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Zahid: Conquer global halal industry

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KUALA LUMPUR: Both the public and private sectors must work more closely to make Malaysia the global leader in halal products and services, said Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

The Deputy Prime Minister said Malaysia was in the forefront of introducing new halal products but had been overtaken by other countries due to a lack of follow-through action.

"This needs to change as Malaysia has good potential to be the world's top player in the lucrative halal industry valued at US\$2.3 trillion (RM9.56 trillion) annually.

"We lack in follow-through and I urge that we do more so that we can be at the forefront," he said when opening the Halal Cosmetics and Personal Care: In Trend conference here yesterday.

The conference was organised by the Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), an agency under the International Trade and Industry Ministry.

Last week, Dr Ahmad Zahid had announced the setting up of the Malaysia Halal Council, which he chairs, to spur the country's halal industry.

The Government, he said, wanted to see the halal industry offering



Beauty products: Dr Ahmad Zahid (second from left) and Abdullah visiting a cosmetics booth during the conference at the KL Convention Centre.

not just consumer products which included food items and cosmetics but services such as banking and insurance as well.

Also present at the conference

were former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who was a prime mover in the development of the halal industry and standards, HDC chairman Tan Sri Dr Syed

Jalaludin Syed Salim, HDC chief executive Datuk Seri Jamil Bidin and Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Lee Chee Leong.