

PM's visit paves way for stronger economic ties

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THE high-level meetings between Malaysia and Kenya this week have been fruitful, and will deepen ties and economic co-operation between the two countries, the prime minister said.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he felt his visit here had been a success, especially in paving the way for businessmen from both countries to explore opportunities.

"It is all up to them now," he told reporters in a wrap-up of his three-day official visit to Kenya, which ended yesterday.

Abdullah's visit has opened doors for the Malaysian business delegation led by Nadicorp Holdings executive chairman Datuk Nadzmi Salleh.

For instance, Malaysian water group Puncak Niaga Holdings Bhd was invited to participate in

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Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi



projects in the Kenyan capital and one of East Africa's most populous cities.

With between three and four million people, Nairobi's water supply and related industries were worth some US\$1.5 billion (RM5.1 billion) a year, said Puncak Niaga executive chairman Tan Sri Rozali Ismail.

The group had also been invited to take part in water and sewerage projects in Khartoum, Sudan, worth an estimated US\$1.5 bil-

lion, he said.

Initial discussions with officials from both Nairobi and Khartoum had been promising, he said.

"We will be following up with more detailed proposals in the coming months," he told the *New Straits Times* yesterday.

It's not just the bigger Malaysian companies that have benefited from the prime minister's three-stop tour of Africa which began on April 17.

Power industry consultancy

Toprank Corporation Sdn Bhd has also found doors opened in Kenya.

Nairobi officials had said the city's power supply was at maximum utilisation and would need to expand very soon, said Toprank director Yong Tzen Wae.

"It has been very promising," he said.

Similarly, the SAL group of colleges' chairman, Abdul Rashid Abdul Ghani, has been pleased with the reception he was shown in both Sudan and Kenya.

Feedback in Khartoum and Nairobi had been positive about the group's concept of "educities", which involve developing areas for educational institutions and training, he said.

Abdullah ended his Kenya visit with a tour of the Masai Mara, one of Africa's most famous game reserves. The park reserve covers 1,500 sq km in the Great Rift Valley that extends from the Mediterranean Sea to South Africa.

Abdullah said he wanted to explore how Kenya developed its tourism industry through promoting conservation and the natural beauty of the park.