

# Malaysia, Kenya may have air links

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**NAIROBI:** Malaysia and Kenya, keen on having stronger bilateral investment and trade ties, have agreed to set up a joint commission and explore the possibility of starting air links as soon as possible.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who held talks with Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki here yesterday, said the joint commission would meet once a year to implement decisions and programmes agreed by both governments.

"The commission will also help solve problems arising from implementation of projects and issues that can affect businessmen, like visas," Abdullah said when addressing the Malaysian-Kenya business luncheon.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar will chair the commission while Kenya will appoint its

official soon.

Abdullah, who is on a three-day official visit to Kenya, said both leaders also agreed on the need to set up air links.

"If we are going to do more with each other, with more flow of businessmen, tourists and students, then the availability of air transportation becomes very important."

Later at a press conference, when asked if some African countries like Kenya might lose out to other countries that had the natural resources to attract investment, Abdullah said these countries could create incentives and introduce a business-friendly atmosphere.

Abdullah said many countries had no natural resources but they were doing very well in the manufacturing sector, adding that having skilled workers was also important.

After the bilateral talks, the two

leaders also witnessed the signing of two memorandums of understanding, for cooperation on science and technology, and the planning and implementation of road projects.

Today, on the last day of the visit, the Prime Minister will visit Masaai Mara, the world-renowned wildlife sanctuary in Serengeti.

Abdullah also hopes both countries can expand bilateral trade.

He said that although the East African country was Malaysia's eighth largest trading partner in the region, the amount was still small.

"The bilateral trade value in 2006 was only US\$90.3mil, which accounts for less than 0.1% percent of Malaysia's global trade.

"But I am pleased to note that trade figures are on the upward trend," he said at the Malaysia-Kenya Business Forum here.