

KL, Jakarta vow to get tough with cross-border crime
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Malaysia and Indonesia agreed today to heighten intelligence cooperation to anticipate rising cross-border crime due to the impact of the global economic crisis.

Smuggling, human trafficking and piracy along their porous sea and land borders were among the main concerns as Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi took part in joint border committee talks in Jakarta.

"We should be more cautious. We have common enemies, such as groups of criminals, smugglers and human trafficking. Intelligence cooperation has to be intensified," Abdullah told reporters after the meeting.

"Human trafficking has to be eradicated. We would deploy more personnel if we needed them," said Abdullah, who also acts as the defence minister.

Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono, who also took part in the meeting, said: "The economic slowdown and slowing exports could compel people who reside in the border areas to engage in cross-border crime."

He said the worst impacts from the financial crisis would hit Indonesia and Malaysia next year.

Abdullah is expected to meet Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono later today.

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