

# Penang to become first halal leather trading hub

PENANG will become the first international halal leather trading hub in the world.

This is through the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the state's halal facilitation agency and a company in Britain.

State Domestic Trade, Religious and Consumer Affairs Committee chairman Abdul Malik Abul Kassim said the smart partnership was sealed yesterday between Penang International Halal Hub (PIHH) and Halal Industries Group UK (HIG).

Abdul Malik said the venture would see Penang becoming the central hub for the halal leather supply chain including importing, certifying and trading with halal

leather producers from China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Brazil.

"The total skin and hide market in the world is estimated to worth US\$100bil (RM341bil) with products ranging from apparel, accessories, bags, wallets and furniture.

"Penang is well-positioned to serve the halal leather industry due to its strategic location and investment-friendly infrastructure," he said in his speech before Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng launched the first Penang International Halal Expo and Conference at the Penang International Sports Arena yesterday.

A total of 87 exhibitors took part in the three-day expo.

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ABDUL MALIK ABUL KASSIM



The MoU was signed after the opening of the event, where Abdul Malik represented PIHH and HIG was represented by its director Patrick Duwernell.

Abdul Malik said HIG had been working on the halal concept for two years.

Duwernell said with the halal leather collaboration, HIG would bring its 20 years of experience working with its own brands and doing the design and manufacturing for world famous brands.

On the event, Abdul Malik said several companies and agencies were undecided if they wanted to participate.

"Some think it will not be successful, while some were instructed not to take part as the state government is ruled by Pakatan Rakyat," he said.

However, Lim told a press conference later that there was a misunderstanding about the matter and that it could be sorted out. "We don't want to play up such issues," he said.