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PM wants stronger measures

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Najib tells security forces to step up efforts to stop kidnappings

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KUALA LUMPUR: Sabah's huge sea borders and information leaks are reasons for the string of abductions in the state, but these are not an excuse for security forces not to make more concerted efforts to end the problem.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said it was impossible to place security personnel and assets at all locations along the borders at all times.

He said there was no country that could do this, even developed countries, but this was not an excuse.

"I feel that this is a blow to us and the Deputy Prime Minister feels the same.

"Nevertheless, we want new actions by the security forces, which I will take up with them," Najib told a media conference after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting.

He said immediate measures

must be taken because the people of Sabah would not stand for the continuing abductions.

"The problem is that information is being leaked by insiders, the kidnappers know when there are no security forces present at a particular location and that is the time they strike.

Asked to comment on reports that the Philippine President's tough action against criminals and drug dealers was creating a wave of refugees coming into Sabah, Najib said there was no major influx at present but added that the Government would monitor the situation.

On another matter, Najib again clarified his remarks which he had made during an interview in Germany on the next general election, which was taken out of context.

He said the translator did not understand what he said in English, which was then translated to German.

"I said elections are not due until

2018, it did not mean that elections will be held in 2018. It was wrongly translated," he said.

The Prime Minister said he had since issued a clarification, stating that he did not say the general election would be in 2018 or that it would be earlier.

Najib, who is Umno president, announced earlier that the party's annual general assembly will be from Nov 29 to Dec 3.

He said vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi will open meetings of the Wanita, Puteri and Youth wings on the evening of Nov 29.

The wings will then hold their assemblies the next day, while Najib will open the party assembly on Dec 1.

The Umno president said the party continued to draw new members at a healthy rate despite reports suggesting that a newly created party was luring members away from it.

Najib said that in August alone, Umno registered 6,000 new members.

"I say this because there is a party which got 30 new members and it made the front page of a newspaper, whereas we got 6,000.

"This shows that Umno is still getting good support from the people," he said.

Najib highlighted the success of the pro-government Aspirasi campus election candidates who formed the student governing bodies in 12 public universities following their recent elections.

This was a positive sign that the policies of the Government can be accepted by the younger generation, "as long as we are given the opportunity to explain the issues and engage with them," he said.



For more stories:
See page 21