

PM Visits Father Who Lost Three Children in Drowning Tragedy

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PEKAN, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today handed over a personal contribution to Mohd Rasid Mohd Daud, who lost two daughters and a son after they drowned while fishing in a swollen ditch near their house in Kampung Permatang Jerek, Merchong Nenasi here on Dec 5.

Najib, who handed over the contribution at the compound of the Nenasi Fire Station, expressed his sympathies to Mohd Rasid, 49, who is still grief-stricken over the tragedy.

Mohd Rasid, who was attired in a blue T-shirt and jeans, was seen thanking Najib for the kind gesture.

Merchong Village Development & Security Committee secretary Ismail Kasim, who accompanied Mohd Rasid, said the farmer still found it hard to cope with the loss of his children whose bodies were found just about 300 metres from his home.

He said Ismail's wife Mardiah Zakaria could not be present because she has been in poor health even before the tragedy happened.

The three children, Nor Aleeza Marliyana, 12, Mohamad Firdaus, 11, and Nor Alia Mardiana, seven, had gone fishing at the ditch where the water was about six-feet deep when the tragedy happened.

With the loss of the siblings, Mohd Rasid and Mardiah are left with only one child, Suraya, three.

After extending words to comfort Mohd Rasid, Najib then visited Bidah Hamid, 78, who has been paralysed since five years ago, at an old folks home in Kampung Sepauk, Nenasi Darat near here.

Bidah, who has been unable to walk after undergoing surgery to have a tumour removed from her ovary, was overjoyed that the prime minister himself came by despite his busy schedule to inquire about her welfare.

"I do not know what to say...I am deeply touched that the prime minister is willing to come to visit me. I thank him from the bottom of my heart," said Bidah, who also received a personal contribution from Najib.

Bidah said she had known the prime minister who is also the MP for Pekan for a long time as her husband Wok Jusoh, who died in 2008, used to be very active in politics for the Nenasi UMNO branch.

"Najib is a good man and always thinks about the welfare of the people here in Nenasi. He often comes back to visit this area, long ago this was also his kampung.

"I once got to shake his hands when he came by to hand over mango tree saplings to the villagers to be planted. I myself received a sapling," said the elderly lady with a giggle.

Her daughter, Rosnani, 49, said she opted not to work so that she could look into her mother's needs. "Before this my mother was quite healthy and could walk with the aid of a walking stick but after the surgery she became paralysed until now," she said.

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