

Karpal killed in accident near Kampar
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Veteran opposition MP and lawyer Karpal Singh was killed in an accident near Kampar in Perak this morning.

His long-time personal assistant Michael Cornelius Jayakrishnan, 39, was also killed.

Karpal's son Ram Karpal and the driver were believed to be injured in the accident which occurred at 1.10am near 301.6km northbound marker along the the North-South Highway.

Malaysiakini learnt that Karpal and his son, who is also a lawyer, were heading north for a court case later today.

Photos taken at the scene of the accident - near Gua Tempurung in Kampar - show the white Toyota Alphard badly damaged.

Contacted later, an Ipoh police spokesperson told *Malaysiakini* that it is believed the MPV collided with a lorry which switched lanes without indication.

Karpal's other son and Puchong MP Gobind Singh Deo told *The Star* that his father had died on the spot.

"My brother Ram is slightly injured but we are trying to get through to him," he added when the daily contacted him at 3.30am.

According to a police statement later, Ram and driver of the ill-fated car, C Selvam, were not injured. However, Karpal's Indonesian maid suffered severe injuries and she is warded at Ipoh's Hospital Permaisuri Bainun.

The driver of the lorry, which was hit behind by Karpal's car, and its three passengers escaped without injury.

The police said the MPV carrying Karpal and four others hit the slow moving lorry at a hilly stretch of the highway.

The five-tonne lorry was carrying a load of cement, steel and mosaic tiles.

Karpal, 74, was involved in a previous car accident in 2005 where he was paralysed and wheelchair-bound.

The vocal politician graduated from University of Singapore and started his law practice before running for Parliament in 1978.

His long tenure as Jelutong MP and fiery speeches in the Dewan Rakyat earned him the

moniker "Tiger of Jelutong".

Karpal had recently relinquished his post as DAP chairperson pending the disposal of his appeal against a sedition charge.

Last month, the High Court found him guilty of uttering seditious words against the Sultan of Perak at the height of the constitutional crisis in 2009.

PM offers condolences

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak conveyed his condolences via Twitter.

"I have just landed at Ankara when I heard the news that YB Karpal Singh died in a road accident. My condolences to the family," read the premier's tweet.

Other netizens also expressed condolences and shock over Karpal's passing. "Shocked and sad news! DAP chairman Karpal Singh passed away in accident tonight. Malaysia has lost a truly patriotic son," wrote Taiping MP Nga Kor Ming.

"Our dear Mr Karpal is no longer with us... I just can't accept it...," said Kulai MP Teo Nie Ching.

The bodies of the two deceased, Karpal and Michael, arrived at the Ipoh general hospital at 7.20am.

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng right and his deputy Mohd Rashid Hasnon, and former Perak menteri besar Nizar Jamaluddin were there.

They conveyed their condolences to Karpal's sons Gobind and Jagdeep. Karpal's wife was seen crying, while a relative tried to prevent photos from being taken. The bodies were sent for post-mortem.

Gobind said that the family expects the post-mortem to finish at 10.30am, after which they will bring the body back to their family home in Penang by 1pm.

He added that he was informed about the accident at 2.15am, and together with his wife, rushed to the scene. Gobind and his mother, Gurmit Kaur, managed to see Karpal's body.

The funeral for the veteran politician is expected to be either on Saturday evening or Sunday morning, he added.

"Mr Karpal has family and friends overseas and we are waiting for them to return for his funeral," he said.

"His body will be kept in our family home along Jalan Utama (Penang)," he added.

Gobind said Ram, who sustained slight bruises, is well.

He also thanked all well-wishers for their support and requested the public to give the grieving family some privacy.

"We will be keeping everyone informed with regular updates," he added.
At about 8.30am, a man believed to be Karpal's driver, Selvam, was seen approaching the forensic department in the hospital. He was sobbing but was taken away by several people from the scene.

It is learnt that Karpal's body will be cremated at the Sikh cremation hall at 11am on Sunday.

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