

PM to make SMI announcement at Smidex 2007

NST- 6/6/2007.

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is expected to make an announcement regarding the small- and medium-sized industry (SMI) at Smidex 2007.

However, information on the announcement is unclear as officials declined to elaborate.

"We don't want to steal the thunder (by giving details) now. Let the Prime Minister make the announcement," said Small and Medium Industries Development Corp (Smidec) chief executive officer Datuk Hafsa Hashim when asked by reporters after the opening ceremony of the SME Convention 2007 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Abdullah is scheduled to open Smidex 2007, the region's premier business event, at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre today. The event is being held until Friday.

The SME Convention was officiated by Ministry of International Trade and Industry parliamentary secretary Datin Paduka Dr Tan Yee Kew.

Last month, the Small and Medium Industries Association of Malaysia had come up with their wish list for the special task force to facilitate business (Pemudah).

It included among others the reformation of the Government Delivery System

(GDS) to provide better, faster and more convenient service for foreign direct investment and domestic direct investment.

The Government had earlier set up Pemudah, comprising government leaders, entrepreneurs and association leaders to brainstorm, collect market feedback and come up with suggestions to improve the GDS.

Since the aim of GDS is to provide service for the people, all the systems that are recommended by Pemudah to improve the current situation must be people-oriented, customer-oriented and people-friendly.

Almost 97 per cent of the manufacturers in Malaysia are small and medium industries.

On Smidex, Hafsa said Smidec has received a total of more than 800 participants from both local and international firms which include countries like Thailand, Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) member countries and African nations.

She said the event has attracted more than 300 companies with a total of 434 booths. About 8,000 people are expected to visit the four-day event.

"With the 'SME Networking: Local Links, Global Reach', we hope it will provide a platform and give opportunities for SMI industry players to outsource potential ventures through business-matching sessions," she said.