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Indian State seeks Malaysia's assistance

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The Indian State of Chhattigarh wants Malaysia to assist in development, especially in the oil palm sector.

Its Chief Minister, Ajit Jogi, said the similarity in geographic and climatic conditions between the State and Malaysia made the proposition highly feasible.

Speaking after meeting Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu at his office here today, Jogi said: "The crux of our development plans, is to build infrastructure, in particular roads and an administrative centre similar to Putrajaya.

"We are also keen to use our rich natural resources for oil palm and olive cultivation."

Jogi, who arrived in Malaysia on Saturday, said his visit had given him confidence that Malaysia could play a key role in generating growth in Chhattigarh.

"I am impressed by the efforts of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in developing Malaysia over the last 20 years and am keen to emulate this.

"Several infrastructure and road projects by Malaysian contractors have already started in Chhattigarh and their progress will open the door for more such projects there."

Samy Vellu said a group comprising Roadbuilder (M) Holdings Bhd, IJM Corporation Bhd and Bumi Hiway (M) Sdn Bhd had been awarded a 58km road project in Chhattigarh.

He said the project, to start in two months' time, would be completed before November next year, adding that the companies' consultants had already started work in the State.