

MALAYSIA, INDIA TO REVIEW ECONOMIC COOPERATION PACT TO INCREASE TRADE

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia and India will soon review their economic cooperation pact, signed in 2011, to chart out ways to enhance and diversify trade further, the Indian High Commissioner to Malaysia has said.

The two sides are expected to review the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) either in December or February next year," T S Tirumurti said.

He said, although, the agreement had helped in a big way and bilateral trade now stood at USD 13.38 billion in 2013, as per Malaysian statistics, the trade balance was in Malaysia's favour.

"We will need to review the working of CECA and how it can be enhanced further to enlarge and diversify our trade basket and decrease the trade balance, which is significantly imbalanced in Malaysia's favour," he told the state-run news agency Bernama.

Malaysia exported goods worth USD 9.95 billion to India while it imported USD 4.44 billion from India last year.

The CECA, which came into force on July 1, 2011, is a free trade agreement, which covers trade in goods and services and investment, as well as, economic cooperation.

The High Commissioner encouraged Malaysian companies to continue to look at India as an investment destination since many large Malaysian companies had already invested in India or taken up major projects successfully over the years.

A more liberal investment climate in India and the focus of the new government to remove bottlenecks in investment and promote Public Private Partnership would certainly enhance opportunities for Malaysian companies to invest in India, particularly in infrastructure, Tirumurti said.

"I am confident that Malaysian companies will find India an even more conducive place to do business and take up large projects," he said.

