

# KERATAN AKHBAR

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AVOID MISINFORMATION

## 'FIRST MISSING PERSON CASE'

There are only cases of people getting lost hiking in Gunung Berembun, says Negri police chief

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**N**O missing person cases have been reported in the past 10 years at the resort where Irish teenager Nora Anne Quoirin went missing last Sunday.

State police chief Datuk Mohamad Mat Yusop said there were only cases of people getting lost while hiking in Gunung Berembun.

"Nora's case is the first that has ever happened here. We advise the public not to disseminate wrong information as search-and-rescue (SAR) operations are still active."

He said SAR operations at Gunung Berembun might be expanded today.

He refuted claims that outdoor activities near the resort had been ordered to stop.

He said he had even encouraged outdoor activities as it could

help in the search for Nora.

Volunteers were encouraged to join SAR operations, which would continue until further notice.

Mohamad said police had investigated more than 30 houses near the resort.

Police also set up a hotline (0111-228 5058) for the public to provide information related to the search for Nora.

Yesterday afternoon, the SAR team received a royal surprise when Tunku Besar Seri Menanti Tunku Ali Redhauddin Tuanku Muhriz paid a visit to present Hari Raya Aidiladha goodies.

More than 350 goodies were distributed to SAR personnel.

Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Mazlan Mansor also paid Nora's family a visit.

He expressed sympathy and spoke encouragingly to Nora's father, Sebastien Marie Philippe, at the resort.

The family of five arrived in Malaysia for a two-week holiday and checked in at the resort last Saturday. The next morning, the special needs teen was found missing.

The family insists she was abducted, but police have yet to discover evidence of this and have classified the teen's disappearance as a missing person case. But investigators have not ruled out abduction and are investigating all angles.



Nora Anne Quoirin



The hikers who volunteered to join the search for the missing teen scouring the forest in Seremban yesterday. PIC BY AUZLAN SIDIK

## 12 experienced hikers join search effort

**SEREMBAN:** Twelve experienced hikers yesterday lent a hand in the search for missing Irish teenager Nora Anne Quoirin.

Search-and-rescue (SAR) operations for the special needs 15-year-old entered the eighth day yesterday.

Representative of the hikers group, Kenny Chan, said they had collectively agreed to help in the search for the teen.

"When we learnt about the case, we began discussing how we could help. So we gathered the hikers, who can go around the area and search," Chan said,

adding that they started their search about 10am yesterday.

Chan said the hikers would continue their search today and it would continue for 10 hours.

He acknowledged that the area where Nora went missing was a challenging one.

He called on other experienced hikers to volunteer their help.

Meanwhile, state Housing, Local Government and New Village Committee chairman Teo Kok Seong, who visited the resort where Nora went missing, reminded 18 owners of the resorts in Pantai Hill to expedite the pro-

cess of applying for an operating licence from the Nilai Municipal Council.

He said since the state government had decided to "legalise" the resorts, which had been operating without a licence for 10 years, only 30 per cent of 18 resort owners had sent in their applications.

Prior to the initiative, resorts in Pantai Hill had been operating without permits and the land they operated on was categorised as agricultural land.

Teo said Nora's disappearance had nothing to do with the programme, which began in June.

## 'Climbers get lost all the time, but usually found within a day'

**NILAI:** Tropical rainforests in Malaysia are considered to be some of the oldest in the world and are major attractions for those who love outdoor adventures and exploring nature.

Despite the difficulties and risks, mountainous jungles here have never failed to attract enthusiasts to take up the challenge of conquering them.

A common snag when exploring the forests is getting lost under the shady foliage. In some cases, the authorities have had to launch search-and-rescue (SAR) operations. There were also incidents said to be linked to mysterious elements.

Many climbers have become lost while trekking on the jungle's fringe, but most were eventually found.

But the case of missing Irish teen Nora Anne Quoirin remains unsolved. The 15-year-old special needs child was found missing last Sunday while holidaying with her family at The Dusun resort in Pantai here.

Those who have climbed the mountain near the resort describe Gunung Berembun's forest as a thick jungle with tracks well shaded by huge tropical trees.

The wreckage of a B-24 bomber that reportedly crashed during World War 2 draws many to the

forest, but the rest of the jungle also gets a lot of interest.

Sharing his experience climbing Gunung Berembun, Zuhairi Mansor, 43, who grew up in Kampung Pantai here, said there were many cases of people getting lost then found after several days.

"Climbers who get lost are usually found the next day. But some have been found dead and we helped bring the bodies down."

Here are three cases:

**MAY 1, 2019:** A climber lost his way for more than 12 hours on Gunung Berembun while climbing with his father. The victim was found by rescuers at 8am the following day at the foot

of the mountain.

**AUG 26, 2017:** Sixteen people, including a child aged 4 and a 3-month-old baby, were reported lost for about five hours while descending Gunung Berembun. They found their way back at 2.05am the following day.

**OCT 16, 2016:** Five medical college students were reported lost for more than seven hours on Gunung Berembun. They were found by a SAR team the next morning.

On Nora's case, Zuhairi said some Gunung Berembun climbing guides were assisting in the search operations.

"Even though they are familiar with the forest, they are baffled

by Nora's case."

He said many climbers were mysteriously drawn to the mountain.

Besides the main track from the Pantai police station, two other tracks from Kuala Pilah and Jelebu also lead to Gunung Berembun.

Climber Syaifi Yusoff, 30, said ascending the 1,014m mountain was a physical and mental test as some sections were steep.

"In my experience, climbers will come across rivers and huge trees that shade the well-paved tracks and signage. If one follows the track, one will not get lost," said Syaifi, who has been climbing since he was 16. **Bernama**