



Heimtextil 2019: A lively start to the new furnishing season gives hope for a good business

With record levels of exhibitors and an impressive range of innovative products as well as offers on top themes such as sustainability, contract business and healthy sleep, Heimtextil 2019 held during January 7-10 enjoyed a dynamic start to the new season for home and contract textiles. The event's new hall concept met with broad approval.

Organized by Messe Frankfurt, the Heimtextil show boasted 3,025 exhibitors from 65 countries. Olaf Schmidt, Messe Frankfurt vice-president of textiles and textile technologies said the number of US buyers at the show had increased, implying that the country was exploring opportunities in the international market. "All the big US stores are here. There is,

clearly, a shift to other countries and because of the emotional character of the ongoing problem, we should know in about six months from now what will happen," he added.

However, he was unsure if other suppliers can quickly replace China as the world's biggest textile supplier with its huge textile-manufacturing infrastructure. Schmidt was upbeat about the Asian region's potential, with Vietnam, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh expected to become key players in the global textile supply chain. "I also believe fierce international competition will force suppliers to upgrade their production processes, adopt automation and faster and convenient modes of supplies. Technological innovation is the mantra of

the industry's future," he said. The textile exhibition saw participation from Asian exhibitors, including eight exhibitors from Indonesia, three from Malaysia, three from Thailand and eight from Vietnam. The top two textile giants, China and India, had 559 and 394 exhibitors respectively, surpassing the host country Germany at 301.

According to the Malaysian trade commissioner in Frankfurt, Badrul Hisham Hilal, Malaysia's total exports of textiles, apparel and footwear amounted RM13.69 billion in the January-November 2018 period. The US is the biggest market for such products, accounting for RM1.78 billion, 13% of total exports. ♦