

The Launch of Malaysianwood.net And 100 Malaysian Timbers 2010 Edition

- ENGLISH VERSION ONLY -

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AT THE LAUNCH OF MALAYSIANWOOD.NET AND 100 MALAYSIAN TIMBERS-2010 EDITION,
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Y.B. Senator Datuk G. Palanivel
Timbalan Menteri Perusahaan Perladangan dan Komoditi

Y.Bhg. Dato' Wilfred Madius Tangau
Pengerusi, Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB)

Y.Bhg. Dr. Jalaluddin Harun
Ketua Pengarah, Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB)

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-Puan,

Salam sejahtera, Selamat Pagi dan Salam 1Malaysia,

Terlebih dahulu saya ingin merakamkan penghargaan dan terima kasih kepada Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB) kerana menjemput saya untuk menyempurnakan Majlis Pelancaran Portal Perdagangan Secara Elektronik iaitu Malaysianwood.net dan buku yang mengandungi maklumat mengenai spesies kayu di Malaysia iaitu "100 Malaysian Timbers – 2010 Edition" pada pagi ini. Saya juga berbesar hati dengan kehadiran tuan-tuan dan puan-puan di Majlis pada pagi ini, yang mana adalah mencerminkan sokongan berterusan bukan sahaja kepada program-program yang dilaksanakan oleh MTIB tetapi juga pembangunan industri perindustrian negara secara keseluruhannya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. I am indeed glad and honoured to be invited at the launching of the electronic Portal which have been named as Malaysianwood.net. I strongly believe that the development of Malaysianwood.net portal is timely and in accordance with the government's efforts to facilitate the industry in meeting the demand from the ever-changing and competitive domestic and global market environment.

3. The Malaysian timber industry is, without doubt, still very much an export oriented sector, with annual exports totalling not less than RM20 billion for the last few years. For the period of January-May 2010, Malaysia's exports of timber and timber products totalled RM8.5 billion, an increase of 17.4% compared with the exports in the corresponding period last year. As a result of the continued promotion efforts, our timber and timber products are being exported to all parts of the world. MTIB, in particular has been putting extra efforts to explore new markets for Malaysian timber and timber products over the years. It is, therefore, would come as no surprise that the timber industry is opened to the influence of the international markets. Thus, lay the challenge for the Malaysian timber industry to adapt and counter these changing environments, demands and preferences of the international market which abounds with issues such as certification, legality and sustainability in the management of forest resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Trade is no longer a direct and simple process of buying and selling. It is increasingly being linked to one's responsibility towards the environment as well as our social and economic commitments. Initiatives on climate change, REDD or Reducing Emissions From Deforestation and Forest Degradation, carbon trading, certification for forest sustainability and legality of products are taken and discussed at many of the international forum such as the United Nations Convention on Climate Change.

5. Malaysia's efforts in sustainable forest management (SFM) are well-recognised internationally. The objectives of forest management were clearly formulated in the National Forest Policy Plan (1978). Riding on this advantage, the Malaysia Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS), operated by the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC), was developed to certify Malaysian timber products as those from sustainable source. MTCS has gained endorsement of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Scheme (PEFC) on 1 May 2009 for a period of five (5) years. Since then, MTCS has gained recognition in major timber markets and Malaysia's certified timber products are increasingly being demanded. This initiative is taken not just for the purpose of trade but also to demonstrate our responsibility towards the environment and sustainability of our resources and trade.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. I would like to draw your attention to the development in the United States and European Union regarding the Lacey Act and the Due Diligence Regulations, which actually illustrate the demands for responsible trading. As the United States and European Union are two of our main export destinations, it is pertinent for Malaysia to take appropriate initiatives to respond to their demand for certified timber. Otherwise, we are at the verge of risking our market share in those major export destinations in the near future.

