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Malaysia's Ekuinas picks controlling stake in pharma distributor Medispec



Image taken from Ekuinas website.

By [Yimie Yong](#)

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Malaysia's government-linked private equity firm Ekuiti Nasional Bhd (Ekuinas) on Wednesday announced that it has acquired a controlling stake in Medispec (M) Sdn Bhd, a local pharma and supplement product distributor, based on an enterprise value of 88.5 million ringgit (\$21.87 million).

The deal marks Ekuinas's maiden investment in the pharmaceutical industry.

Medispec markets over 100 drugs and 30 health supplements under both prescription and over-the-counter categories, according to a statement.

"Ekuinas' entry into the healthcare and pharmaceutical space is timely as we look to capitalise on global megatrends and demographic shifts amid the emergence of COVID-19. Medispec is one of the leading distributors and marketers of healthcare and pharmaceutical products in Malaysia with a track record of over 35 years. It has established a strong supply chain and distribution network in the local market, driven by their deep industry knowledge and strong relationship with principals," Ekuinas chief executive officer Syed Yasir Arafat Syed Abd Kadir said.

“Apart from growing our home-grown supplement brand Vitamode domestically, we are poised to take our brand regionally to Asean countries by leveraging Ekuinas’ expertise,” Medispec chief executive officer Teng Beng Lee said.

Ekuinas has made cumulative investments in 42 companies since its inception in 2009, representing a total committed investment of 4.4 billion ringgit (\$1.09 billion).

The PE firm has scored a couple of recent portfolio exits. In October last year, Ekuinas had divested its entire 60% holding in homegrown desserts and beverages firm [Coolblog Apps Sdn Bhd](#) to Singapore-based PE firm Archipelago Capital Partners.

Earlier in August, Ekuinas divested its 100% stake in halal meat-based food maker [PrimaBaguz Sdn Bhd](#) to US-based Johnsonville International LLC, according to a report in August last year.

In an email interview last year, Syed Yasir said, Ekuinas has been selective in deploying its capital in the past two to three years, as its focus was mainly on divesting its assets and strengthening its portfolio companies’ operations.

“We see this as a great opportunity for firms such as ours which have divested around 50% of our portfolio to reset and aggressively look at opportunities to acquire companies or as a bolt-on for our portfolio companies to consolidate and further strengthen their respective positions,” Syed Yasir had said then.

[Ekuiti Nasional Bhd \(Ekuinas\)](#) [Medispec](#)

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