

## **Kuwait Invites Malaysian Firms To Part Take In US\$130 Billion Infrastructure Development Programme**

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**From D. Arul Rajoo**

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17 (Bernama) -- Kuwait has invited Malaysian companies to participate in the oil-rich nation's US\$130 billion five-year infrastructure development programme, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said Wednesday.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the companies are offered to take up highway, airport and port construction projects.

"Actually, many Malaysian companies have ventured into the Middle East (market). Maybe the information (about opportunities in Kuwait) has not trickle down or some (companies) are not clear about the policies and laws here...maybe that's the reason, they (Malaysian companies) did not focus here," he said.

Muhyiddin was speaking to Malaysian journalists after attending the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit which ended here today.

Present were Deputy Foreign Minister Senator A. Kohilan Pillay and Malaysia's Ambassador to Kuwait Datuk Adnan Othman.

Muhyiddin said the invitation was extended during bilateral talks between him and Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah here.

He said Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed told him of Kuwait's readiness to help Malaysian companies and felt that there was a need for specialty companies from Malaysia to undertake collaborative projects in specific sectors.

Towards this end, Muhyiddin said he suggested that both sides organise special trade missions to promote and explore new investment sectors.

On Malaysia-Kuwait Trade Agreement, the Deputy Prime Minister said progress has been made and hoped that negotiations are concluded soon to open up more investment and two-way trade opportunities.

"Malaysia hopes more companies from Kuwait will invest in Malaysia such as Kuwait Finance House and Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company," he said.

Muhyiddin said that under the Economic Transformation Programme, 12 key areas have been identified as investment opportunities and hoped that Kuwaiti companies would take advantage of the opportunities.

Malaysia-Kuwait bilateral trade has hit RM1.945 billion between January and July this year.

Muhyiddin also said he has extended invitation to the Kuwaiti Prime Minister to visit Malaysia and also expressed the hope that the Emir of Kuwait would make a state visit to Malaysia.

Muhyiddin said the tourism sector has also shown good progress, with 23,000 Kuwaities visiting Malaysia last year, as compared to 18,010 in 2010.

The Deputy Prime Minister hoped that Kuwaiti tourist arrivals would continue to increase in future and to woo more tourists, Malaysia has introduced new tourist attractions like Legoland.

Muhyiddin said the Kuwaiti Prime Minister felt that the media could help in tourism promotion besides exchange of visits at the higher level.

Muhyiddin also said the Higher Education Cooperation Memorandum has been finalised and was only waiting for the suitable time to be signed either in Kuala Lumpur or in Kuwait City.

Also at the bilateral meeting, both countries agreed to support each other's nomination for a non-permanent member seat at the United Nations Security Council.

Malaysia and Kuwait are vying for a seat for the 2015-2016 and 2018-2019 terms.

Also at the meeting, Malaysia sought Kuwait's support for its nomination to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and support the Gulf nation's candidacy for the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

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