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Malaysia keen on increasing trade with San'aa

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar said Malaysia is committed to increasing trade and economic links with Yemen as well as enhancing their relations and co-operation in various fields.

He said Malaysia would also continue to explore and develop mutually beneficial programmes with Yemen and welcomed the country's participation in the Malaysia Technical Co-operation Programme.

The MTCP was initiated and designed to help government officials of developing countries share, exchange as well as learn from each other's experience and enhance their knowledge and skills in matters of public administration, science and technology, agriculture and industrial development.

In his speech at the State banquet in honour of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh at Istana Negara tonight, the King said Malaysia would take every measure not only to reinforce existing interactions between the people of the two countries, but also explore new avenues for co-operation.

"We believe the future of our relations hinges on the expansion of contacts and links which will increase familiarity, trust and friendship between Yemen and Malaysia," he said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said the people of the two countries were no strangers and relations between them started a long time ago.

"The Yemenis, especially the merchants and traders of Hadramaut, are credited with the dawn and spread of Islam to Southeast Asia. Indeed, they were the first western people to come to the Malay peninsular which itself shows that they were successful people in a worldly sense," he added.

Ali Abdullah arrived today for a four-day official visit where he was received at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah International Airport in Subang by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The Yemeni President was accompanied by a 69-member delegation.

Ali Abdullah was accorded an official welcoming ceremony at Parliament Square this afternoon. He later held discussions with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Prime Minister's Department and witnessed the signing of bilateral agreements.

Bernama reports Ali Abdullah in his speech invited Malaysians to invest in Yemen.

"Yemen has provided (foreign) investors encouraging facilities and guarantees and opened wide fields for investments and mutual interests, including oil, gas, minerals, tourism and industry.

"There are different and wide investment opportunities in Yemen in the light of the investment law which provides encouraging facilities and guarantees," he said.

He said spiritual, cultural and trade relations linked the two countries.

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