

'HELP LOCAL INDUSTRIES TAP HALAL MARKET'

Synergy between
govt departments,
ministries can help
nation boost Islamic
economy, says PM

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Malaysia — whose Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) halal certification is in high demand by its regional counterparts — must also boost local industries through synergy between government departments and ministries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the nation could go further when local enterprises were prioritised, halal-certified and given equal opportunities to market their products.

"There must be synergy between government bodies, regardless of departments and ministries, and the emphasis should be on micro, small and medium enterprises.

"It is only right that we let those from Tanjung Karang to Manek Urai introduce their industries so that we can enable and be proud of the Islamic economy.

"Give them space to establish themselves with assistance and facilitate the certification with the respective industries.

"I have decided that the coordination will be parked under a cabinet committee under Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (who is also rural and regional development minister)."

He was speaking at the opening of the 2023 Global Halal Summit at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre.

Present were Zahid, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

Anwar said Jakim, the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation and Majlis Amanah Rakyat could work together to help local businesses.

He said there was no doubt that Jakim's halal certification was of high grade, but it still needed to be improved.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says the nation can go further when local enterprises are prioritised, halal-certified and given equal opportunities to market their products, PIC BY AHMAD UKASYAH

He said this could be done by improving efficiency, quality, research and the ability to issue such documents quickly.

"We have come to a point where the world sees Malaysia as advanced. The (halal) certification is widely recognised by international communities and nations.

"Countries and industries refer to the Malaysian certification, a recognition of our high standards. We should fully utilise this, not only for halal certification, but also for the industries."

Anwar said in his meetings with his regional counterparts, the halal industry was often discussed.

He said some leaders had requested that Jakim help them with halal certification.

He said more could be done beyond merely being a country whose halal certification for the food industry is widely accepted.

Anwar said the country must take advantage and tap into the halal industry, which has been forecasted to be worth US\$2.4 trillion by 2024.

He said halal certification could go beyond food and beverages and could be used for cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

Bernama reported Na'im as saying that Malaysia's halal certification must meet dynamic demands and regulatory standards at the international level.

He said this was one of Jakim's strategies to ensure Malaysia's halal certification was always dynamic, relevant and efficient in

facing the challenges and demands of the future.

He said Jakim would ensure the standardisation of halal standards across countries and industries, as well as transparency and traceability using technologies such as blockchain to monitor the entire supply chain and educate customers about the halal status of a product.

"Technology integration is needed for the certification process, from submitting applications, to monitoring inspections and communicating with halal certification bodies.

"We also conduct research and promote innovation to help address challenges and take advantage of opportunities that arise in halal certification as well as meet the needs of diverse industries, including cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and medical devices."

Na'im said Jakim implemented the Malaysia Halal Certification Instant Initiative 2.0 to improve the Malaysian halal certification issuing process, which saw the faster completion of domestic applications without neglecting integrity and syariah compliance.

"This initiative has sped up the Malaysian halal certification process, which can be completed in 30 working days from the date a complete domestic application is received, compared with 30 working days from the date of payment of the certification fee.

"The application for international manufacturing now takes less than three months."