

**DPM: Have edge over rivals**  
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**By Minderjeet Kaur**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysian companies must rapidly adopt and strengthen business models through research, state-of-the-art technology, innovations and aggressive branding.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said this was necessary to exploit the seamless global market opportunities under the free trade agreements.

He said he wanted local businessman to be bold in acquiring the necessary edge over competitors to penetrate the global market.

"These attributes would result in creating greater acceptability of their products and services, within and beyond domestic borders," he said during the 75th anniversary celebrations of George Kent (M) Bhd yesterday. The infrastructure investment, water and construction company is also involved in making water meters.

Present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Idris Jala, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Kong Cho Ha and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek.

Muhyiddin said he wanted local companies to acquire potential investments or projects that may bear fruit in the short and long term.

"In an environment where market opening is an ongoing process and tariff barriers no longer provide protection, there is no alternative or option for the Malaysian business community but to be the best among the highly-ranked."

He said he was confident Malaysian companies would gain acceptance from consumers as the government had implemented efforts at both the federal and state levels to promote a conducive, business-friendly environment.

"I am confident our country's growth can be sustained. Domestic demand should continue to be resilient and the private sector should continue to seize market opportunities created."

However, Muhyiddin said it was equally important for government agencies and departments to be fully aware of problems faced by the private sector so that the necessary remedial action could be taken.

"This can help in improving the business climate and the performance of the public sector delivery system."

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (centre) looking at George Kent's one millionth water meter at the company's 75th anniversary celebrations yesterday. With him are (from right) George Kent chairman Tan Sri Tan Kay Hock, Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek and Datuk Seri Kong Cho Ha. At left is Datuk Seri Idris Jala. — NST picture by Effendy Rashid

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