

## **Najib: Malaysia to appoint senior official soon as facilitator to Thai-rebel peace talks**

**TheStarOnline**

**February 28, 2013**

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PUTRAJAYA: A series of dialogues between the Thai government and Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) rebel group will begin in two weeks.

[Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak](#) said the dialogues would be held in Kuala Lumpur.

"Malaysia will appoint shortly, a senior official as the facilitator.

"We are optimistic of a favourable result. Malaysia strongly believes that the establishment of peaceful conditions in southern border provinces of Thailand will bring prosperity to the area, including our side of the border," Najib said in a joint statement with his Thailand counterpart Yingluck Shinawatra at the end of Malaysia-Thailand Annual Consultation here Thursday.

Yingluck, meanwhile, said Thailand was looking forward to a lasting solution in its southern border provinces.

"It is our wish to promote peace and prosperity in southern border provinces through a convincing effort.

"In this context, we agreed on putting an end to violence and creating peaceful and harmonious environment for the benefit of Thai people in the areas.

"The Thai authorities are willing to engage all stakeholders in the process in a good faith," she said.

Earlier in the day, the Thai government signed its first-ever agreement with a rebel group in its Muslim-majority south, pledging to work toward peace talks aimed at ending a festering insurgency.

The potentially historic deal was signed at the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) in Jalan Semarak, Kuala Lumpur between Thai officials and a BRN representative.

The "general consensus document to launch a dialogue process for peace" was signed by Lieutenant-General Paradorn Pattanathabutr, secretary-general of Thailand's National Security Council, and Hassan Taib of the BRN.

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