

Malaysia aims to be world halal hub

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia with its comprehensive halal ecosystem wants to position itself as the halal hub in the Asian region, if not the world.

"We are ranked No. 1 in terms of the halal economy," said Malaysia External Trade Development Corp (Matrade) deputy chief executive officer Datuk Wan Latiff Wan Musa.

"We have a comprehensive ecosystem in the halal industry compared to other countries. The banks provide funding for companies to set up facilities and machines," he said, adding that the Islamic Development Department (Jakim) issues halal certification while Matrade handles marketing.

He said such an approach taken by the government has strengthened the Malaysia brand for halal products.

"We have the upcoming Malaysia International Halal Showcase (Mihas) for local companies to promote their products for export," he shared.

Mihas, which is a top sourcing platform for halal products and services, is in its 16th edition this year. Matrade is targeting 1,000 exhibitors at Mihas 2019, to be held at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre (Mitec) here on April 3-6. The exhibitors and trade visitors come from 70 countries.

Wan Latiff said there are 1,600 local companies exporting products with halal certification.

"We export food and beverage products, food flavours, food colouring, palm oil ingredients for chocolate and ice-cream, as well as cosmetics, personal care and pharmaceutical



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products for the halal market," he said, citing China, Singapore, Japan and the United States as among importers of Malaysian halal products.

"We have established a standard and certification for halal products, so our products are most sought after. Our products are highly regarded by international buyers," he added.

Citing reports, he said with 1.8 billion Muslims around the globe and Muslims worldwide spending an estimated US\$2.1 trillion in 2017, the prospects for the halal industry are good.



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Wan Latiff said Malaysian companies in the halal sector have opportunities to grow as the government provides facilities for expansion.

Matrade arranges for their participation in trade fairs abroad, such as in Dubai, Japan and China, as well as their inclusion in export acceleration missions overseas.

Halal exports is a special category in the inaugural Export Excellence Awards 2019, launched by Star Media Group in partnership with Standard Chartered. The main award categories are electrical and electronics; oil and gas; chemical, mineral and alloy; agriculture; machinery, equipment and automation; services; and other industries. Deadline for entry submission is Aug 2, and winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on Nov 12. For more information, go to exportawards.com.my