

## **Government Ready To Help Airlines With Mental Screening Of Pilots**

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BALIK PULAU, March 29 (Bernama) -- The health ministry is willing to cooperate with the country's airlines if they wish to carry out mental screening tests on pilots, says deputy minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya.

He said the checks (mental screening) were essential to ensure that all pilots were in optimal mental state and did not suffer emotional disturbance, prior to flying.

"However, the initiative should be undertaken by the airline itself, and the ministry is ready to cooperate," he told reporters after launching the 'Healthy Parks, Eradicate Aedes' programme at Taman Pondok Upeh in Balik Pulau, Sunday.

Dr Hilmi suggested that the medical examination should be done as often as possible, or at least every six months to ensure pilots did not suffer from depression while operating the aircraft.

"Such examination can also ensure the pilots are in stable condition and can prevent a mishap as in the case of the Germanwings flight," he said.

On Tuesday, a Germanwings (Lufthansa's low-cost carrier) Airbus aircraft crashed on the slopes of the French Alps, killing all 150 people on board, including 16 schoolchildren.

A local newspaper in Germany reported that the Germanwings co-pilot could have deliberately crashed the plane after suffering serious depression for the past six years.

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