

> World Halal Forum/Malaysia International Halal Showcase 2006

Resolutions to boost industry

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THE World Halal Forum (WHF) yesterday passed two resolutions to further boost the halal industry locally, among Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) members and non-Muslim countries.

The first resolution calls for the formation of an International Halal Industry Association that comprises halal producers and service providers.

WHF chairman Khairy Jamaluddin said the association will be the voice for the global halal industry to interact with governments, halal legislators and certifying agencies.

It will also undertake the role as the platform for halal industry players to network, he said in his closing remarks at the forum in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The second resolution is to request for a specific fund from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), to be allocated under the association, to spearhead the halal industry.

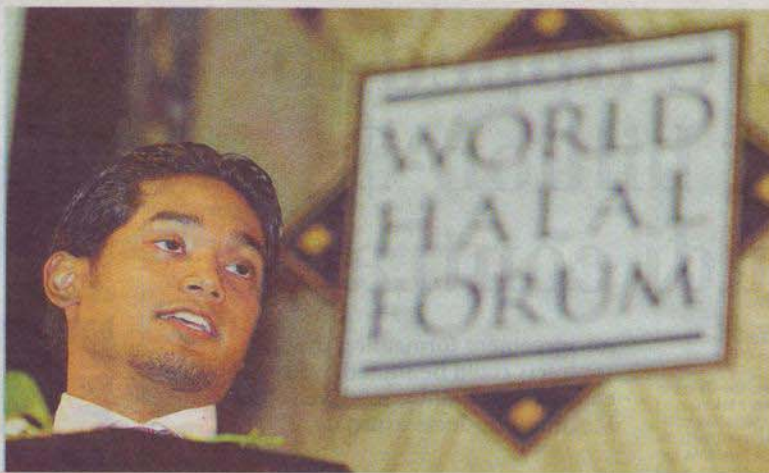
Khairy said the association will look into, among others, the lack of participation by Muslims themselves in the global halal industry, now more than 80 per cent controlled by non-Muslims.

The WHF has offered to be the secretariat of the association.

Commenting on the proposed fund, IDB regional director Ahmed Hariri said: "I think at least US\$200 million to US\$300

million (RM722 million to RM1.08 billion) is needed to realise the development of the halal industry globally."

The three-day forum, which ended yesterday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, had gathered more than 500 local and international halal industry players to discuss the halal framework, its standard, procedures, certification and supply chain, among others.



The International Halal Industry Association will be the voice for the global halal industry to interact with governments, halal legislators and certifying agencies, says Khairy

KL has potential to be key player

■ By Ranjeetha Pakiam
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MALAYSIA has the potential to emerge as a leading player in the halal products market, despite facing stiff competition from other countries in the region.

Matrade services and product promotion director Zakaria Kamaruddin said Malaysia faced competition from countries such as Brunei and Singapore but could establish itself as a halal hub in time to come.

"We are aware of the competition in the halal product market. But we have done well and we have a good track record.

"We also have strong backing from the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who has announced that the World Halal Forum and the Malaysian International Halal Showcase 2006 (Mihās 2006) will be an annual event," he said at a Press conference after the launching of Mihās at the Malaysian International Exhibition and Convention Centre yesterday.

During the launch of Mihās ear-

lier, Abdullah said the showcasing of halal products and services through Mihās was part of a larger effort to bring together not only Muslim nations in trade and commerce, but also like-minded economies that wished to pursue further development of the halal market.

"Indeed, the halal concept can be applied universally as it involves the consumption of clean, healthy safe and high quality products and services," he said in his speech which was read by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

He said the Malaysian Government was committed towards achieving greater awareness of the global halal industry and to ensure the continuous development of the halal market worldwide.

This aim, he said, was supported by several initiatives outlined in the Ninth Malaysia Plan such as capacity building in the halal industry as well as enhancing the necessary infrastructure.

Abdullah also announced that the fourth Mihās would take place from May 9 to 12 next year.

HIGHLIGHTS

UAE halal hub partnership

MISC Integrated Logistics Sdn Bhd (MILS) will enter into a partnership with a Dubai-based logistics company to set up a halal hub in the United Arab Emirates. MILS chief executive officer Hilmi Mohd Nashir said the partnership would help the company to enhance its presence in the global logistics scene, particularly in West Asia. An agreement between the two parties will be signed in Kuala Lumpur on May 18.

Rotterdam plans distribution centre

PORT of Rotterdam in the Netherlands, the world's largest cargo port, plans to set up a halal distribution centre with the help of its partners from Malaysia and Indonesia. "This is part of our move to position ourselves as the gateway into Europe for halal products," business development manager Capt Kees Weststrate said in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

KMT ready for more shipments

KELANG Multi Terminal Sdn Bhd (KMT), the operator of Westports Malaysia, said the company is ready to handle more shipments coming from the halal industry. Its executive chairman Tan Sri G. Gnanalingam said the port has the sufficient logistic capability, infrastructure and facilities to handle the shipments.

LSGB prepared to share expertise

LSG Sky Chef-Brahim Sdn Bhd (LSGB) says it is prepared to share its expertise to those interested in setting up halal-compliant kitchens for in-flight food. Chairman Datuk Ibrahim Badawi said as the operator of the world's largest halal in-flight catering kitchen at KL International Airport in Sepang, the company has adequate credentials and capability to provide consultations on matters concerning halal onboard meals.

Reports by Azlan Abu Bakar and Anna Maria