

**KL seeks to double trade volume with Astana**  
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Government hopes to double the trade volume with Kazakhstan over the next few years, which currently stands at over US\$60mil (RM184mil).

Corporations, especially those in the oil and gas sector, were interested to tap into the Caspian Sea, the world's largest lake at the southwest of Kazakhstan.

Speaking to reporters after hosting a business exhibition by Malaysian companies for the republic's president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, here yesterday, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said the companies were keen on five sectors, which are oil and gas, infrastructure, agriculture, tourism and Islamic banking.

"There is a huge potential for growth," he said, adding that the Kazakhstan government has already engaged with local companies for the construction of hospitals, hotels, a light rail transit and a new airport in Almaty.

Mustapa said the Malaysian Government had pledged to get local companies to invest there, starting with the 10 which exhibited yesterday.

They included Sapura-Kencana Petroleum Bhd, Markmore Group, Sime Darby Bhd and Melewar Industrial Group Bhd.

Nazarbayev ended his two-day visit yesterday.

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