

05 SEP 1996

King-Malawi

KING CALLS FOR INCREASED MALAYSIA-MALAWI TRADE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 5 (Bernama) -- The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar tonight expressed confidence that the encouraging start to stronger economic relations between Malaysia and Malawi, particularly in telecommunications, will serve as a catalyst for more investments in the African country.

Tuanku Ja'afar said this would be more so as the Malaysian private sector became increasingly aware of business opportunities in Malawi.

He said this at a state banquet at Istana Negara in honour of Malawi President Dr Bakili Muluzi who arrived today for a three-day visit.

The King hoped the Malawi government will facilitate the establishment of these ventures which will be of mutual benefit to the two countries.

The private sectors from both sides should be encouraged to be more vigorous in enhancing bilateral trade which currently did not reflect its true potential, he added.

Malaysia's trade with Malawi stood at RM1.87 million last year .

The King urged Malawi businessmen to look closely at the growing Malaysian market so that Malaysians will become familiar with products from Malawi.

He hoped Malaysia could also be an active participant in Malawi's growth as it embarks on an economic liberalisation programme that will attract foreign investments and expand its industrial base.

Tuanku Ja'afar said Malaysia has acquired some experience in certain aspects of economic planning, including privatisation, which it would like to share with Malawi.

He was confident Malawi would play an important role in the development of regional cooperation in the southern African region.

Also present at the banquet were Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah and Madame Annie Buluzi.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, were present.

In his reply, Dr Muluzi said Malaysia's success was a source of inspiration for his country and hoped that the two countries would exchange information on development for mutual benefit.

He said as a result of various reforms undertaken by his government, Malawi was projected to have a high growth rate this year.

However, he said Malawi still had to get all the assistance it needed on its way towards development, including from countries like Malaysia.

Dr Muluzi also invited Malaysian entrepreneurs to visit Malawi and see for themselves business opportunities there. -- BERNAMA

MAM RM