

**Malaysia Cooperates With Neighbours To Beef Up Security In Sulu Sea - Hishammuddin Bernama**  
**Mar 16, 2015**

LANGKAWI, March 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will cooperate with its neighbours in beefing up and helping to maintain security in the region, especially in the Sulu Sea and the Straits of Malacca.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said besides ensuring the region's maritime security, which also involves the country, Malaysia also had to focus on the Sulu Sea.

"Apart from making sure maritime security in the Straits of Malacca, which involves Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia, we need to now focus on Sulu Sea, and that will involve Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia and also Brunei.

"What we are doing in Malaysia, as far as Sabah is concerned, we have moved our 8x8 armoured carriers to Tawau and we have moved our Hawks (fighter jet) to Labuan," he told reporters after visiting KD Jebat, here today.

He said his ministry also decided to build a Royal Malaysian Air Force terminal at Lahad Datu airport while Brunei had agreed to transfer its Sikorsky S-70 Blackhawk to Malaysia for use in eastern Sabah.

Hishammuddin also said, Malaysia's decision to purchase defence equipment would depend on the needs and threats it faced and whether the purchases were at the expense of more urgent procurement.

"Asset acquisition will be based on perceived threats and affordability due to current economic situation," he said.

He added that he would be having a six-eyed meeting involving his counterparts from Brunei and Indonesia to discuss ways to ensure security within the region.

On the South China Sea, Hishammuddin said it was a security challenge that could be resolved by the 10 nations of Asean countries.

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