a brand new Proton Perdana V6 sponsored by Edaran Otomobil Nasional Bhd as the grand prize.

This will be followed by the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation on October 13, which will see the admission of four new members in the eight-member grouping.

The four new members of the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation are Brunei, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, while the existing eight-member countries are Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Japan.

Besides the two major events, the World Franchise Council (WFC) meeting will also be held on October 14. WFC consists of 34-member countries' franchise associations and is expected to deliberate important issues related to the industry.

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