

12 Malaysians on ship attacked by Israelis
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Twelve Malaysians, including two members of the media, are confirmed on board the Mavi Marmara, the lead vessel of a pro-Palestine flotilla that was attacked by Israeli forces today.

NONEThe two media workers are Astro Awani journalist Ashwad Ismail and cameraman Samsul Kamal Abdul Latip.

They are part of an 11-member mission out of Malaysia called Lifeline4Gaza, which participated in a 'Freedom Flotilla' to bring humanitarian aid and supplies to the Gaza strip.

It is understood however that Lifeline4Gaza may not be the only mission from Malaysia, as several other groups are believed to have gone separately on other ships in the flotilla.

Lifeline4Gaza's Hafidzi Mohd Noor said the other nine in their group are volunteers from six Malaysian NGOs.

They include Haluan, Aqsa Syarif, Yayasan Amal, Muslim Care, Palestine Centre of Excellence (Pace) and Jemaah Islamiah Malaysia (JIM).

Hafidzi, who was unable to maintain contact with their group when the attack started, noted that they do not know the identity of the 12th Malaysian on board the Turkish-registered Mavi Marmara.

"We were made to understand that one volunteer from Mapim (another Malaysian NGO) was supposed to join them on the Mavi Marmara, as the Greek ship he was on was facing technical problems, but we don't know if he actually went on or not," Hafidzi said when contacted.

NONEEarlier today, international media reported that Israeli Naval commandos stormed the Mavi Marmara (left) killing at least 16 activists.

The Israeli government had vowed to prevent the convoy, a "Freedom Flotilla" of six ships carrying 10,000 tonnes of humanitarian aid, from reaching Gaza's shores.

Various agencies reported that the strike was launched while the three transport and three cargo ships were still in international waters.

The flotilla, which set sail from Cyprus on Sunday, carries an international group of 700 activists including 1976 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mairead Corrigan Maguire of Northern Ireland, European legislators and an elderly Holocaust survivor.

Dead not identified

Those killed have yet to be identified, as the Israeli Navy has reportedly enforced a communications blackout on the Mavi Marmara.

azlanAccording to Al-Jazeera, the ships are now being towed to the Israeli town of Haifa and not to Ashdod as reported earlier This is seen as a move to avoid the media.

Meanwhile, Meru assemblyperson Abdul Rani Osman who had gone in support of the Malaysian mission, said there are six volunteers and two journalists on board one of the six ships in the Freedom Flotilla.

Abdul Rani, who stayed back in Istanbul, confirmed via SMS that 16 people have been killed and all six ships are being towed to Haifa where the activists are expected to be jailed.

National news agency Bernama carried a separate report quoting the Perdana Global Peace Organisation (PGPO) as saying that their volunteers are safe on the Rachel Corrie, one of the ships in the convoy.

NONEShamsul Akmar Musa Kamal, one of the three PGPO officials on the Rachel Corrie, sent an SMS to officials at the PGPO headquarters in Kuala Lumpur saying they are safe and located some 1,000 nautical miles from Gaza.

"Our next plan is to continue forward and turn back if there is a warning from Israeli forces," he said in the message.

The two other PGPO officials on board are Matthias Chang and Ahmad Faizal Azumu, alongside Parit MP Mohd Nizar Zakaria and TV3 journalist Halim Mohamed and cameraman Mohd Jufri Judin.

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