

# Foreign fishermen try to disable MMEA boats

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**PASIR PUTEH:** Foreign fishermen encroaching into Malaysian waters to catch fish are resorting to daring tactics to avoid arrest, and their latest manoeuvre involved throwing a rope at a Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) patrol boat in hopes of tangling the propellers.

The incident occurred during an operation by the MMEA's *KM Jujur* patrol boat on Monday.

Kelantan MMEA director Maritime Captain Syed Nor Adli Syed Ab Rahman said the MMEA boat was conducting Op Damai Khas Kuda Laut and Op Naga Barat at 9.20am when they spotted a foreign fishing vessel operating 173 nautical miles off Tok Bali.

"Upon spotting the MMEA boat, the fishing vessel's skipper tried to flee, but not before instructing his crew members to throw a rope towards the Malaysian patrol boat.

"Fortunately, the rope did not strike the MMEA boat's propellers, and our officers

were able to apprehend the foreign vessel," he said during a press conference held here yesterday.

After inspecting the vessel, Nor Adli said they detained five crew members, including the skipper.

"Upon further inspection, our officers discovered 1,000kg of fish, 7,000 litres of diesel, and various communication equipment.

"The total value of the seizure, including the vessel, amounts to about RM1.5 million."

The five foreigners, all from Vietnam and aged between 24 and 31, are being held for further legal action.

Nor Adli said this marked the 18th seizure of a Vietnamese vessel by the MMEA this year.

"Since the beginning of the year, we have seized 23 foreign fishing vessels for encroaching on Malaysian territorial waters, with 18 of them originating from Vietnam.

"The remaining vessels were from Thailand."



Kelantan Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency director Maritime Captain Syed Nor Adli Syed Ab Rahman (right) and his officers detaining foreign fishermen off Pasir Puteh yesterday. BERNAMA PIC