Beat: News

MH17 Bodies Heading To Netherlands Before Return To Malaysia, Says Najib

MH17 Crash

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia., 22.07.2014, 00:36 Time

USPA NEWS - KUALA LUMPUR , July 21 - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib tonight said the 282 bodies recovered from the Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 crash site will be sent to the Netherlands for further investigations before the remains of the Malaysians are brought home.

He also announced that the Ukrainians had agreed to hand over the black boxes to Malaysia. Najib also said Ukraine had guaranteed the safety of investigators going into the crash site. “At approximately 9pm tonight Ukraine time (3am Tuesday, Malaysian time), the two black boxes will be handed over to a Malaysian team in Donetsk, who will take custody of them,“ he said in a late night live broadcast over state television. Flight MH17 was shot down last Thursday in eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 passengers and crew on board. ajib said he had earlier this evening spoken to Alexander Borodai, the commander of the pro-Russian separatists which control the region where the tragedy occurred, and reached an agreement which would pave the way for

the return of the dead and provide safe passage to investigators, as well as the return of the two black boxes to Malaysia. Najib said the remains of the 282 people, currently in Torez wil be moved by train to Kharkiv where representatives from Netherlands will take possession of them. “The train will depart this evening Ukraine time, and will be accompanied by six Malaysian members of the recovery team. The remains will then be flown to Amsterdam on board a Dutch C130 Hercules, together with the Malaysian team. “Following any necessary forensic work, the remains of Malaysian citizens will then be flown home to Malaysia,“ he said.

Najib said though an agreement had been reached a number of steps were required before the whole process was completed. “I ask that all parties continue to work together to ensure that this agreement is honoured, and that the remains of our people are returned, the black box is handed over, and the international team is granted full access to the site,“ he said. “Only then can the investigation into MH17 truly begin. Only then can the victims be afforded the respect they deserve. “We need to know what caused the plane to crash, and who was responsible for it, so that justice may be done,“ he said

Najib said there were times in the last few days that he had wanted to give greater voice to the anger and grief that the Malaysian people felt. “But sometimes, we must work quietly in the service of a better outcome. I understand that for the families, nothing can undo this damage. The lives taken cannot be given back, the dignity lost cannot be regained,“ he said. Meanwhile, in Torez, eyewitness report seeing the train with the refrigerated rail cars containing the 282 bodies pull out of Torez station in eastern Ukraine around the same time as Najib was speaking.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2500/mh17-bodies-heading-to-netherlands-before-return-to-malaysia-says-najib.html

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V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): JohnShen Lee

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619