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German firms to invest more in Malaysia

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GERMAN businessmen, who are satisfied with the economic and political conditions in Malaysia, plan to increase their investments in the country, German President Professor Dr Roman Herzog said.

He said the German business community whom he had met earlier in Kuala Lumpur, had expressed satisfaction on Malaysia's political stability and see many development opportunities in the country.

"The volume of trade between both countries now stands at DM9 billion (1 mark = RM1.50) and the accumulated German investment in Malaysia totalling some DM4 billion.

"German business community here has assured me that they will continue to invest significantly in Malaysia," he told a news conference for local and foreign media in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said German companies in the country will continue producing their products in Malaysia, but instead of exporting them to Europe, they will export them to other parts of the world.

On difficulties faced by German investors in the country, he said: "Whenever such difficulties exist, it will be mainly due to bureaucracy and administration.

"However, I have not heard about any complaints by German businessmen on difficulties in conducting business in Malaysia."

Currently, there are about 300 German companies operating in Malaysia.

Asked on advice he would give to German entrepreneurs back in Germany, Herzog said:

"Normally if I visit Asian or African countries, I will try to convince German businessmen on the opportunities in these countries.

"But in Malaysia, it's not necessary for me to do so because the country is well-known to German businessmen and they are aware of the political stability and opportunities here."

On whether German companies will participate in the Multimedia Super Corridor, Herzog said: "So far, there is no formal discussion by German investors on that. But there is German representative who sits on MSC advisory board - Dr Heinrich von Pierer, who is Siemens chairman and chief executive officer."

This is also one of the issues Herzog discussed with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad paid a courtesy call on him.

Herzog also said that he will pursue the implementation of a minimum set of ethical rules for different races, cultures and religions.

He said in his discussions with Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars back in Germany, they felt that the ethical rules can be achieved.

"At this morning conference at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (Ikim), we had agreed on the minimum set of ethical rules," he said.

Herzog will leave for Sarawak today.

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