

1976 SABAH PLANE CRASH REPORT TO BE MADE PUBLIC

Govt owes it to victims' kin, Sabah people and the public to declassify it, says Anwar

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THE full report on the Sabah Air GAF Nomad crash in 1976, which claimed the lives of 11 people, will be declassified by next week.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the decision came after taking into consideration the views of the people of Sabah and demands by the victims' next of kin.

"Hence, we decided that the final and full report on the crash of Sabah Air's GAF N-22B Nomad on June 6, 1976 will be declassified and revealed within a week.

"However, some of the findings could be released within the next few days," he said at a press conference after chairing the cabinet meeting yesterday.

Anwar said information from

the report would be disseminated through official statements issued by the government and Transport Ministry.

After 47 years, he said, the investigation findings of the crash, which had also claimed the lives of five Sabah ministers, would be revealed to the public, according to Section 2(c) of the Official Secrets Act 1972.

Anwar said the decision was in line with the unity government's openness and transparency policy.

With the announcement, it will shed light on the events leading to the crash, also known as the Double Six Tragedy, as well as the cause of the accident.

He said views from the Attorney-General's Chambers had been sought before the decision was made.

"The cabinet is fully aware of the legal implications. But after looking into those concerns, we feel that we owe it to the public, people of Sabah and the families concerned to release (the report).

"I don't believe that findings such as this, which affected the families, state and public, should be kept under the Official Secrets Act."

The plane crashed off Sembulan while attempting to land at

the Kota Kinabalu International Airport, killing 11 people.

In 2019, then Sabah deputy chief minister Datuk Christina Liew said there had been many requests over the years for the truth about the 1976 air crash.

Among the deceased were then chief minister Tun Fuad Stephens, Datuk Peter Mojuntin (local government and housing minister), Datuk Salleh Sulong (state finance minister) and Chong Thien Vun (state works and communication minister).

Also killed were Datuk Wahid Peter Andu (secretary to the state finance minister), Dr Syed Hussin Wafa (state economic planning director) and Datuk Ishak Atan (private secretary to then federal minister Tan Sri Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah).

Stephens' eldest son Johari and bodyguard Corporal Said Mohammad, as well as pilot Captain Ghandi Nathan were also killed in the crash.

The incident occurred less than two months after Stephens' party, Sabah People's United Front, defeated Umno in the 1977 Sabah elections and subsequently formed the state government.

On March 8, the Kota Kinabalu High Court ordered the federal government to declassify the investigation into the crash.



The Sabah Air GAF N-22B Nomad plane carrying 11 people which crashed off Sembulan while attempting to land at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport on June 6, 1976. FILE PIC