

Urgent questions for the prime minister
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Since the onset of this crisis, I have disagreed with the speculation that Malaysian authorities have been deliberately withholding or concealing information regarding the status of MH370.

The conflicting and often contradictory details stemmed from incompetence, as opposed to a diabolical plot.

Our authorities just lack the experience and expertise in dealing with a misadventure of this magnitude.

And to believe that Malaysia has the ability to hoodwink the world is giving our leaders too much credit.

But I strongly feel that satellite "pings" and some form of "analysis never before used" are required to locate the brains of our officials.

And the absence of a functioning cerebrum was evident in the events that unravelled last night.

In a hastily organised news conference, a grim-faced Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak announced that the Boeing 777 had gone down in the Indian Ocean, and that all 239 on board were lost.

The revelation even caught China by surprise. Were the other nations involved in the search and rescue mission notified or were they kept in the dark as well?

The next question is: why the rush?

Najib made a brief statement on the fate of the plane and those on it without divulging specific information or fielding questions from journalists. Instead the media was told that a briefing would be held this morning.

Perhaps the prime minister was worried that if he did not break the news, the foreign media might beat him to it and steal the limelight.

The relatives of the passengers and crew were shell-shocked and understandably so. In Beijing, tears flowed, tempers flared, chairs flew and walls were punched.

Imagine. After 17 days of trepidation as investigators landed at one dead end after another in search of a plane that simply vanished, the Malaysian prime minister tells the relatives that all hope is lost.

And this devastating blow comes after days of keeping their hopes alive with the oft repeated "looking into all possibilities" remark.

Indeed, since the Beijing-bound flight went missing on March 8, a slew of speculations - some bordering on the bizarre and supernatural - had emerged.

But what actually transpired would only be known once the black box is discovered, which

could take days, weeks, months or even years.

However, one thing is for certain. The credibility of the Malaysian government has suffered a major dent as a result of this disaster.

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