

Malaysian, Indonesian police link up to combat crime

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JAKARTA: A Joint Police Co-operation Committee (JPCC) will be set up under the auspices of the Malaysia-Indonesia General Border Committee (Malindo GBC) to fight transnational crime.

Announcing this yesterday, Malindo GBC joint chairmen, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono, said the move was to bring greater effectiveness to operations between the two nations' police.

Najib said the committee was the next logical step in fighting transnational crime as the problem was becoming more challenging.

Juwono said police presence, especially around the border areas, would have to be increased.

Najib and Juwono were speaking to Malaysian and Indonesian reporters after chairing the meeting here yesterday.

The Malindo GBC is jointly chaired by the defence ministers of both countries. It was formed to deal with border issues between the two nations, with delegates discussing intelligence and operational factors for enforcement agencies.

Speaking to Malaysian reporters, Najib said the JPCC would begin early next year, with the structure to be decided by the two nations' police forces. On who would head the committee, he said it would be decided later.

On the scope of the JPCC, Najib said it would focus on operations on land borders between the two countries

(between Kalimantan and Sabah and Sarawak), but would also include riverine borders, meaning that Marine police operations would also be included.

He said the police forces of both nations would still be confined to operations within their own borders, but greater co-operation was expected with the setting up of the committee.

Najib said another issue discussed during the Malindo GBC meeting was the issue of joint patrols in the Straits of Malacca. He said the present system of co-ordinated patrols would continue as joint patrols would lead to problems.

Najib said another way of better patrolling the Straits was to increase the "eye-in-the-sky" programme wherever possible, according to the

capabilities of the Straits' littoral states — Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore.

On another matter, Najib said Malaysian students studying in Indonesia would now only have to apply for a study visa once — for the du-

ration of their studies.

He said the change, as agreed to by the Indonesian government, will enable a student to qualify for a multiple-entry visa which will be effective according to the length of time needed for the respective course the

student is taking.

The news of the new visa-ruling was passed on to Najib by Indonesian Vice-President Jusof Kalla when the Deputy Prime Minister paid a courtesy call on him yesterday. —
By Leslie Andres