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Hungary keen to have air, cultural, educational links

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Hungary wants to establish an air link, initiate cultural and educational ties and mutual recognition of tertiary degrees and diplomas with Malaysia.

Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn said there was also scope for sporting exchanges between the two countries.

He added that Hungary and Malaysia could also collaborate to reconstruct Yugoslavia and Bosnia Herzegovina.

Speaking at a Press conference at the end of his two-day official visit here, Horn added that discussion for an air link would be pursued.

Among bilateral agreements between Malaysia and Hungary, is an air services agreement signed in 1993.

The bilateral agreements in force between the two countries are on trade (1970), avoidance of double taxation (1989), partial visa abolishment (1993), mutual protection of investments (1993) and scientific and technological co-operation (1997).

"It is our hope that an air link will be established soon," he said, adding that this would boost Malaysian investments in Hungary.

Malaysian investments in Hungary, Horn said, was still very low.

He added that a direct air link would also encourage the growth of the tourism industry and infrastructure development.

He said his country would also prepare to establish cultural and educational ties that would benefit both countries.

"Malaysian can participate actively by conducting English training courses in Hungary," he added.

Horn also said that both countries could learn from each other, particularly in the field of sports.

Touching on his visit, he said, it would enhance co-operation between Hungary and developing countries in Southeast Asia.

Prior to his arrival in Langkawi for a two-day private visit, Horn and his wife Anna, together with several Cabinet ministers and businessmen had made an official visit to Singapore.

He acknowledged Malaysia as a "gateway" for Hungarian products to the region.

Likewise, he said, Hungary could be a "hub and link" for Malaysia to export its goods to countries in eastern and central Europe.

Horn said his discussion with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had laid a strong foundation for joint ventures between businessmen of both countries.

"I have also indicated to Dr Mahathir of Hungary's interest in taking part in the Trans-Asia railway link," he added.

Impressed with Malaysia's economic growth, he said, there were vast investment opportunities in Hungary, particularly in tourism and infrastructure development.

Horn said he also noted that "private entrepreneurs" involved in Government commerce were free from "ideological" intervention.

He added that all projects and activities planned by the Government must be beneficial to the people.

"There must be strategic alliances between state and private entrepreneurs," he said.

Towards this end, Horn said Vision 2020 provided an amalgamation of economics, political and social affairs that could satisfy the demands of

society.

He added that he was also impressed with Malaysia's move to address the challenges of the Information Age.

"Malaysia is the only country in the world which has initiated the Multimedia Super Corridor for this purpose."

In the morning, Horn and his delegation were briefed by Multimedia Development Corporation chairman Tan Sri Othman Yeop Abdullah and also visited Menara Maybank.

He also witnessed the signing ceremony of the co-operation agreement between Matrade and ITD-Hungary.

The delegation also visited the Proton plant in Shah Alam.

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