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Timber convention to focus on Chinese, Far East markets

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THE Malaysian Timber Marketing Convention (MTMC) 2000 will focus on the potential of Chinese and the Far East markets for the commodity.

MTMC chairman Tunku Osman Ahmad said the convention, held for the first time last year, should be attracting local and foreign timber representatives who want to gain insight into these markets.

"In last year's convention, there were 21 strong delegations from China. In recognition of this fact, we have dedicated a whole session this year on China and the Far East," he said when announcing details of MTMC 2000 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Osman said with 1.2 billion potential timber consumers and its impending entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO), China holds great potential as a market for timber products.

"All these make up a potent brew of attractive business potential and enticing trading possibilities," he added.

Apart from a presentation on business know-how in the China market, the convention will also have a panel discussion on the timber markets of South Korea and Japan.

MTMC 2000 is scheduled to take place in Kuala Lumpur from September 28 to 29 this year.

Osman said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed has agreed to officiate MTMC 2000 which represents the whole spectrum of the Malaysian timber industry.

The convention is being jointly organised by eight members of all sectors of the timber industry in Malaysia such as Malaysian Wood Industries Association, Timber Exporters' Association of Malaysia, Malaysian Panel Products Manufacturers' Association and Malaysian Furniture Industry Council.

Osman said another current topic in the global timber industry which will be discussed during the convention is timber certification.

The discussions will touch on the market for certified timber in Europe and the potential impact of the "timber certification trend" on the rest of the global market for timber products.

The MTMC 1999 attracted 325 timber industry players from Malaysia and other countries. 86 foreign participants from 21 different countries took part last year. Among them were from European countries such as Belgium (2), Denmark (2), France (3), Germany (1), Holland (1) and UK (12). From West Asian countries; Saudi Arabia (2), United Arab Emirates (9) and Yemen (2). Representatives from Asian countries include Japan (1), South Korea (3), China (21), Hong Kong (3), Indonesia (2), Singapore (1) and Vietnam (1).

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