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Anwar: Malaysia may take part in Djibouti round table conference

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Malaysia will consider sending a representative to a two-day round table conference in Djibouti beginning May 29.

The assurance was given by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to Djiboutian Foreign Minister Mohamed Moussa Chehem during their 40-minute meeting at the Prime Minister's Department today.

Mohamed Moussa, who is also the Djiboutian International Co-operation Minister, had earlier extended an invitation to the conference from Djiboutian President Hassan Gouled Aptidon to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Foreign Ministry's Southeast Asia and South Pacific undersecretary Mohd Arshad Hussain who briefed reporters on the outcome of the meeting said the east African nation had also requested Malaysia's assistance to secure loans from the International Islamic Development Bank.

"To this, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is also the bank's board member, requested Djibouti to furnish some details.

"He also suggested that a portion of the loans might be given to purchase diesel generators of five to 10 megawatts."

On other assistance sought by Djibouti, Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said he would encourage the Malaysian private sector to visit it and explore investment opportunities there.

"He would also urge Malaysian ministers to visit Djibouti and see what type of expertise Malaysia can offer to bring about development in the country," said Mohd Arshad, adding that among business prospects identified were joint ventures and privatisation projects.

Bilateral trade between Malaysia and Djibouti last year totalled RM11.78 million, an increase of RM6.78 million from the previous year.

Malaysian exports amounted to RM11.77 million, while imports stood at RM100,000.

Malaysia exports palm oil (94.73 per cent), furniture and parts (3.31 per cent), and telecommunications equipment (1.78 per cent) to Djibouti, while its imports include commodities.

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