

Guan Eng presses Najib to oversee Sabah kidnapping case
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The Penang government wants Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to take charge of the situation in Sabah, after the latest kidnapping by gunmen believed to be linked to the Abu Sayyaf militant group.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng said Najib should take charge if Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein and Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi could not do the job to keep the borders of Malaysia and its citizens safe.

"The both of them should explain why this has happened again. But it seems that they are not able to do the job.

"If so, we urge the PM to take over...This is serious. Now it is Sabah but where is next?" he told a press conference in Penang today.

On Thursday, four armed and masked men stormed into a popular seafood restaurant and kidnapped a female restaurant manager and a customer from Sarawak.

Lim said it was disappointing that such a crime had taken place when so much assurance had been given by the authorities and condemned Putrajaya for failing to do its job to protect the safety of Malaysia's borders and citizens.

"The most important matter now is to save the lives of the victims. But this will also hurt Sabah and Malaysia's image as a tourism destination," he said.

There had been several cases of kidnapping for ransom in Sabah in the last few years. In 2013, a Taiwanese woman was kidnapped while her husband was killed in Sipadan.

In April last year, a tourist from China and a Filipina hotel staff in Semporna were also abducted. In June last year, a fish breeder and his Filipino worker were taken by kidnapers. In July last year, armed men also killed one policeman and kidnapped another on Mabul island off Semporna.

To combat the kidnappings and intrusion of foreign gunmen, the government set up the Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom) and supplying assets to boost safety and security. – May 16, 2015.

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