

## **Najib Meets Putin in Sochi for Bilateral Talks**

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**From Leslean Arshad**

SOCHI (Russia), May 19 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak holds bilateral talks Thursday with Russian President Vladimir Putin as the two-day ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit begins here.

The meeting between the two leaders was held at the Radisson Blu Resort and Congress Centre here.

Najib, who arrived in Russia's Black Sea resort city of Sochi Wednesday, is joining other ASEAN leaders to participate in the summit to commemorate the 20 years of ASEAN-Russia dialogue relations.

The summit also serves as a platform for the leaders of the ASEAN member states and Russia to chart the future direction of the partnership.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Putin, who is hosting the summit, is also scheduled to meet other ASEAN leaders.

The Russian president will also host an official reception for the leaders Thursday evening.

Russia has been a dialogue partner of ASEAN since July 1996.

The first Russia-ASEAN Summit was held in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005.

Malaysia and Russia diplomatic relations will enter its 50th anniversary next year.

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