

# MALAYSIA AS A GLOBAL LEADER IN THE HALAL INDUSTRY

SEEKING something halal (that which is permissible in Islamic law) is an obligation for all Muslims.

In the Quran, there are several verses that touch upon matters related to halal, among them is Verse 168, Surah Al-Baqarah: "O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth (that is) halal and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan, for indeed he is to you a clear enemy."

Allah has enjoined upon us to apply halal in our daily lives, not only in what we consume and use but also in all aspects of life.

However, the definition of halal is broad and not limited to those who adhere to the Islamic faith. The increasing number of halal consumers from non-Muslim populations worldwide has placed this industry on an exponential growth trajectory.

In this modern era, halal encompasses all activities in the community, including personal care products, medications, services, and commercial activities related to the halal industry itself. It has become a preferred standard not only among Muslim communities but also among non-Muslims.

## Malaysia takes the lead

Malaysia as a leader in the global halal economy has been emphasised by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim himself during the launch of the Global Halal Summit (GHaS) 2023 in Kuala Lumpur on Sept 12.

At this international conference, Anwar emphasised that in his meetings with leaders from Japan, China and South Korea which are now global economic giants, the topic of the halal industry and Malaysia as a world-recognised halal certification hub was frequently raised.

According to the Prime Minister, this is an advantage that the country should fully realise and seize.

"Similarly, during my official visit to Vietnam and Laos recently, during bilateral discussions I was asked in detail about halal certification and the halal industry ecosystem, and they requested Malaysia's assistance in training and opening the path to the establishment of a halal product network in their countries.

"Why were we asked? It is because the world recognises the precision and ecosystem we have created in the halal industry," he said.

Furthermore, the concept of Ekonomi Madani expresses the aspiration for national development through the strengthening of trade, including innovative and competitive halal industries. This places Malaysia on the right track with a focus on fostering an inclusive, high-impact halal industry as one of the strategies in the 12th Malaysia Plan to accelerate high-impact industrial development.

The growth of the halal sector is driven not only by the global Muslim population but also by factors such as added value, hygiene, and authenticity - which position Malaysian halal products highly and make them the preferred choice for non-Muslim consumers.

Malaysia has long been a leader in the halal industry. The gov-

## 26 countries use Halal Malaysia trademark for certification



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (front row, centre) flanked by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (left) and Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Aziz at the Global Halal Summit (GHaS) 2023 in Kuala Lumpur on Sept 12. In his speech, Anwar shared that world leaders want to learn more about Malaysia's halal ecosystem and certification.



Anwar and Ahmad Zahid visiting an exhibition booth at GHaS 2023. According to Anwar, the world recognises the precision and ecosystem Malaysia has created in the halal industry.

ernment has actively developed and enhanced the halal ecosystem, including research and the establishment of excellent infrastructure to support the country's halal sector development, as reflected in:

> Jakim (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia) which is responsible for halal certification. The Jakim halal logo has an excellent reputation and ensures that the products and services offered adhere to recognised halal standards.

> The national halal ecosystem is further strengthened by the establishment of the Halal Development Corporation Berhad which is responsible for developing the halal industry. This industrial ecosystem should not be limited to food and beverages but also encompass other products such as cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, as well as services such as banking and takaful.

This strong ecosystem allows Malaysia to become a competitive global leader in the halal industry by connecting the gov-

ernment, industry players and consumers in the halal value chain.

Through creating opportunities, investments, trade, jobs, information sharing and technology transfer in the halal value chain, we can make this industry more competitive and globally resilient to address global trade challenges.

> The Department of Standards Malaysia also plays a role in elevating Malaysia's halal industry as a benchmark for quality and safety for goods that meet international standards. Once again, this is not limited to Islamic countries alone. We take pride in Malaysia being the first country to establish Malaysian halal standards which serve as a reference for the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states.

> To complement Malaysia's halal ecosystem and economy, GHaS 2023 will continue to maintain the momentum of halal by providing more new opportunities. GHaS is part of the government's efforts to promote and

maintain our halal reputation, not only in Malaysia but also on the international stage.

GHaS has opened up space and opportunities, becoming the largest platform for all players in the global halal industry. It aligns with our goal to make Malaysia the top choice for halal products and services internationally.

Furthermore, GHaS, particularly through its Malaysia International Halal Showcase (Mihas), serves as the best option for industry players to build relationships with business partners from around the world.

## Halal Malaysia trademark

Jakim as a government-recognised body is responsible for issuing the country's halal certification based on halal standards developed in collaboration with the Department of Standards.

Fifteen standards have been developed for the halal sector - including food and beverage schemes, pharmaceuticals, logistics, cosmetics, halal laboratory testing, and Muslim-friendly hospitality services.

Today, we stand on the brink of an impressive evolution in the halal industry driven by continuous demand from the global market.

To protect the Halal Malaysia brand as a highly valuable intellectual property, Jakim has taken the initiative to register this trademark outside the country through Sirim Berhad.

To date, the Halal Malaysia trademark or logo has been registered and used in 26 countries other than Malaysia, including the United States, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Kazakhstan.

For the first time, foreign industry players can directly apply to Jakim for Malaysian halal certification through the latest initiative - International Direct Application for Malaysian Halal Certification.

Malaysia's international halal certification covers seven schemes:

- > F&B products
- > Cosmetics
- > Pharmaceuticals
- > Consumer goods
- > Logistics services
- > Medical devices
- > Contract manufacturing.

This initiative should be seen as a gateway that opens us to boundless opportunities, as Jakim continues with the implementation of the Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification (International) 2023.

This comprehensive guideline serves as a directional guide for halal industry players operating globally. Its purpose is to maintain the integrity and consumer confidence in the Halal Malaysia logo, especially in a more complex and challenging global landscape.

Jakim's efforts also serve as a catalyst for other countries to follow Malaysia's lead as a pioneer in the global halal industry. The synergy between the Malaysian government, international certification bodies and halal industry players can address current global economic challenges and further strengthen the global halal industry.

For this reason, the Prime Minister urges Malaysian halal industry players to fully utilise this robust Halal Malaysia ecosystem to explore and create greater opportunities in the global halal market.

As a leading global halal hub, this will indirectly enable Malaysia to contribute to the global halal market share, which is expected to grow by 3.5% annually to reach US\$2.4tril by 2024.

GHaS serves as a primary platform for global halal certification bodies to exchange views, explore best practices, generate new ideas, and share the latest developments in the halal industry to enhance global halal certification.