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Ireland willing to lend a helping hand

IPOH, Sun. - Ireland is prepared to help Malaysia improve the standard of English among students, its Foreign Minister Brian Cowen said today.

He said the co-operation between the two countries in education had existed for a long time and both had benefited from the close rapport.

"Malaysia and Ireland have many things in common, and co-operate in various fields," Cowen said after visiting the Perak Turf Club here.

Today is the last day of his five-day tour of the country, during which he had meetings with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his counterpart Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, and Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

Cowen said Ireland could supply software for institutions of higher learning and schools in Malaysia.

"Ireland is one of the major producers of software and its education programmes could be brought into Malaysia," he said.

Investors in Ireland see Malaysia as an ideal place to invest in due to several plus points, including its people who are highly educated and skilled.

"Investment from Ireland stands at about RM7 billion, and many multi-national companies have made Malaysia their base to venture into the Asian market.

"Malaysian companies have also set up branches in Ireland to tap the European market," he said.