

## **Malaysia Eyes Hub For Fish Stocks From Indonesia**

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**By Azeman Ariffin**

JAKARTA, March 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is eyeing to become a hub for fish stocks from Indonesia to enable Indonesian marine catches enter the country.

Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority (LKIM) chairman Datuk Irmohizam Ibrahim said towards this end, LKIM is proposing to build cold rooms to keep the fish stocks from the neighbouring country.

He said to set up the freezing facility, a proposal had been submitted to the Indonesian Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister Susi Pudjiastuti and she had welcome the move and hoped it would become a reality.

"When the proposal is implemented, Malaysia will not face problems in the supply of fish during adverse seasonal and weather conditions," he told reporters after paying a courtesy call on Susi at her office, here Friday.

"Indonesia has six million fishermen who could ensure adequate supply of fish by exporting the more fish to Malaysia," he said.

Also present in the meeting was the Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim.

Irmohizam said there are potential prospects for cooperation in the field of fisheries which could directly strengthen further the cordial bilateral relations.

The LKIM chairman, who is also Selangor Youth Council (MBS) president, was leading an MBS and LKIM delegation for a five-day goodwill visit to Jakarta to promote relations between LKIM and Indonesia's Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

He said among the matters discussed with Susi was on identifying the best method to promote marine law understanding between the two countries.

"We want the fishermen of both countries to respect each other's sovereignty so that cases of encroachment will not recur and we are confident the best approach was through educating the fishermen on the legislation," he said.

Meanwhile, Susi said the Indonesian government also wanted to improve cooperation with Malaysia as both countries were of the same race and stock.

"Malaysia has its principles and we also have our interests to protect our respective fishing regions. We agree both countries should defend each other's waters," she said.

Indonesian authorities have been taking stern actions by sinking any fishing boats which encroached the country's waters.

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