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Three pillars of strength

Maybank Asset Management banking on 3 areas to expand in Asean

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PETALING JAYA: Maybank Asset Management Group Bhd is confident the three fronts it is banking on will help it expand in Asean.

The three areas, which the group describes as its pillars, are people, structure and processes. Apart from Malaysia, it now has asset management operations in Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore.

Chief executive officer Nor Azamin Salleh said that in terms of people, it was on the lookout for the best talent in the region to facilitate its expansion plans.

"We have top-notch fund managers in the region and would continue to recruit more in line with our expansion drive. The Maybank group has the biggest stockbroking company in Thailand and is the fourth largest bank in Singapore.

"In Indonesia, the group has one of the largest banking operations via PT



Nor Azamin: 'We have top-notch fund managers in the region.'

Bank International Indonesia Tbk, as well as a presence in the Philippines and Vietnam.

"For the asset management business, we would leverage on Maybank's operations in other countries in Asean as well as its strong distribution channels for our expansion and recruitment purposes," he told *StarBiz* in an interview.

Rather than monitoring from a specific country, Maybank Asset Management had fund managers on the ground in the three countries, who were able to assess the investment, political, social and economic conditions there to churn out the best solutions in line with its bottom-up investment approach, he noted.

This, Nor Azamin said, would also enable it to compete with other foreign players in the region, who generally had fund managers located in a particular country.

He added that the company was also strongly focusing on the governance structure, infrastructure and processes that included risk management and investment processes to build its track record as an Asean asset management company.

Nor Azamin said that by 2017, Maybank Asset Management aimed to be a Top 5 asset management player in all the five countries in which the Maybank group had a presence.

In terms of contribution to revenue and asset size for the asset management business, he said currently, the local market made up between 75% and 80% and the balance came from the region. In 2017, he said contribution from Malaysia would be down to between 55% and 60%, with the balance coming from overseas.

Maybank Asset Management's total asset under management (including in the region) to-date stands at RM11.7bil. Among the countries in which the group had asset management operations, he said Indonesia had the most potential in terms of market size and a growing affluent population.

"Besides the population and size of the market, Indonesia's high net-worth individuals are on the rise, underpinned by its strong economic growth.

"We would be opening a branch in Medan (Indonesia) probably this year and another two to three by next year," Nor Azamin said.