

**PM visits Lahad Datu today**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**March 7, 2013**  
**By Boo Su-Lyn**

LAHAD DATU, March 7 — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak will come here today to monitor the security forces' operations against the Sulu militants, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said.

Ahmad Zahid said Najib's visit would spur the security forces on, noting that Najib had been defence minister for 14 years.

"He has gone to the battlefield. He's been to Bosnia," said Ahmad Zahid at a joint press conference with Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein here today.

Asked if Najib would go to Kampung Tanduo that was pounded by air strikes last Tuesday to flush out some 200 Sulu gunmen, Hishammuddin said: "He'll let us know."

Ahmad Zahid refused to confirm if the air strikes had killed any southern Filipino gunmen, telling the press to refer to Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar and Armed Forces chief Gen Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin instead.

Zulkifeli said yesterday that no Sulu casualties have yet to be reported from Tuesday's air strikes.

He stressed that the nine bodies of Sulu militants discovered yesterday were of those killed in last Friday's shootout, and not by the air strikes. Twelve followers of the Sulu sultanate in total were killed last Friday.

Zulkifeli said that one Sulu gunman was shot dead yesterday morning, bringing the Sulu death toll to 13.

Self-proclaimed princess Jacel Kiram reportedly said yesterday that Sulu militant leader Agbimuddin Kiram and his group of Sulu sultanate followers survived last Tuesday's aerial assault since invading Kampung Tanduo here on February 9.

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