

## **Maybank Allocates RM1 Bln This Year To Loan Fund For SMEs**

**Bernama**

**19 March, 2014**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 19 (Bernama) -- Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank) has allocated about RM1 billion this year to a loan fund for small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country.

Maybank Singapore Group Head for Community Financial Services and Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Lim Hong Tat said of the amount, between 50 per cent and 60 per cent could be set aside for Bumiputera SMEs.

"Eligible SMEs must at least have three years of experience in their business in order to apply for the loan," he told reporters after the signing ceremony in Kuala Lumpur, on Tuesday.

Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC) and Maybank, Wednesday signed a new portfolio guarantee agreement to enhance financial access for SMEs.

"The agreement will benefit the 1,000 SMEs that are in need of additional working capital to expand and grow their business," he said.

Under this scheme, the minimum financing application is RM50,000 for each SME, while the maximum amount can go up to RM1.5 million with 70 per cent guaranteed by CGC.

Maybank has also implemented a better risk assessment tool to more easily assess and rate its customers according to their risk profile, speeding up the loan application process to between seven and eight days from about two weeks previously.

"Maybank has had a long history of supporting the SME fraternity. Over the years, we have grown our SME portfolio to over RM40 billion currently and expect our market share to continue growing this year," said Lim.

Maybank aims to grow its retail SME loans between 30-40 per cent this year compared with 21 per cent last year.

"Our support for SMEs will not stop here. Maybank is involved in a series of seminars and workshops throughout the year as part of our commitment to grow SMEs," said Lim.

Meanwhile, CGC President and Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad said the group is targeting to provide RM2.7 billion worth of loans and financing for SMEs by focusing on

four main segments namely Bumiputera entrepreneurs, start ups, new growth sectors and Syariah-based financing.

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