

**SPEECH BY**

**YB SENATOR DATUK LIM BAN HONG  
DEPUTY MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**LAUNCHING OF CALLIE  
THE LOUNGE, FOUR SEASONS HOTEL  
29 MARCH 2021**

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**YB Datuk Seri Dr. Wee Ka Siong,  
Minister of Transport**

**The representative from Callie,**

**Excellencies Ambassador,**

**Members of the Media,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**A very good evening to everyone.**

**1. First and foremost, I would like to record my sincere appreciation to CALLIE for inviting me to be part of this auspicious event.**

**2. I am delighted to see all of you here today despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. I would also like to congratulate CALLIE in making its venture overseas in the healthcare segment particularly in producing “Malaysian Made” face mask.**

**3. It has been a year since the pandemic swept across the globe and caused unprecedented impact on global trade. In Malaysia and all over the world, it continues to disrupt markets, productions and**

supply chains. To overcome these challenges, MITI has been working closely with the industry players across all sectors, to provide vital support to businesses via stimulus packages and incentives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. It is heartening to see that in spite of the tumultuous year, Malaysia's external trade in 2020 performed fairly well with exports rebounding in the second half of 2020 as compared to the negative growth recorded in the first half of the year. The trade surplus recorded in 2020 marked the fourth consecutive year of double digit growth with an expansion of 26.9% to RM184.79 billion compared to 2019. This was also the largest trade surplus thus far, representing Malaysia's achievement in sustaining trade surplus for 23 consecutive years since 1998. This could be attributed to the progressive opening of the economy and gradual recovery of external demand. In January 2021, Malaysia's exports maintained its positive growth for five consecutive months, registering an increase of 6.6% to RM89.63 billion compared to January 2020.

5. For healthcare industry in Malaysia, we have seen a steady growth for the past one year. In 2020, Malaysia's export of medical devices registered double digit growth (of 24.9%) valued at RM29.99 billion. Major exports were surgical & examination gloves, medical instruments, apparatus & appliances, catheters, syringes, needles & sutures, and electro medical equipment to name a few. Top export destinations were USA, Germany, Japan, Singapore and Belgium.

6. Malaysia has always been the largest global producer and leading exporter of rubber gloves. In 2020, Malaysia's export of surgical and examination gloves recorded double digit growth (of 51.9%) valued at RM17.07 billion. Major export destinations were USA, Germany, Japan, China and Brazil.

7. During the year, Malaysia's export of surgical masks registered triple digit growth (of 407.5%) valued at RM61.1 million (2019: RM12.04 million) in 2019. Our top export destinations for surgical masks were Hong Kong, China, Italy, Singapore and Germany.

8. MATRADE is committed to build the global resilience of Malaysian exporters, particularly in the COVID-19 recovery period. MATRADE has outlined 334 export promotion and development activities in 2021 focusing on the creation of export champions in high-value sectors including medical and pharmaceutical subsectors, the utilization of digital platforms, inclusiveness, tapping on current market trends, and forging strategic collaborations.

9. Since 2005, MATRADE has been coordinating Malaysian exporters' participation in Arab Health Expo in Dubai tapping into lucrative healthcare market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This year's edition which will be held from 21 to 24 June, offers hybrid format with online showcase scheduled from May to July. Other programmes planned for this year is International Sourcing Programme (INSP) in-conjunction with Asia Pandemic Congress in Kuala Lumpur from 16 to 18 August.

10. To further facilitate Malaysian companies to penetrate international markets amid the health crisis, MATRADE is providing

updated market insights via MyExport and utilizing the virtual format of B2B pre-arranged meetings, eBizMatch to virtually link foreign buyers with Malaysian companies through its 46 overseas offices worldwide.

11. Since the COVID-19 outbreak in March last year, MATRADE had conducted 196 eBizMatch sessions which involved buyers from USA, the UK, The Netherlands, UAE, South Africa, China, Hong Kong and Australia sourcing for medical products such as rubber gloves, personal protective equipment (PPE), face mask, syringes, catheter, and sutures.

12. MITI through MATRADE, provides support to accelerate export such as the Market Development Grant (MDG) and eTRADE Programme 2.0. The scope of MDG has been expanded to cover expenses for participation in virtual trade events to promote exports, and logistics costs for shipment of product overseas.

13. Under the 12th Malaysia Plan, the Government has approved the enhancement of the eTRADE programme. In eTRADE 2.0, SMEs will be offered two types of financial aid which is the Onboarding Scheme worth RM5,000 and the Digital Marketing and Training Scheme (DMT) Scheme worth RM20,000.

14. I would like to assure you that MITI will continue to be at the forefront in facilitating Malaysian businesses to excel in the overseas markets, which will ultimately drive exports' growth, boost global opportunities and heighten the visibility of Malaysian products and services. We would also ensure Malaysia continues to be a

**prominent manufacturing hub for medical devices, PPE and healthcare related products.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**15. On this note, I would like to congratulate Callie on the launching of new product and I wish you success in your future venture.**

**Thank you.**