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PM: Turkey can invest more

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ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT: Erdogan wants to see bilateral trade grow to RM21.9 billion by 2018, says Najib

ANTALYA (TURKEY)

WHILE bilateral relations between Malaysia and Turkey are satisfactory, there is more scope for investments by the latter in the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Turkish investments in Malaysia totalled only US\$241 million (RM1.05 billion) compared with Malaysia's US\$2.5 billion in Turkey.

He was speaking here after a courtesy call and a 45-minute bilateral

discussion with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday.

Malaysian investments in Turkey were through Khazanah Nasional Bhd, including US\$1.4 billion in the healthcare sector, US\$714 million via Malaysian Airports Holdings Bhd in the development and maintenance of the Sabiha Gokcen Istanbul International Airport, as well as Avicenna Capital Sdn Bhd in providing the Acibadem Sigorta healthcare insurance at US\$252 million.

Najib said bilateral trade between the two countries would continue to chart positive progress following enforcement of the free trade agreement (FTA) in August.

"The FTA has resulted in bilateral trade between January and August jumping 40 per cent compared with the same period last year."

Total trade between January and August was US\$916 million, Najib said, adding that Erdogan had indicated his desire to see the figure grow to US\$5 billion by 2018.

The prime minister said the number of Malaysian tourists to Turkey reached 70,000, while 16,500 Turks visited Malaysia, with Turkish Airlines increasing flights from seven to 10 a week.

He said there were 144 Malaysians

studying in Turkey, while 236 Turkish students were in Malaysia.

Erdogan informed Najib that he was satisfied with the cooperation between Petronas and the Turkish authorities to develop oil fields in Iraq, and called for joint ventures in Turkmenistan next.

In terms of security cooperation, Najib said he was satisfied with the selection of Turkish defence industry firm FNSS to supply eight-wheel-drive armoured personnel carriers and combat vehicles.

He said he was invited by Erdogan to attend the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Summit and the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul next year.

Najib arrived here on Friday for a three-day working visit in conjunc-

tion with the 10th G20 Summit hosted by Turkey.

Meanwhile, Najib's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, yesterday visited the Antalya Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled, the second biggest of its kind in Europe.

The visit was organised for spouses of G20 state leaders, as well as spouses of leaders invited to the G20 summit meeting today.

At the centre, Rosmah spent an hour talking to those undergoing rehabilitation.

The spouses were briefed on the centre, where more therapy processes were being included, such as swimming therapy, and independence-boosting programmes, such as information technology classes.

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