

**PM: Sulu invaders can surrender or face consequences**

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Najib: Slain police commandos to get posthumous promotions so that their families can get higher pensions

SUBANG JAYA: The Government has given the Sulu invaders two choices: surrender or face the repercussions at the hands of security forces, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said on Saturday.

Speaking to reporters at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base here, Najib said he had spoken to Philippines president Benigno Aquino on Friday night regarding the matter.

He said the window for negotiations was closed, given the hostile stand taken by the rebels.

"The Sulu rebels have to surrender or they will face the action of our security forces," he told a press conference on Saturday after paying his last respects to the remains of the fallen commandos Insp Zulkifli Mamat, 29, and Kpl Sabaruddin Daud.

He condemned the actions of the Sulu gunmen who might have led the two fallen special force commandos into an ambush before they were gun downed.

Najib revealed he had received a report, as well as first hand accounts, from one of the Vet 69 commandos, who claimed they had walked into a trap.

"I was told some Sulu gunmen had waved the white flag but when the Malaysian forces moved in, they were fired upon instead.

"I am not ruling out the possibility that it might have been a trap.

"If it is true they (Sulu gunmen) used this tactic, then its nothing short of a cowardly act," he told reporters.

"I've told Aquino the Government will not consider any claims by the Sulu gunmen...they only have two options- surrender or face actions by our security forces," he said.

The Government had no choice but to turn tough.

"They trespassed into our country armed with weapons and they killed two of our police personnel while injuring three others...these are very serious offences.

"For us, there is nothing more to be considered or negotiated upon...they should surrender soon or face any action," he said.

Asked if the gunmen had been given a deadline, Najib declined to say more. "For tactical reasons...I cannot reveal."

The Prime Minister also announced that both fallen heroes would be promoted. Insp Zulkifli Mamat would be promoted to Asst Supt while Kpl Sabaruddin Daud promoted to Sargeant.

"With the respective promotions, both families will receive higher pensions.

"The Government and the police will consider other form of aid and will inform the families after the funeral as well as other matters are concluded.

"We never forget the contribution and service as well as the huge sacrifice by our two heroes," he said.

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