

# Ties between Western Australia and Malaysia set to expand

KOTA KINABALU:

Business collaborations and investments between Western Australia (WA) and Malaysia are blossoming and trade relations are envisaged to continue to expand.

South West Group cum South West Corridor Development Foundation Inc director, Chris Fitzhardinge said bilateral trade amounted to A\$2 billion over the past 12 months.

"Malaysia's exports to WA alone were valued at A\$1.38 billion, while Malaysia's imports from WA were worth A\$690 million," he said during a press conference after a presentation on South Metropolitan Region's



Verghese

Capabilities and Investment Opportunities in WA to potential investors here yesterday.



Fitzhardinge

The Malaysian exports were petroleum, electronic equipment and manufactured goods while Malaysian

imports from WA were mostly livestock and engineering services.

"A positive relationship and strong trade ties has developed between Malaysia and Western Australia and is a good sign for trade relations.

"Malaysia is one of the top 10 trade partners of Western Australia and the third most important tourism country for us as well," he said.

According to Fitzhardinge, there are a lot of potential investors coming from Malaysia to invest in WA, including from Sabah, which is why Sabah Western Australia Trade Centre (SWATC) was set up two years ago.

"SWATC's objectives are to stimulate bilateral trade between the regions and making strong economic links. It also seeks to engage small businesses or with large companies," he said.

At the same conference, Western Australia Trade Office Kuala Lumpur regional director Verghese Jacob said most of the WA investors were interested in livestock investments in East Malaysia.

He said the two states, Sabah and Sarawak, have vast tracts of land suitable for livestock activities and were free of foot and mouth disease. Another potential investment area, he said, was education.