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GECCommunity 2016 sets sight on RM100m cross-border valuation

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Over 150 programmes being implemented by 15 ministries and 60 agencies

by **MARK RAO & ALIFAH ZAINUDDIN**

THE Global Economic Community 2016 (GECCommunity) is expected to facilitate RM100 million worth of cross-border valuation, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak.

Mohd Najib said the target can be achieved by working with over 3,000 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from over 60 countries present in the ecosystem.

"SMEs make up a huge part of our economy. According to the latest figures, 97.3% of registered businesses in Malaysia are SMEs," he said at the inaugural GECCommunity event at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday.

"Of these, 77% are micro enterprises, 20% are small enterprises and 3% are medium enterprises."

The latest government data showed that SMEs currently contribute 36.3% to Malaysia's GDP, while employing 66.5% of the labour force and providing 17.6% of total export value.

The finance minister said the country will work towards creating an entrepreneurship development system, with over 150 entrepreneurship development programmes being implemented by 15 ministries and 60 agencies.

Initiatives developed to meet the RM100 million target include Mastercard-Cyberjaya cashless society, Techstars Health Accelerator and Nestle Open Innovation.

Malaysia also launched the social enterprise certification and social procurement incentive, which is expected to ben-

efit at least 500,000 B40 (bottom 40% household income group) individuals through the programmes.

The certification will be introduced by the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC), the entrepreneurship platform launched in 2014 by Najib and US President Barack Obama.

MaGIC will further undertake the Global Accelerator Programme, where it will support nine industry-specific cluster labs to bridge corporations and entrepreneurs, and the Asean Impact Challenge to cultivate global talents in solving regional issues.

The event also marked the launch of the second wave of the Malaysia Commercialisation Year (MCY), effective next year, following the success of the maiden event in 2016.

MCY 2016 commercialised 123 products with an estimated value of RM155 million.

Najib said the continuation of the initiative next year is expected to boost the use of technology-based solutions across all sectors in the country.

"We are confident that 2017 will see many new, innovative tech-based solutions, not just from public research institutions, but also from the private sector and industries," he said.

Meanwhile, Treasury Secretary General Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah said Malaysia will continue to adopt an open economy policy in embracing the digital revolution.

"There is now a great trend where great nations are embarking on inward-looking policies. This is not good for the world," Mohd Irwan said at the same event.

"Malaysia will continue to implement an open economy and an outward-looking policy

to enhance innovation and creation of new technologies to make the world a better place to live in," he said.

This, according to him, requires a mentality shift across government entities, private sector, non-governmental organisations and individuals in meeting the trend of businesses moving from ownership to assets in a diverse industry.

"We want to be at the frontier and not behind the curve. We want to be one of the technology leaders and creators, and not just the followers and adopters," added Mohd Irwan.

The GECCommunity 2016 summit was a joint effort between the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia.

The opening day of the two-day event saw over 5,000 participants with over 50 speakers and 50 exhibitors.