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PM expresses sorrow over tragedy

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ASSURANCE: Govt will save those stranded in remote areas, says Najib

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday expressed his sorrow over the loss of lives following the earthquake that hit Sabah on Friday.

In a Facebook posting yesterday, he expressed his sympathies to the loved ones of those who died

in the tragedy.

"I convey my deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the earthquake in Sabah."

He also gave his assurance that the

government was not sparing any effort to locate those stranded in remote areas.

"So many lives were lost, infrastructure and buildings damaged. There also some who are still missing."

Najib, who is on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, said although he was abroad, he was being updated on the search-and-rescue efforts.

He said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, as chairman of the National Disaster Management Committee, was in Sabah to monitor the situation and administer its operations there.

He said 168 victims had been rescued, with 16 Casualties.

He added that 56 search- and-rescue personnel were in the mountains to bring down five bodies of victims who have yet to be identified.

He said the Federal Government and the Sabah government would monitor, prepare a report and take action to ensure that all these were rectified as soon as possible for the convenience of the public, especially students in Sabah.

Najib said the Armed Forces was on standby to be deployed, while the Special Search and Rescue Team Malaysia consisting of paramedics, engineers and rescuers, had been mobilised to help.

"Naturally, we are grateful to all who helped in the search efforts,

particularly the mountain pilot who sacrificed so much to help the earthquake victims.

"God willing, together with those who were here, prayers will be held tonight.

"May Allah protect the people of Malaysia, especially in Sabah, and facilitate rescue efforts.

"I hope all Malaysians, irrespective of race or religion, will continue to pray for the safety of the people of Sabah."

Najib said he would be in the state soon.

Najib said his official visit to Saudi Arabia, which was at the request of Saudi Arabia's King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Sauda, had been planned earlier.