

FOREIGN FISHING VESSEL ARRESTS DOWN 73.8 PCT SINCE 2021 - DOF

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PUTRAJAYA, June 5 (Bernama) -- The number of foreign fishing vessel (FFV) arrests in Malaysian waters has fallen by 73.8 per cent since 2021, reflecting the effectiveness of integrated enforcement operations involving multiple maritime agencies.

Fisheries director-general Datuk Adnan Hussain said FFV arrests dropped from 126 cases in 2021 to 33 cases in 2025, demonstrating the success of efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

He said the operations were carried out through collaboration among various agencies, including Ops Naga, which brings together 17 enforcement bodies such as the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) and the Marine Police Force (MPF).

"This steady decline demonstrates the effectiveness of integrated operations carried out consistently by various agencies, including the deployment of assets in critical maritime zones located more than 60 nautical miles from the coastline.

"The sustained presence of these assets has also strengthened deterrence against encroachment by foreign vessels into Malaysian waters," he said in a statement issued in conjunction with the International Day for the Fight Against IUU Fishing (IUU Fishing Day 2026) today.

Adnan said a total of 546 FFV arrests were recorded between 2020 and 2025, with the MMEA accounting for 474 cases, or 86.8 per cent of the total.

The MPF recorded 53 cases, while the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Malaysia registered 19 cases during the same period.

He said IUU fishing remains a challenge to the management and conservation of the country's fisheries resources as the methods used are becoming increasingly complex and difficult to detect.

Among the tactics identified are switching off Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) to avoid detection, manipulating fish landing data, encroaching into fishing areas subject to licensing conditions, and commercial trawlers operating in Zone A waters in violation of regulations.

"IUU fishing not only depletes the country's fisheries resources but can also disrupt marine ecosystems and affect the livelihoods of fishing communities that depend on the sector," he said.

Adnan said the DOF would continue strengthening enforcement of the Fisheries Act 1985 (Act 317) and enhancing cooperation with maritime enforcement agencies to ensure the country's fisheries resources remain protected and sustainably managed.

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TAGS: DOF, IUU, Adnan Hussain, arrests, integrated enforcement, maritime agencies

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