

RM50,000 support for undergrads' education

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(From left) Tan, Lim, Chan, Wang and Leeuwenburgh with the mock cheque for a year's sponsorship of The Star epaper. — AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

A MOCK cheque totalling RM50,000 to sponsor a year's worth of The Star epaper for university students was among highlights at a dinner in conjunction with South-East Asia's largest furniture trade show.

The brief but meaningful ceremony took place after a welcome speech by Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) founder and chairman Datuk Tan Chin Huat.

He presented the cheque to Star Media Group (SMG) group chief executive officer Chan Seng Fatt and chief business officer Lydia Wang.

Also present were MIFF general manager Kelie Lim and Informa Markets country manager Gerard Leeuwenburgh.

Lim said MIFF had been supporting The Star's education sponsorship programme for over 15 years because the initiative encouraged education and creativity among young people who will become future trendsetters and industry leaders.

"We find it meaningful to be part of a programme that encourages a culture of lifelong learning through reading.

"We realise that an English newspaper can also help improve proficiency in the language, which is an important skill in the international business market.

"The ability to professionally converse and express oneself in English can really help students excel in their careers.

"During my days as a student, there was always encouragement from our English teacher and lecturers to cultivate the reading habit.

"I believe practice makes perfect, so it is important to have an environment for us to cultivate the language," she said.

Lim, who hails from Muar in Johor, recalled her years at a Chinese school and how she had wished for more resources to improve her English proficiency.

"Luckily, I was able to brush up on my English after stepping into the working environment. "

One of the ways was through reading and my resources included newspapers, as well as communicating with others in the industry and reading reference materials from research papers.

"Today, with better resources, students who are able to have more exposure and practice of English language during their schooling years will surely have a good foundation to adapt to the working environment," she said.

Lim said MIFF was compelled to offer continuous support, seeing how well The Star had managed the education programme over the years.

"We are impressed with how the newspaper has become a reliable source of information by showing consistent quality in its reporting," said Lim.

"We have also seen how the business has evolved by adapting to new technology and trends, and diversified its content as it evolved from print to digital format."

She said the partnership between The Star and MIFF had allowed the furniture exhibition titan to do something for the community while reaching out to a wider audience.

"Through this partnership, we have been able to leverage on each other's strengths, one of which is information sharing as part of an initiative to develop the industry together," she said.

In agreement, Leeuwenburgh said the epaper sponsorship had garnered support for the international trade fair as it provided students access to information.

“It is common knowledge that access to information always benefits a community,” he said.

The dinner, held at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur, also honoured 30 senior representatives and endorsing bodies of MIFF.

Tan said the fair, with its 30 years of experience, had gained a reputation for being the world’s top 10 furniture event.

“For 2024, there were 715 exhibitors from 15 countries including Malaysia. Orders over the four days were recorded at US\$1.28bil (approximately RM5.6bil) These are record figures in our history,” he said.

MIFF 2025, organised by Informa Markets, will take place from March 1 to 4 at Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre and World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur.