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We are committed to finding plane, says Najib

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia remains committed to the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 and is hopeful that the jetliner will be found, said Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

The prime minister, in a statement posted on his blog, NajibRazak.com, yesterday, said together with Malaysia's international partners, the country had followed the little evidence that there was on the disappearance of the ill-fated aircraft on March 8, last year, and would continue its commitment to the search.

He said the disappearance of MH370 was without precedent, and so, too, was the search, which he described as the most complex and technically challenging in aviation history.

Malaysia, he said, had brought together a huge international team to find the plane and that the nation would never forget the dedication of those who have helped.

"Today, we stand united in remembering and honouring the 239 people, including 50 Malaysians, on board MH370. Our prayers are with them and their loved ones left behind — whose sorrow we share.

"To the men and women who continue to work tirelessly to find MH370's final resting place, thank you.

"No words can describe the pain the families of those on board are going through. The lack of answers and definitive proof, such as aircraft wreckage, has made this more difficult to bear."

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, on his Facebook account, expressed hope that the families of the victims on board Flight MH370 would have the strength to overcome the challenges they face.

"Today marks the one year dis-

appearance <v Flight MH370.

"Besides commemorating the passengers and crew aboard MH370, let us together pray to the Almighty that we will be protected from disasters and the country will always remain peaceful.

"There is a reason behind every test by Allah. I pray that the family members of the passengers and crew onboard will always remain tough in facing the test."

Meanwhile, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said the search for missing Flight MH370 would extend beyond its current scope if it is not found, AFP reported.

He said Australian authorities, that were leading the hunt, were about 40 per cent through scouring a priority 60,000-square-kilometre area of the southern Indian Ocean and were due to conclude in May, but intended to search further "as long as there are reasonable leads".

"We are reasonably optimistic of success, but if we don't succeed in this search, there is another search that we intend to make because we owe it to the families of the dead.

"We are reasonably optimistic of finding the plane."

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi yesterday said the search would go on and extended his condolences to the next of kin.

"Today will be a tough day for the next of kin of passengers who boarded the flight. Our hearts are with you," Wang said at a press conference on the sidelines of the National People's Congress, China's Communist-controlled Parliament.

"Malaysia Airlines has already started compensation work. We will support all necessary services for the next of kin and help safeguard their legitimate and lawful requests and interests."