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Iran identifies areas for co-operation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Malaysia and Iran have identified various areas to improve bilateral relations, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Mohsen Aminzadeh said today.

The current volume of trade between the two countries, mainly in the oil and gas industry, was not very high but there were potential areas in which co-operation could be increased, he said.

Iran is aware of the economic problems faced by several Asian countries, including Malaysia, but believes Malaysia will still be able to participate in Iran's development.

Mohsen told a Press conference that the areas identified were the manufacturing of industrial goods, construction of power plants, joint production of goods for domestic use and export, electronics, computers and telecommunications.

There is also great potential for Malaysia to co-operate in the development of Iran's tourism industry.

"Iran has many free trade zones that can be developed through mutual co-operation. Also hotels and recreational facilities," Mohsen said.

Another area that the two countries could jointly develop was the cultural and arts industry.

"Not many Iranian artists are known here and through cultural commonalities, we can venture into the joint production of art and cultural products," he said.

Mohsen said steel production was another area for Malaysia to consider.

"Malaysia is having difficulties in this area and Iran has the expertise to turn it into a profitable industry."

Other areas of interest include the construction of pipelines for the transfer of oil and gas.

"Iran and Malaysia share common stands and views and they have worked to remove tension in different Islamic countries," he added.

Mohsen arrived here yesterday. Before visiting Malaysia, he had spent a few days in Brunei. He will leave for home tomorrow.

During his brief stay in Malaysia, he had called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

On Iran-United States relations, Mohsen said Iran hoped to be able to make headway in removing the "high wall of mistrust" which existed between them.

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