

Najib due in Perth later today

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By AFP

The prime minister will be touring the air base being used as staging post for MH370 search missions.

PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak is due in Perth later this evening to tour the air base being used as a staging post to conduct search missions for the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.

He will also meet with his Australian counterpart Tony Abbott, as well as Angus Houston, who is heading a new coordination centre in Perth.

Malaysia's handling of the crisis, marked by piecemeal and occasionally contradictory information, has been widely questioned, especially by disconsolate relatives of the 153 Chinese nationals aboard.

Many of them have alleged incompetence or even a cover-up by Malaysia, straining ties between the two countries, although the rhetoric has eased in recent days.

Despite this, Houston said: "The cooperation with Malaysia has been first class."

In an effort to appease angry relatives, a closed-door briefing is scheduled this morning in Kuala Lumpur with families of those who were on board the plane to hear from technical experts from Malaysia, China and Australia.

On Tuesday, Malaysia Airlines finally revealed the full radio communications with the pilots of the missing flight, but the routine exchanges shed no light on the mystery.

The previously unreleased conversations between MH370's pilots and air traffic controllers had been the subject of much speculation as suspicions have focused on whether one or both of the pilots deliberately diverted the plane.

But they revealed nothing about what happened aboard the ill-fated jet.

"There is no indication of anything abnormal in the transcript," a Malaysian government statement said of the 43 separate transmissions over nearly 54 minutes, which were thick with air-traffic and navigational jargon.

Malaysia's authoritarian government — which muzzles its own pliant mainstream press — revealed it was compiling a dossier of "false" media reports over the crisis and would consider filing lawsuits.

Acting Transport Minister and Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said on his

Twitter feed that the country's attorney general had been instructed to "compile evidence and advise" on possible legal action

MH370 went off radar an hour into its journey from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8.

Malaysia believes the flight which had 239 people aboard was deliberately diverted by someone on board and that satellite data indicates it crashed in the Indian Ocean.

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