

Pray for those on board helicopter, says Najib
MalaysiaKini.com
May 5th, 2016

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has expressed concern over reports of a missing helicopter carrying several VIPs in Sarawak.

In a Twitter posting this evening, he said: "Deeply concerned about reports of helicopter missing between Betong and Kuching."

"Search and rescue activated. Let us pray for their safety," he added.

It was reported that Najib was also in Betong - where the helicopter took off from - earlier today.

The prime minister had visited the Mara Junior Science College there before departing for Kuching.

Defence Minister Hishamuddin Hussein also tweeted that he and his family are praying that those on board are safe.

Hishamuddin also disclosed that he has directed the air force and army to assist the search and rescue operations.

Several others also took to Twitter to express their concern over the incident, with Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin stating: "Please pray that they are safe."

Whereas Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said: "Praying for the safety of those onboard missing helicopter in Sarawak. Search ongoing."

Opposition leaders also tweeted on the incident, with Selangor Menteri Besar Mohd Azmin Ali urging all to pray for the safety of the crew and passengers.

Air traffic controllers had lost contact with the helicopter, which was headed to Kuching, at 5pm while it was near Sebuyau.

Reports claimed that those on board were Deputy Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities Noriah Kasnon, Kuala Kangsar MP Wan Mohammad Khairil Anuar Wan Ahmad, Plantation Industries and Commodities Ministry secretary-general Sundaran Ann Amalai, Noriah's husband Asmuni Abdullah, and bodyguard Ahmad Sobri.

The helicopter was piloted by Capt Rudolf Rex Raga.

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