

Federal Government Considers Aid For Sabah Villagers Affected By Armed Intrusion - Najib
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KOTA KINABALU, March 11 (Bernama) -- The federal government is considering providing compassionate aid to the local community whose livelihood has been affected by the intrusion of armed Sulu militants in Kampung Tanduo, Lahad Datu, in Sabah, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

He said it was a measure which the federal government could take to ease the burden of the people who lived close to the village.

"I am made to understand that the local people are unable to go about their daily life as usual ... that they cannot go out to sea because the area faces the threat of the militants.

"I feel this is an additional measure that the federal government can implement to ease the burden of the people of Sabah," he said in a video conference with Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman.

About 1,000 civil servants in the state, gathered at the Tun Ahmad Raffae Auditorium at Menara Tun Mustapha, heard the prime minister speak after he had addressed the Premier Gathering of the Civil Service in Putrajaya.

Sabah Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Seri Yahya Hussin, state cabinet ministers and State Secretary Tan Sri Sukarti Wakiman were also present at the auditorium.

Najib said the proposal to provide the compassionate aid was discussed with Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who is scheduled to visit Sabah Tuesday.

The prime minister reiterated the government's stand not to compromise on the question of Sabah's security, sovereignty and integrity.

"I believe that with the sound cooperation between the federal and state governments, we can overcome this problem, this challenge," he said, referring to the intrusion by the armed Sulu militants from the southern Philippines.

Malaysian security forces launched the "Ops Daulat" offensive on Tuesday after the militants killed eight policemen in Kampung Tanduo and Kampung Simunul in Semporna on March 1 and 2.

They had holed up in Kampung Tanduo since Feb 12 and ignored the government's attempt to negotiate their surrender.

During the video conference, Musa said the civil servants in Sabah would continue to support the transformation initiatives introduced by the prime minister.

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