

**Najib hopes parents accept education ministry's move to close schools**  
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today he hoped parents understood the government's decision to close schools today and tomorrow, due to the effects of the poor air quality on their children's health.

"I understand the parents' disappointment that the schools' closure due to the haze had disrupted the children's study sessions.

"I hope the parents can understand that the government's decision had taken their children's health as a priority," he said.

In a statement issued today, the education ministry said all schools in Melaka, Negri Sembilan, Selangor, Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching and Samarahan in Sarawak, Tawau, Lahad Datu, Semporna and Kunak in Sabah as well as Muar, Ledang and Segamat in Johor will be closed tomorrow due to the haze.

According to the statement, the closure affected 3,029 schools and 1,909,842 students.

Meanwhile, in another posting on his Facebook page, Najib advised people with health problems to immediately seek treatment following the current severe smog condition resulting from the forest fires in Indonesia.

"The haze is quite severe in several areas today. Children, the elderly and asthma patients must take precautionary steps.

"If need be, go immediately to the nearest government clinics or hospitals to get assistance," he said.

The air quality in most states continued to deteriorate, and as at 1pm today, 18 areas recorded an unhealthy Air Pollutant Index (API) reading. – Bernama, October 19, 2015.

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