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## Local ICT firms secure RM10.9 mln orders at Middle East trade show

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Eleven Malaysian information and communication technology (ICT) companies secured orders worth RM10.9 million at the ICT trade fair, Gitex Technology Week, from Oct 18-22 in Dubai.

The companies participated under the umbrella of the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation

(MATRADE). The event attracted trade visitors from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and included government departments as well as IT companies.

The orders received by the Malaysian companies are for ICT security solutions, systems integration, content development for the

education and healthcare sectors and e-government solutions, MATRADE said in a statement here yesterday.

A further RM74 million in potential sales had also been identified.

"The capability of Malaysian ICT companies is well accepted in the Middle East and by local governments.

"This is because Malaysia is the leading e-government nation in the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC)," MATRADE's chief executive officer, Datuk Noharuddin Nordin said.

He said that the local ICT experience was an ideal model for OIC countries to adopt e-government initiatives to improve their delivery systems.

"Furthermore, our ICT companies are already

exporting their ICT solutions worldwide, making it easier for Middle East clients to understand the ICT products and services," he added.

This year, Malaysian ICT companies received serious business enquiries, from Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Despite the current economic slowdown, ICT

spending in the GCC countries is growing at the rate of 10 per cent annually.

This makes the region one of the fastest growing in terms of ICT spending globally.

ICT spending in the UAE is estimated at approximately US\$11.4 billion (US\$1.00=RM3.42) in 2009 and set to increase to US\$14.8 billion in 2011.

The largest spending is

within the consumer sector that is expected to surge to US\$6.8 billion in the next three years from the current US\$5.3 billion.

The UAE is also spending nearly US\$1.0 billion on ICT in the communications energy and utilities and government sectors, with spending in each expected to rise to US\$1.2 billion by 2011. — Bernama