7. Given the recent development in the international timber market, the Government through MTIB has undertaken several initiatives to sustain Malaysia's position as a leader in the tropical timber trade. The establishment of forest plantations programme, for instance, is one such effort as it holds the key for the future development of the timber industry in the form of sufficient raw materials. Under the Forest Plantation Programme by the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities and MTIB, a total area of 375,000 hectares of forest plantations was targeted to be planted by 2020. However, to further develop the forest plantation programme, I need to stress the importance of private investment in cooperating with the Government in developing forest plantations. In this regard, the Ministry and MTIB welcome further involvement and investment in the forest plantation programme so that the aspiration of planting 375,000 hectares of forest by 2020 and supplying the raw materials for the downstream sector would become a reality.

8. In accordance with the Prime Minister's aspiration of developing innovations, my Ministry has for years encouraged the creation of new technology and innovations in the timber sector. New products such as glulam offer new and innovative uses of timbers with superior technical properties and enhanced design value. Together with other products such as wood plastic composite and kenaf fibreboard, they represent highly potential growth areas in the timber industry. In the construction industry, the application of the Industrialised Building System (IBS) is encouraged by the Government and MTIB is taking the lead role in promoting timber IBS. Among the advantages offered by the IBS are less dependence on foreign labour, less wastage, less volume of building materials and increased site cleanliness.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. There is no doubt that there are always changes in the market. Consumer preference will change according to time and requirement, and so is product development. Such were the dynamics of the marketplace that one has to be creative and innovative in order to stay competitive in the market. This would require us to explore new ways of doing things and to take advantage of new technologies that would allow us to be more efficient and innovative in doing business.

10. As the market in becoming more dynamic and complex, the means of buying and selling has also evolved over the last decade. New technology in information technology (IT) has made it possible for people to sell their products online, in the comfort of their room, without actually seeing the buyer in person. Throughout the world, millions of dollars have been generated through online business that no enterprising businessmen would want to ignore the potential it offers.

11. It is in this context, that marketing and trading have also gone electronic. The Malaysianwood.net is one such system, specially developed to serve the Malaysian timber industry in the trading of their products. The Malaysianwood.net, offers the industry an option for quick and convenient networking. Besides offering the industry with a trading floor with which to conduct their business, the portal also serve as a reservoir of information on timber products and markets which is available at a click of a button.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. As the world trade becomes more competitive, the consolidation of information on the vast array of Malaysian timbers into a convenient and easily readable form which could be readily accessible is highly critical. Hence, the development of Malaysianwood.net, which I strongly believe is a step in the right direction for the Malaysian timber industry. I applaud MTIB for initiating such significant and useful gateway.

13. In this respect, I am also pleased to note that MTIB has revised the publication titled, "100 Malaysian Timbers – 2010 Edition", a publication which provides comprehensive information on the Malaysian timbers. I have been informed that this book was first published in 1986, and after almost 24 years it is recognised that there is a need for an update to the list of timber species from 53 to 100 species. The book does not only cover the species found throughout Malaysia but also offer informational facts of the trees and achievements in utilizing these species which have been generated throughout the years. As such, I duly acknowledged the work of the revision committee in adding the new species and development in the book. I am sure that it is not an easy task, but I hope that the committee would found solace to know that they have assumed an important part in enhancing the knowledge of the Malaysian timber species. I am confident that this book will be able to meet the needs of forestry and wood technology students and timber practitioners, on the knowledge of Malaysian timbers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. In this regard I wish to commend MTIB for taking the lead in developing the Malaysianwood.net for the benefit of the Malaysian timber industry. The industry is now given another effective option to market and trade their products to the world. It is indeed my fervent hope that the e-market place at the Malaysianwood.net will soon develop into an important marketplace for not only the Malaysian timber industry to sell their products, but also international buyers looking for Malaysian timber products. On that note, ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure and honour to officially launch the Malaysianwood.net and 100 Malaysian Timbers – 2010 Edition.

Thank you.

Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities