

# Top Glove leads E50 winners

■ By Azlan Abu Bakar  
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TOP Glove Corp Bhd's subsidiary, Top Glove Sdn Bhd, walked away with the top honours at this year's Enterprise 50 (E50) Award.

The second and third place went to Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd and ABX Express (M) Sdn Bhd respectively.

Others which were in the top 10 ranks were Bintulu Edible Oils Sdn Bhd, United Logistics Sdn Bhd, Teras Teknologi Sdn Bhd, Gateway Option Sdn Bhd, TT Vision Technologies Sdn Bhd, Cape Technology Sdn Bhd and KEU Control Engineering Sdn Bhd.

Jointly organised by the Small and Medium Industries Development Corp (Smidec) and Deloitte Consulting Malaysia Sdn Bhd, E50 is an annual award aimed at promoting the success of local enterprises.

Telekom Malaysia Bhd and RHB Bank Bhd were the supporting sponsors, while Business Times was the official publication.

Fifty local companies were presented with the awards at a ceremony held in Kuala Lumpur last night for their outstanding performance.

The awards were presented by International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

Also present were Smidec chairman Datuk Mohamed Al-Amin Abdul Majid and Deloitte KassimChan managing partner Ahmad Mustapha Ghazali.

Speaking at an earlier press conference, Deloitte Consulting Malaysia Sdn Bhd managing director Azman Mohd Zain said the judges had a tough time deciding on the winners for this year's award.

Azman said it took the judges months to evaluate and conduct assessments on the total 143 companies which took part this year before narrowing it down to only 50 companies.

As in the past, the manufacturing sector dominated the winners' podium with 29 places in the Top 50.



OUTSTANDING: Rafidah (left) with the winners of the E50 Award.

## SMEs urged to send more staff for training

■ By Hamisah Hamid  
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ONLY 0.24 per cent of employees in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have undergone training at various designated institutes in the first 10 months of this year with grants provided by Small Medium Industry Development Corp (Smidec).

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said total employment within the SME community is over 6.5 million, with SMEs in the manufacturing sector alone employing 1.1 million.

"However, as at end-October 2007, only 15,824 employees from SMEs had been trained at the various designated skills training institutes throughout the country with the SMEs availing themselves of the grants provided by Smidec.

"To date, Smidec has approved grants totalling RM16.02 million for the upgrading of the skills of over 15,800 employees of SMEs," she said at the 2007 Enterprise 50 (E50) Award ceremony in Kuala Lumpur last night.

Also present were Smidec chairman Datuk Mohamed Al Amin Abdul Majid, Smidec chief executive officer Datuk Hafisah Hashim, Deloitte KassimChan managing partner Ahmad Mustapha Ghazali and Business Times deputy editor Mustapha Kamil.

Rafidah urged SMEs to be more proactive in skills upgrading and utilising the various programmes provided by the government. They must continue to invest to improve management, technological and

workforce capabilities as well as measures which enhance productivity and performance.

"For SMEs, these investments can range from creativity and innovation on the shopfloor, such as in the layout of machinery and processes, to research and development and prototyping of new products," she said.

Under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), a total of RM463 million has been allocated for SMEs. Of the total, RM280.83 million had been approved between January 2006 and October 2007 as loans and grants to 4,522 applicants.

Rafidah also proposed that for 2008, the E50 Award programme be confined only to SMEs, but covering all sectors.

"Certainly, there need to be adjustments to the categories of awards and the criteria used for evaluation and adjudication. This will ensure that companies compete on a level playing field and are evaluated against their peers in each relevant sector," she said.

This way, the larger SME companies will vie for the Malaysian Industrial Excellence Award, which is the main award programme for private sector enterprises.

Rafidah said since its inception, the E50 Award has attracted 1,310 participants and 386 companies have emerged as winners.

"Forty-one companies have been listed ... and I am told that six of the winners of this year's E50 Award have plans for listing within the next 12 months," she said.

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