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Colombo seeks KL's expertise

KUALA LUMPUR: Sri Lanka is seeking Malaysia's help to upgrade roads in northern Jaffna, which is regarded as Tamil Tiger territory.

Sri Lankan Commerce, Trade, Market Development and Highways Minister Jayaraj Fernando Pulle said upgrading works needed to be carried out along a 120km stretch from Vavunia to Mullathivu via Killinochi.

“Over the last 30 years, there have been no proper roads built in the area. But after the peace talks, the Tigers requested the Sri Lankan government to improve the infrastructure there.

“We have no highways like here in Malaysia. That is why we hope that the Malaysian Government can help us,” Pulle told newsmen after meeting Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu yesterday.

He had earlier told Samy Vellu that the Sri Lankan government still wanted Malaysia to undertake the RM1.1bil Colombo-Kandy Highway project.

At a joint press conference, Samy Vellu said the project would be mainly coordinated by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) here.

“We signed an MoU in 2003 but then there was a change in the Sri Lankan government. We are renegotiating and if all goes well, a new MoU will be signed,” said Samy Vellu.