Call for concerted effort by ASEAN to develop halal industry

BANGKOK: A halal science centre in Thailand has called for a concerted effort by ASEAN countries to develop a regional halal industry, using a globally-accepted unified logo and certificate.

The Halal Science Centre of Chulalongkorn University (HSC-CU) felt that a unified logo and certificate would be accepted by all organisations and countries and enable Asean to tap into the emerging halal markets.

Its Assistant Director, Sulida Wangchi, said each of the ASEAN member countries now had its own logo and certification which were not universally accepted.

She anticipated tremendous growth in the halal industry following increasing demand for halal food and other consumer products, but lamented that the market was currently dominated by countries such as Brazil, China and the United States.

"Therefore, it is better for ASEAN members to work together using a unified halal logo and certificate which will be accepted by all organisations so that we can compete with them and tap into the emerging halal markets," she told a group of Malaysian journalists who visited the Halal Science Centre of the university, here.

The visit was part of a media familiarisation trip to Thailand hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

Today, there is an estimated population of 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide and the global demand for halal products for both the food and non-food sectors is estimated at US$2.3 trillion (RM7.05 trillion).

Sulida said ASEAN countries must work closely as halal products from ASEAN could face trade barriers and other policy challenges outside the region because of countries protecting their home-grown products.

She also said that Thailand hoped to work closely with Malaysia to develop the halal food industry in the region. The HSC-CU would sign two memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) on science and technology to support the halal industry, at the Halal Science, Industry and Business International Conference (HASIB) 2012 in Hat Yai from 13 to 15 Oct, she said.

The conference was being held in conjunction with the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Halal Expo 2012, and the topics to be discussed include Halal ICT and Innovation, Seamless Potential of the Halal Industry and Business in the Halal Economy.

Sulida welcomed Malaysian halal industry players to participate in the HASIB 2012. - Bernama
AN Assistant Director of Halal Science Centre of Chulalongkorn University (HSC-CU) Sulida Wangchi.

A laboratory assistant from the Halal Science Centre of Chulalongkorn University conducting lab test on samples recently.

PHOTOS: BERNAMA