

'Surrender and leave the country'

IRRESPONSIBLE AND UNCIVILISED: We are against group's intrusion, say local Suluk community leaders



KOTA KINABALU

TWO local Suluk community leaders have condemned the armed Filipino intruders holed up at Kampung Tanduo, Lahad Datu, for causing unrest and tension in Sabah.

Describing the armed intruders, known as Suluk Tausug from the Tawi-Tawi island in the Southern Philippines, as totally irresponsible for threatening Malaysia's sovereignty, they urged the authorities to take firm action against them.

The Suluk community in Sabah is said to be from the same ethnic group as the Suluk Tausug.

United Sabah Suluk Association chairman Jamal Ali said the Suluk community in the state was against the group's intrusion.

"The group, despite being fellow Muslims, has acted inhumanely against our security forces," he said, adding that the group should

Flashpoints: situation in the east coast of Sabah



said, adding that the group should surrender and leave the country immediately.

Sabah Suluk Ethnic Association secretary Mohd Zaki Harry Susanto described the intruders as uncivilised.

"The group has no business to create trouble and problems in our country. It should leave our shores immediately as we do not want to see more bloodshed.

"I have relatives in the Philippines, but if they came here illegally, I would tell them off because that would be against our laws."

Zaki said the local Suluks had made their decision to stay in Malaysia.

"My grandfather came here in the 1930s. Since then, this has been our home. I was born here and I am a Malaysian.

"Our people are willing to offer assistance to protect our country from the intruders," Zaki, who was a former policeman, said.

"When I heard news of our men killed in action, I felt like offering my service. I have faith in our security forces and I am sure they are doing their best."

LAHAD DATU

Tanjung Batu and Tanjung Labian have been declared as 'red zones'. Hundreds of villagers have fled their homes. Five army battalions have been sent there. Security cordon around Kampung Tanduo is intact.

KUNAK

VAT 69 commandos are still hunting for a group of foreign gunmen believed to be hiding there.

SEMPORNA

The scene of a bloody battle on Saturday night which saw six policemen and six intruders killed. Police said the situation is under control.

TAWAU AND SANDAKAN

Hospitals in both towns have been put on red alert. An army battalion was sent to each town yesterday.



Philippine President Benigno Aquino III says he is aware that **certain personalities conspired and brought about the situation**

Aquino warns conspirators

MANILA: Philippine President Benigno Aquino III warned yesterday that those who conspired with the Sulu sultan in pressing for his claim to Sabah will be penalised, China's Xinhua news agency reported.

Aquino said in a speech that the clan of Sultan Jamalul Kiram III could not have acted alone when they launched their attempt to "reclaim" Sabah.

"I am aware that certain personalities conspired and brought us to this situation — one that has no quick solution.

"Some of these people have not yet been identified. But I assure you that

these people will not succeed and that they will be brought to justice."

Aquino said the government had launched an investigation to uncover the people who may have incited Kiram's group to go to Sabah.

He urged the sultan and his followers to let reason prevail and prevent more bloodshed in Sabah.

In a telephone call on Saturday, Aquino said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak told him that negotiation was already impossible given the loss of life on the Malaysian side.

He said he appealed to the Malaysian side to ensure the safety of some

800,000 overseas Filipino workers in Malaysia.

Aquino expressed confidence that the peace talks between the former rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine government would not be derailed by the Sabah incident.

Malaysia is the third-party facilitator of the peace talks between the MILF and the Philippine government.

Aquino said it was in the interest of Malaysia to ensure that the peace process was concluded to ensure the stability of peace and order situation in Mindanao. **Bernama**