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## Matrade aims 10% increase in firms owned by women

THE Malaysia External Trade Development Corp (Matrade) expects to see a further increase of 10% in women-owned companies this year, supported by higher awareness towards the entrepreneur industry.

Of the 16,391 companies registered as of February 2016, only 13% or 2,135 companies are women-owned, said chairman Datuk Noraini Ahmad.

"The target is driven by 105 programmes organised by Matrade such as women exporter development programme (WEDP), business coaching programme, promotion activities as well as financing schemes facilities.

"Awareness to establish business among women is growing nowadays as they notice the importance and advantages they can get from it," she told reporters after attending the "Trade Talk@ Matrade: Women Defining Success" in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Since the launch of the WEDP in 2005, she said 109 women-owned companies benefitted from the three-year assistance programme.

The WEDP programme aims to help women entrepreneurs expand their businesses globally. — *Bernama*