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Govt to participate in Indian projects

Ariff Awang

THE Malaysian Government, through the Works Ministry, has agreed to participate in five infrastructure development projects in the Indian state of Kerala.

This will involve road construction and water treatment plant projects.

Its Minister, Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, said the ministry has discussed with the Kerala State Government about four road projects and one water supply project.

"We have been working with the Kerala State Government for the last 12 months. With the Kerala ministers visit we will further develop the idea of working together on the five projects.

"Malaysia is very interested in south-south cooperation to help each other, while at the same time receiving help ourselves," he said at his ministry in Kuala Lumpur yesterday after having a discussion on the projects with the delegation from Kerala.

The delegation comprised its Chief Minister E.K. Nayanar, Public Works Minister P.J. Joseph and their other officials.

Nayanar is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today. The delegation, guests of the Government, will be in Malaysia for about three days. Their visit started yesterday.

"Kerala is interested in infrastructure development and Malaysia is interested in utilising expertise to enhance the projects," he said, adding that Malaysian parties will also work with Indian contractors and experts to accomplish the projects.

According to him, the four road construction projects include the upgrading of existing road projects. Malaysia will be involved in the road projects through the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) that will act as the government agency.

CIDB will start the projects soon as the letter of intent is received from Kerala State Government.

Another project he said is to extend water supply to Port Kochin in Kerala which is a more viable project.

In January last year, Biwater Harthasuma Consortium, a contracting firm of Malaysian company ARA Corp signed a memorandum of understanding with the Kerala State Industrial Development Corp, a public sector firm, to develop a RM380 million water treatment project at Klamassery, near Kochi.

The project included a plant capable of processing 200 million litres of water daily. Demand from industrial units in and around Kochi has been put at over 100 million litres and the rest has been contracted to be bought by Kerala Water Authority.

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