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SUZUKI MOTOR CORPORATION TO HEADLINE THE 2018 AFF FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP AS TITLE SPONSOR

Suzuki Motor Corporation will be the title sponsor of the ASEAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION (AFF) Football Championship once again, paving the way for another exciting edition of the region's biggest and most passionately supported football tournament in 2018.

This will mark the sixth successive occasion Suzuki Motor Corporation have backed the AFF's flagship competition – the AFF Suzuki Cup – since 2008. First played in 1996, the biennial tournament is contested by the national “A” teams of Southeast Asia, and boasts record TV ratings as well as sold-out stadia.

“We began our sponsorship as the title sponsor in 2008 with the passion to bring thrill and excitement to the ASEAN region” said Kinji Saito, Managing Officer from Suzuki Motor Corporation. “Since then, together with fans and championship staff, the AFF SUZUKI CUP has created sensational moments and unforgettable memories which embody Suzuki’s corporate slogan, “Way of Life!”. The 2018 championship will mark the 10 year anniversary of our sponsorship, and with new changes to the tournament format, it will surely be as remarkable and exciting as ever, and mark a new chapter in the history of the AFF SUZUKI CUP.”

Thailand triumphed for a record fifth time when the event was last played in 2016. They defeated Indonesia in the Final, during the year when Myanmar and the Philippines hosted the Group Stages for the first time.

“Next year will be the 12th time we have staged the AFF Football Championship and we are truly grateful to Suzuki Motor Corporation for embracing the region’s top footballing tournament as the title sponsor once again,” said Lt Gen Dato’ Sri Azzuddin Ahmad (Retired), General Secretary of AFF.

“It is incredible how quickly time has flown by since the inaugural tournament was staged in Singapore in 1996. Not only has the tournament grown from strength to strength, it has created opportunities to groom football talent in the region and is today the most important regional stage for local teams to take the next step up.”

Importantly, Suzuki’s renewal comes at a time when the tournament will see some exciting new changes to its format, aimed at providing more exposure for the players in their home country and driving greater fan engagement.

Starting next year, the Qualification Round will see the two lowest-ranked ASEAN teams playing off against each other, with the winner joining the top nine ranked countries in the Group Stage.

Each Group will comprise five teams, with each team playing two matches at home and two matches away. The Semi-Finals and Finals format will remain home-and-away matches played over two-legs. This means throughout the course of the tournament, there will be more home matches held in every participating country, which will further enhance established rivalries. “These are exciting times for the AFF Football Championship with Suzuki Motor Corporation extending their legacy as title sponsor and putting their weight behind an invigorated tournament,” said Tom Smith, President, Football – Asia at Lagardère Sports. “We deeply appreciate Suzuki’s unwavering support and our team looks forward to delivering the most impactful event in the history of the competition.”

About the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF)

The ASEAN Football Federation comprises 12 Member Associations. The main objectives of the ASEAN Football Federation are to develop football in ASEAN through its activities, courses and competitions, to continue to nurture the AFF Football Championship as the premier Football Tournament in Asia and to foster closer relationships between Member Associations in ASEAN and the Regional Federations across Asia.

<http://www.aseanfootball.org>

About Suzuki Motor Corporation

The Suzuki Motor Corporation is one of the rare manufacturers in the world to produce both motorcycles and automobiles. The company designs and manufactures passenger cars, commercial vehicles, motorcycles, ATVs and outboard motors. Its motorcycle products range from scooters to large motorcycles to meet the diverse demands of its customers around the world. Suzuki's automobile business has a large share of the Japanese mini car market and develops a range of products for the global market, focusing on the compact car market in response to increasing concerns for the good of the environment and Suzuki is the world's most beloved compact car brand based on IHS Automotive sales volume data*. The main production facilities are located in 19 countries and regions overseas, enabling Suzuki to operate as a global organisation serving 208 countries and regions. The global sales volume in 2016FY (April 2016 to March 2017) is 2.92 million units for Automobiles and 1.37 units for Motorcycles and ATVs.

*The views, opinions and finding expressed in this document are those of Suzuki Motor Corporation and are not those of IHS.

About Lagardère Sports

Lagardère Sports is a leading sports marketing agency, with a global network of local experts dedicated to delivering innovative solutions that meet clients' needs. The company believes sport inspires emotions and passion that are essential to enrich people's lives and generate powerful collective experiences. Lagardère Sports dedicates expertise and passion to provide clients with privileged access to the infinite opportunities of sports. Lagardère Sports is part of Lagardère Sports and Entertainment, a company with more than 1,600 employees worldwide and 50 years of experience. www.lagardere-se.com