

# Malaysia, S. Korea expand links

**FRUITFUL:** Higher investments from South Korea in coming years

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**T**AN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's working visit to Yeosu and Seoul has not only strengthened the good ties between Malaysia and South Korea but has allowed them to cooperate in various fields.

This, in turn, will increase future investments and trade volume.

Satisfied with the overwhelming support from the South Korean government and its private sector, the deputy prime minister said several companies from the republic had told him that they would invest about RM3 billion within the next few years.

Muhyiddin said during his meeting with South Korean Prime Minister Kim Hwang-sik yesterday, the latter had also offered to share the country's technological expertise, including in nuclear power generation, renewable energy and "turning waste into wealth".

"However, we have yet to make a decision on nuclear power as we believe that the public should gain knowledge on the technology first while other alternatives such as hydro power and renewable energy

must always be considered."

At the same time, he said Kim had asked for the implementation of the free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries to be expedited, while attractive power tariff should be given to its companies which planned to invest in the regional growth centres in Malaysia, particularly the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy.

"We will make a decision on the FTA next month, while for the special power tariff, I have asked the Malaysian Investment Development Authority to look into the matter," he told Malaysian reporters yesterday.

During the meeting, Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said both he and Kim had also agreed to further improve coop-

eration in the education sector, where several memoranda of understanding had been signed before. Currently, there are about 300 Malaysian students in South Korea while the number of students from the republic studying in Malaysia has now reached 3,000.

"I've shared with him our aspirations to be a regional education hub where more South Koreans could pursue their studies, including in the English language," he said, adding that Malaysia had the expertise in the teaching of English as a second language.

Muhyiddin also asked the South Korean government to support Malaysia in its effort to be appointed in several committees under the United Nations, including as a non-permanent member of the

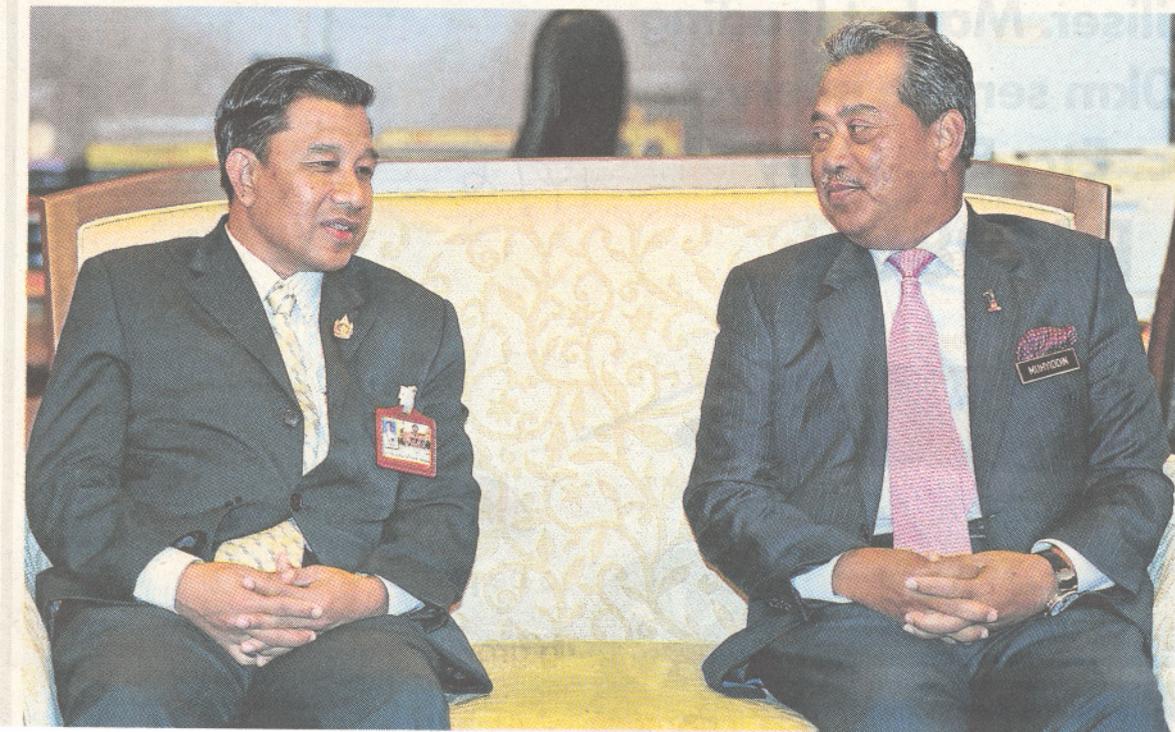
security council.

On new investments, he said among the companies that had made the pledge was Kiswire Ltd., which planned to invest another RM1.8 billion to expand its man facility in Pasir Gudang.

The cable-making company has been in Pasir Gudang for more than 20 years and has invested RM2.1 billion to date.

He said other companies, such as Samsung, Hanwha Group and SK Telecom, were interested in investing in the green technology and telecommunications sectors.

"There are also companies which have asked for a local business partner and we will get the assistance of the International Trade and Industry Ministry to do the matchmaking process," he said.



## COURTESY CALL

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (right) meeting the Thai prime minister's adviser **Datuk Suthiphan Sririkanon**, at Parliament yesterday. Suthiphan and his delegation from the Education Ministry are here until tomorrow. **Bernama pic**