



Picture by PEA IT Solutions Pte Ltd.

Govt pushing SMEs toward e-commerce next year

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KUALA LUMPUR — The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) will be pushing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) towards e-commerce activities next year, via grants and exhibitions.

“For next year the government would focus more on the e-commerce platform with more than half of the exhibitions centred on the new economy,” said International Trade and Industry deputy minister Datuk Ahmad Maslan, whose ministry oversees Matrade.

He said that through Matrade, the government would also offer monetary stimuli for these companies to be included into well-known digital platforms to better market their products across the globe.

“Matrade will provide a grant of RM2,500 for these companies so that they can be listed in premium listing platforms such as Alibaba so that our companies can grow their business internationally.

“The applications can be sent online through Matrade’s portal with caveats that applying companies must have at least 60% Malaysian equity and the product or service must be made in Malaysia,” Ahmad told reporters during a press conference at

Menara Matrade here yesterday.

As part of the initiative set by the government, Matrade would not only increase the number of exhibitions overall in the coming year but also would be centred towards empowering SMEs especially in the digital space.

“We have increased our programmes from 115 in 2015 to 150 next year and more than half of that will be centred towards the e-commerce platform and how our local companies can capitalise in this new market,” the deputy minister noted.

Maslan also commented that government initiatives such as the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in the first

half of this year has dampened the economic effect caused by international events and also the drop in oil prices.

“On the matter of GST, which I have been speaking on since before, it is always looked at negatively at first but in the end it is realised that GST has saved the country’s economy.

“When our country was going through a loss of RM30 billion of profits from petroleum resources, the expected collection for GST at RM39 billion has eclipsed the losses.

“The loss of petroleum resources is expected to exceed more than RM30 billion because of the low prices of petrol,” he said.