
**ASEAN'S 'BAREBONES' SUMMIT TO FOCUS ON MIDEAST CONFLICT IMPACT, SAYS
FILIPINO PRESIDENT**

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Riyaz ul Khaliq

The Philippines will host a scaled-down summit of Southeast Asian nations, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Friday, adding the bloc will work to "coordinate" its response to the impact of the Middle East conflict.

"We have consulted with our counterparts * The consensus that we came to is it that it is precisely now that we must coordinate our efforts," Marcos told reporters, according to the Philippines News Agency.

Manila is the current chair of the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and has scheduled the first summit of the bloc's leaders for May 7-8 in Cebu province. Marcos said the gathering will allow leaders to discuss "what do we do in the future, what do we do for the rest of the year, how can we help each other, and what is the ASEAN position regarding all of these shocks that are coming our way." Describing the upcoming summit as "very barebones," he said leaders will focus on oil, food supplies and prices, and migrant workers' welfare.

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