

Malaysia Turns To Satellite Technology To Track Down Missing Tanker
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By N. Sevagamy KUALA LUMPUR, June 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has turned to satellite technology to track down missing tanker, MT Orkim Harmony.

Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) deputy director-general (operations), Vice-Admiral Datuk Ahmad Puzi Ab Kahar said the agency was collaborating with neighbouring countries to gather relevant data in search of the vessel.

The Malaysian-registered tanker was laden with 6,000 tonnes of RON95 petrol worth RM21 million when it went missing on June 12, while sailing from Melaka to the Kuantan Port.

"We are trying to locate the last position of MT Orkim Harmony, but we have neither received a signal nor a transmission, thus far.

"So far, the satellites have failed to detect the position and signals from the ship, probably due to the weather condition and coordination (position of the ship)," Ahmad Puzi told Bernama here today.

The tanker was carrying 22 crew members comprising 16 Malaysians, five Indonesians and one Myanmar national.

Ahmad Puzi said the search area was very vast - another factor compounding the search operation - despite the deployment of five aircraft, eight ships and three boats.

"However, this afternoon another aircraft, P-3C Orion, with 10-hour flight capacity from Australia joined in the search operation," he said, adding that so far, six aircraft were now involved in the operation.

He said the United States had also agreed to send another aircraft soon to help detect MT Orkim Harmony.

Although the search operation had not shown any positive indication, the search mission would continue until the tanker was found, he added.

Ahmad Puzi said so far, the authorities had not received any ransom demand.

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