

Muslim nations urged to play bigger role in RM2.1t halal industry

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KUALA LUMPUR: Muslim nations should increase their investments in the halal sector.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said there was no doubt about the sector's vast potential.

"The business and commercial potential of the halal industry is beyond doubt, with a market of 1.6 billion Muslims and an estimated market size of more than US\$600 billion (RM2.1 trillion).

"Not only does the sector offer lucrative and tangible returns, it is also an obligation for Muslims. I would like to call on Muslim nations to increase their investments in the halal sector," he said.

The rising awareness of the halal brand has increased the need for halal certification in the world.

"The (Malaysian-based) Halal Industry Development Corporation will undertake overseas halal certification based on the Malaysian certification standards and processes, which is well-established and highly regarded by the halal industry.

"The concept of halal was meant to be global. It is the duty of Muslims to enhance and promote halal as a premium brand, one associated with quality, safety and good

health," Abdullah added.

In his address before launching the World Halal Forum yesterday, he said the Malaysian government would continue to support the halal industry.

"This will be done by developing the infrastructure and introducing new programmes, including the establishment of dedicated halal industrial zones as production centres to tap into the local halal market."

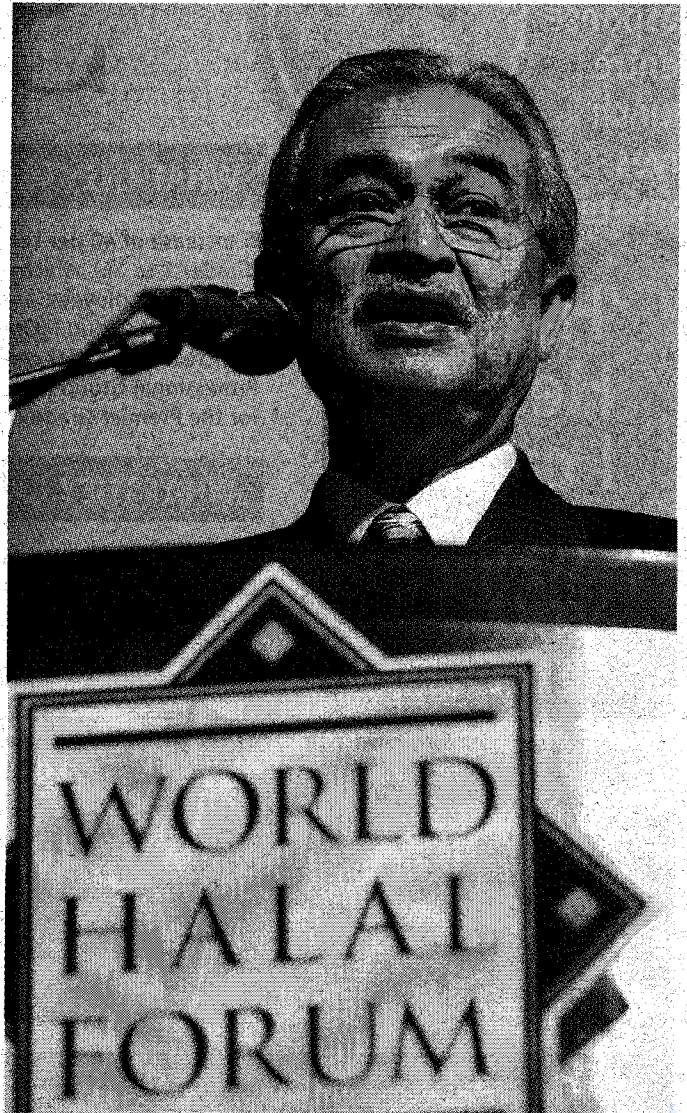
"There should be more meeting of minds among Islamic jurists, scientists and business leaders on how to develop the halal industry.

"If not, we will run the risk of being left behind and miss out on the potential of the halal sector."

About 900 participants from 40 countries, including those from non-Muslim nations such as Australia, Canada and China, will take part in the two-day forum.

Last night, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin presented the Halal Journal Awards 2007 of various categories to local and foreign players in the halal industry.

The recipients were selected for their commitment to develop their products and services by complying with the strict Islamic guidelines.



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wants Muslim nations to increase their investments in the halal sector.