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No business talks during stopover: Murdoch

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MR RUPERT Murdoch, the News Corp Ltd chairman and owner of Hong Kong-based Star Television Ltd, visited the Measat Broadcast Network Systems Sdn Bhd centre in Bukit Jalil yesterday but insisted he was not on a shopping trip.

Murdoch, who was met by pressmen at the departure hall of the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah airport in Subang, said he was in the country for a "brief stopover".

He said he met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, but did not discuss business.

"It was a private talk. Nothing about business ... just world affairs."

Asked if he had discussed the possibility of acquiring stakes in Malaysian companies, Murdoch said:

"No, nothing to do with my business. I am just passing by."

Murdoch had arrived in Kuala Lumpur in the morning. Mr T. Ananda Krishnan, a major shareholder of Measat, was at the airport to send off the world media magnate to China.

Ananda Krishnan said Murdoch, who confessed that Malaysia is a "wonderful place" to do business, briefly toured the Measat Broadcast centre.

When asked if the world media magnate was planning to invest in Measat Broadcast, Ananda Krishnan said: "He (Murdoch) came to visit Astro station because Astro uses Star channel ... Astro has some form of collaboration with them (Star channel)."

Measat Broadcast is the operator of Malaysia's first direct-to-user satellite broadcast services, Astro. Ananda Krishna has stakes in Measat Broadcast through Usaha Tegas Entertainment Systems Sdn Bhd, a company owned by trusts associated with his family.

Meanwhile, Ananda Krishnan said Murdoch had expressed confidence in Malaysia's ability to recover from the current economic problems.

"(Murdoch) is very supportive of Malaysia. He said Malaysia is a wonderful place to do business".

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