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Kazakhstan models growth on Malaysia

KAZAKHSTAN set 2030 to become a developed country

In what is modelled on Malaysia's Vision 2020, Kazakhstan formulated a long-term plan and strategy to obtain developed status.

Kazakh ambassador to Malaysia Beibut Atankulov said: "We are learning a lot from Malaysia to hasten development in our country."

He said his country had introduced a similar concept as 1Malaysia to promote patriotism and tolerance in its multiracial society.

All this demonstrated how Malaysia was held in high esteem by the Kazakh government, thus paving the way for closer ties and greater cooperation between both countries, he said.

Foreign Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Anifali Aman said: "Malaysia and Kazakhstan are developing countries and, as such, we hope to boost co-operation in trade and investment to realise our common goal to become developed nations."

Bilateral relations between Malaysia and Kazakhstan are poised to rise with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's four-day visit here, which started yesterday.

His visit, which coincides with the 7th World Islamic Economic Forum here, is at the invitation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who had visited Malaysia twice.

Najib gets the honour of being the first to speak at the forum after it is launched by Nazarbayev on Wednesday.

Najib, who is accompanied by his



wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, and five ministers, will hold meetings with Nazarbayev and Prime Minister Karim Massimov.

Anifah said the two leaders were expected to discuss ways to increase the private sector's participation in developing Malaysia and Kazakhstan.

They would also discuss a proposal to partially abolish the visa requirement for government officials holding diplomatic passport, and the possibility of Malaysia Airlines and Air-Asia operating flights from Kuala Lumpur to Almaty or Astana, he added.

Anifah said the trade imbalance between the two countries, which was in Malaysia's favour, would also be discussed.

Trade volume between both countries last year was US\$107 million (RM321 million), with Malaysia's exports to Kazakhstan amounting to US\$106.3 million and imports from Kazakhstan valued at US\$700,000.

Noting that Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia, had formed a customs union with Russia and Belarus to boost trade among them, Anifah said Kazakhstan offered tremendous trade and investment opportunities for Malaysia.