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MUHAMMED AHMAD HAMDAN

CORE SECTORS: Group sees attractive opportunities in industries such as Islamic banking, plantation and property

LEMBAGA Tabung Haji (TH) will focus on domestic investments this year as it still sees opportunities in the country despite the challenging economic landscape.

Deputy group managing director Datuk Johan Abdullah said there were attractive opportunities in the core sectors of the pilgrims fund's investment portfolio.

"Islamic banking, plantation and property remain the core sectors that we will invest in. As for the stock market, we are very selective as we are a long-term investor," Johan said at the handing-over of business zakat to the Kelantan Islamic and Malay Custom Council (Maik), here, yesterday.

In previous news reports, TH's group managing director and chief executive of-

ficer Tan Sri Ismee Ismail had said domestic investment would be the "flavour of the year" for the fund as it would be very selective in its overseas investments, given the global volatile market.

He also said the group was hopeful of maintaining its performance this year after paying out a bumper bonus of more than RM3 billion in 2014.

"TH is guided by its strategic asset allocation to carry out its investment strategies," he was quoted as saying.

TH had been actively on the lookout for new strategic investments abroad, especially in the property sector, although overseas ventures make up only about five per cent of its total investments.

Yesterday, TH handed over RM4.04 million in business zakat for last year to Maik, an increase of 4.5 per cent from RM3.87 million in 2013.

Johan said Kelantan was the sixth state, after Johor, Penang, Sabah, Negri Sembilan and Malacca, which had received business zakat from TH this year.

"TH's total business zakat for 2014 was RM49.87 million compared with RM46.29 million in 2013."

Besides contributions to zakat collection centres nationwide, TH also pays zakat to eligible groups via its corporate responsibility programme.



TH deputy group managing director **Datuk Johan Abdullah** (right) handing over its 2014 business zakat to Maik president, the Regent of Kelantan **Tengku Faiz Petra Ismail Petra**, in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. With them is Maik deputy president **Datuk Serpudin Mohamad**.