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Tajuk : Malaysia-Philippines security coop to curb cross-border crime

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MANILA: Malaysia and the Philippines continue to strengthen security cooperation, particularly in intelligence sharing and efforts to curb cross-border crime, which is among the priorities on the ASEAN agenda.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said the matter was among those discussed at the ninth Malaysia-Philippines Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) on Tuesday, including maritime security cooperation in the waters between the east coast of Sabah and the Philippines.

"This is among the key issues on the ASEAN agenda, because if cross-border crime is not curbed, it will cause problems for ASEAN countries.

"We also looked at security cooperation, particularly in the waters between eastern Sabah and the Philippines, as well as the

trilateral cooperation between Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia (through the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement - TCA) to maintain security in the area," he told Bernama after the meeting.

Mohamad said the confidence of foreign tourists from Europe and the United States in visiting the east coast of Sabah had increased, following the absence of kidnap-for-ransom cases since early 2020.

He said Malaysia also expressed its hope that the Code of Conduct (CoC) in the South China Sea could be finalised this year, when the Philippines chairs ASEAN.

Meanwhile, Philippine Foreign Secretary Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro, who co-chaired the meeting with Mohamad, said both sides noted the growing ties between their armed forces, and ongoing efforts

to foster camaraderie among their soldiers, navy and air force personnel.

She added that the TCA, which marks its 10th anniversary this year, had made a significant contribution to security and stability in the common area of operations of the three countries - Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia.

"We have likewise reaffirmed our commitment to advancing law enforcement cooperation through targeted capacity building, technical development, technology transfer and expanded intelligence exchanges.

"Both sides acknowledged the importance of the proposed agreements on combating transnational crimes, specifically on combating illicit traffic and abuse of illegal drugs," she said.
— Bernama