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Ipoh Piper PA-28 crash first fatality involving aircraft type in Malaysia

IPOH: The Piper PA-28-161 Warrior II light aircraft that crashed in Jalan Dr Nazrin Shah, Sungai Rokam, Medan Gopeng here on Monday was the first fatal incident in the country involving the aircraft type.

According to aviation website, Aviation Safety Network, Sunday's crash was the fourth for the aircraft model in Malaysia.

There were two incidents in Kelantan and another one in Johor, all in 2014 but no fatalities were reported.

On Sunday night, flying instructor Fajim Juffa Mustafa Kamal, 52, from Semenyih, Selangor, was killed while another, identified as Muhammad Din Fikri Zainal Abidin, 62, from Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur was injured.

The 8pm incident was the 4,153rd recorded since the first Piper PA-28 crash in San Bernardino, California, the United States on March 9, 1962.

The Piper PA-28 aircraft is manufactured and built by the American company, Piper Aircraft, and designed for flight training, air taxi and personal use.

According to the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) website, the PA-28 family of aircraft comprises all-metal, unpressurised, single-engined, piston-powered aeroplanes with low-mounted wings and tricycle landing gear and can fly continuously for four to five hours with a maximum speed of 127 knots.

Commenting on the latest crash, aviation expert Associate Prof Major Dr Mohd Harridon Mohamed Suffian told Bernama that the true safety features of the Piper PA-28 series were

which is usually used during night flying.

"The handling of the aircraft is different between IFR and Visual Flight Rules (VFR) which are normally utilised during the day where visibility is not a hindrance. Another issue would be fuel starvation where AOPA had compiled various reports that stipulated that the fuel selector had to be positioned or switched constantly to funnel the fuel from the source to the engine.

"This in turn proved to be a hassle and provided extra workload to the pilots. But the PA-28 is still considered an aircraft that is easy to handle. With the statistical data available, further investigation should be actuated and integrated with the statistical information before any conclusive statement is made," said the Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) Head of Aviation Search & Rescue.

Meanwhile, an industry professional from a local general aviation company Muhammad Rizarul Azim Hanan said that Piper PA-28 is widely known all over the world as one of the best options for flight training aircraft.

"Even in Malaysia we have a number of the said aircraft safely flying for the Approved Flight Training Organisation. The rest of the flight training organisations are also doing the same routine of training as per their approved syllabus by our local authority.

"With all of the strict rules and regulations set, I believe every responsible individual and organisation have carried out their designated functions to avoid any catastrophic event from

... of the Piper PA-28 series were
... reviewed by AOPA and they
... indicated that statistically, the
... PA-28 had numerous accidents
... involving the utilisation of
... Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)

... avoid any catastrophic event from
... happening," he said and added
... that no matter how stringent the
... regulations are, people can't stop
... an accident from happening," he
... said. — Bernama