

Western Australia eyes KK



Iliyas (second left) witnessing the signing ceremony by Kenny Chan (seated centre), Fitzhardinge (seated left) and DBKKH director, Lifred Wong (seated right).

Also present were City Hall Deputy Director Generals, Wan Maria Othman (3rd right) and Joannes Solidau (2nd right), City of Rockingham Development Manager, Kevin Dorotich (3rd left), Regional Director for Western Australia Trade Office, Verghese Jacob (left) and DBKKH Director, Kevin How (right).

KOTA KINABALU: Developments in Kota Kinabalu have attracted Western Australia to expand its presence here, in addition to its trade office in Kuala Lumpur.

A formal linkage is now established between Kota Kinabalu City Hall's (KKCH) investment arm, DBKK Holdings Sdn Bhd (DBKKH) and the South West Corridor Development Foundation Inc (SWCDeF), to create a Sabah Western Australia Trade Centre (SWATC) in Kota Kinabalu.

The signing ceremony between DBKKH and SWCDeF, a registered body linked to the six-member local councils in the South West of Perth, Western Australia, took place in City Hall yesterday.

KK Mayor Datuk Iliyas Ibrahim, after witnessing the signing ceremony between DBKKH director/general manager, Kenny Chan Kok Ming and SWCDeF Director, Chris Fitzhardinge, expressed his confidence that the linkage would create bilateral trade relations between Kota Kinabalu City and Western Australia.

Also witnessing the ceremony were Regional Director for Western Australia Trade Office, Verghese Jacob (left), City of Rockingham development manager, Kevin Dorotich, City Hall deputy director-generals, Wan Maria Othman (corporate) and Joannes Solidau (operations) and DBKKH director, Kevin How.

Iliyas, who is glad with the confidence of the South West group of Kota Kinabalu and Sabah, described the setting up of the SWATC as a progressive development as a result of the friendship relations established between Kota Kinabalu and the City of Rockingham two years ago.

According to Fitzhardinge, the SWATC is a very important step of establishing business trade relationship between Kota Kinabalu and Western Australia.

He said both Kota Kinabalu and Western Australia have strong growing economy and strong linkages, which have attracted the attention of many Western Australia investors who are keen to invest in Sabah, but do not have the connection to come here.

Explaining the strategic objective of the Sabah WA Trade Centre (SWATC) as to stimulate the bilateral trade between the two regions, he said resources have also been secured to fund the initiative for an initial three-year period.

Fitzhardinge added that it is apparent that each region has services and products that are sought in each other's markets, thus confirming the potential for productive commercial relationships.

Meanwhile, Dorotich said the Friendship City relation was initiated because of the similarities between Rockingham and Kota Kinabalu.

"Rockingham serves as the City for the Australian Submarine Squadron and Kota Kinabalu is the City that will support the submarine facility in Sepanggar Bay.

"For more than 30 years, Rockingham has managed the fine balance between the clustering of defence related industries while protecting its beautiful expanses of safe beaches and environmental parks," he explained.

He said the defence and resources related industries offering specialized services and expertise from Western Australia will complement the industries in Kota Kinabalu.

According to him, the Government of Western Australia through the Western Australian Trade Office Kuala Lumpur and the City of Rockingham, supports the SWCDeF to establish SWATC and its hosting by DBKKH, with the support of the Mayor of Kota Kinabalu.

He added that the SWATC will employ a Trade Facilitator to identify and develop trade opportunities between the two regions for services and products that are sought in each other's markets resulting in commercial relationships and economic benefit.