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China trip set to improve bilateral trade

THERE is great potential for Malaysia and China to increase their bilateral trade and investments, said Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz yesterday.

To achieve this, Malaysia will send a trade and investment mission to China from Aug 17 to 27, led by Deputy Minister Datuk Kerk Choo Ting.

Rafidah said the mission is not only to increase bilateral trade and investment but also to expand the base of products being traded between the two countries.

She was speaking to reporters after launching the Ministry's family day in Kajang, Selangor, yesterday.

Rafidah said she will also be presenting a paper on trade between the two countries at a separate function, the third Malaysia-China Forum, in Beijing on Aug 19.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will deliver a keynote address at the forum during his three-day working visit to China beginning on Wednesday.

Rafidah said she hoped this trade and investment mission will further strengthen the foundation of bilateral trade between the two countries.

"Malaysia has invested a lot in China and China is also interested in increasing their investments in Malaysia."

It was announced recently that a pulp and paper mill costing RM4.56 billion will be set up in Tawau, Sabah. It is a joint venture between China and Malaysia, which is represented by the Sabah State Government.

China will hold 60 per cent equity while the other 40 per cent will be owned by Sabah.

Sabah's equity in the venture will be made through Sabah Foundation's Investment arm, Innoprise Corporation Sdn Bhd.

The joint venture agreement will be signed this week during Dr Mahathir's trip to China.

Malaysia currently exports more than RM2 billion worth of goods to China.

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