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Malaysian firms eye projects in Tamil Nadu

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A PRIVATE sector committee will be set up to facilitate investment in projects between Malaysia and Tamil Nadu.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the committee will comprise organisations that will be involved in projects in the southern Indian state and the committee members will be determined at a later date.

"Among Malaysian interests in the state are Tenaga Nasional Bhd, Renong Bhd and Proton.

"Malaysia's car manufacturer Proton," Samy Vellu told reporters, "is interested in setting up a manufacturing plant in Madras and the company has received a positive response from the Government of Tamil Nadu."

Earlier yesterday, he had briefed a five-member delegation from Tamil Nadu in Kuala Lumpur.

The Tamil Nadu delegation, on a three-day visit to Malaysia, is headed by State Planning Commissioner of the Government of Tamil Nadu, Mr Thiru Venkitaraman. Other members are from the Industries Department, Tamil Nadu Industrial Department Corp, Electronic Corp and Finance Department.

"There are many projects in Tamil Nadu which Malaysian firms can explore such as in the infrastructure, information technology and mining fields.

"Besides this, the Tamil Nadu Government has also expressed interest in town planning projects such as the development of the Kuala Lumpur Linear City and the new administrative centre, Putrajaya," he said.

Samy Vellu said the Government will be sending a team of consultants to Tamil Nadu to finalise details on reports of two infrastructure projects in Madras.

The two projects are the 30km elevated highway costing RM350 million from Madras Harbour to the Meenambakkam International Airport in Tambaran, and the 200km highway from Madras to Bangalore.

It was reported that Renong Bhd has recently won a contract to construct the RM625 million Bangalore-Mysore highway.

Under the contract, Renong will undertake the construction of the 120km highway using the Malaysian privatization concept. The company will also complete a 66km ring road in Bangalore. It is believed that Renong is confident of securing some RM800 million worth of projects in India.

The highway deals were clinched following negotiations between the minister and the Indian Government and a follow-up visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir to India recently.

Renong has also undertaken infrastructure projects in China and property and infrastructure projects in South Africa.

Samy Vellu, who is also MIC president, said the party will meet in March to discuss the code of conduct of members during the election period.

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