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# Malaysia can pursue chases in Philippine waters

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**WORKING TOGETHER:** Philippine authorities to help fight kidnap-for-ransom groups, boost maritime security, says PM

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PHILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte has given permission to Malaysian vessels in hot pursuit of kidnap-for-ransom gangs, especially off the Sabah coast.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the move was a new development, signalling Duterte's commitment to stop kidnap-for-ransom gangs, especially off the Sabah coast. "The Philippines has offered trilateral cooperation to Malaysia and Indonesia to allow pursuits into Philippine waters. If we stop pursuing, kidnapers may get away.

"If kidnapers cross the Philippines' maritime boundary, Malaysian or Indonesian authorities just need to inform the Philippine navy to continue the pursuit. Philippine authorities will assist them in the chase.

"Defence ministers of the three countries will have a meeting in Vientiane, Laos, on Nov 22 to decide the standard operating procedure (SOP) and iron out legal issues to allow the move to be carried out," he said at a press conference after a bilateral meeting with Duterte yesterday.

Najib said the move would be enforced soon, after the defence ministers work out a SOP.

He said this was a practical way to help each other address kidnap-for-ransom groups, which affected national security.

To a question, Najib said the move

to allow pursuits was only for chases at sea and not on land.

He said 10 Malaysians had been abducted this year, including five who were still in captivity.

On illegal immigrants, Najib said he had raised the matter with Duterte and told him that the issue had become a serious concern for Malaysians, especially Sabahans.

He said both sides agreed that the 7,000 Philippine illegal immigrants detained in immigration depots would be deported in stages soon.

On the southern Philippines peace process, Najib said Duterte had expressed his appreciation of Malaysia's role in it.

"He hopes Malaysia will continue sending a monitoring team to watch over the peace process in southern Philippines, which I have agreed to.

"And we will no longer be sending facilitators as the negotiation process is over. It is now an internal matter (for the Philippines)."

On whether the South China Sea issue was raised, Najib said it was not, adding that he might bring it up during the official dinner for Duterte.

This is Duterte's first official visit since he took office in June.

Najib said Duterte had expressed interest in visiting Malaysia during the recent Asean Summit in Vientiane.

**Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak greeting Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte outside Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday.**



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte at Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday. Bernama pic

## Malaysia-Philippine ties

### TRADE



### MALAYSIAN COMPANIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

- Resorts World Hotel
- Shangri-La Hotels
- Maybank
- Mitra Energy Philippines
- AlloyMtd (formerly MTD Capital Bhd)

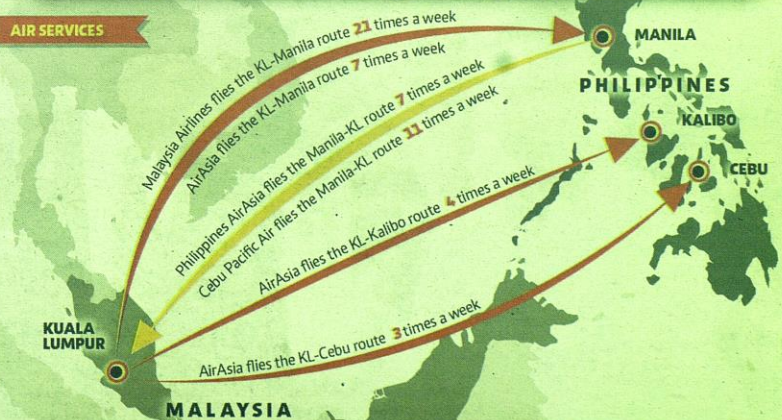
### MALAYSIAN COMPANIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

- Petron Corporation
- Century Motolite Battery Sdn Bhd
- URC Snack Foods Sdn Bhd
- LBC Malaysia
- Pancake House International Malaysia
- Axeroxize (M) Sdn Bhd

### TOURISM



### AIR SERVICES



## Najib glad for closer ties

**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he is delighted by the strengthening of ties between Malaysia and the Philippines in recent years.

"The Philippines is not only Malaysia's neighbour, but also our friend, and I have been delighted by the strengthening of ties between our countries in recent years.

"While the relationship, like any other, strains at times, our common interests far outweigh any points of

disagreement," Najib said following a bilateral meeting with Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte here yesterday.

"Earlier today (yesterday), I hosted President Rodrigo Duterte in Malaysia for the first time for discussions on a wide range of issues, from bilateral ties between Malaysia and the Philippines, to the Mindanao Peace Agreements in the southern Philippines."

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