

MH370 next-of-kin sleep outside MAS office

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A group of MH370 next-of-kin from China slept outside the Malaysia Airlines (MAS) headquarters last night, claiming the airline did not offer to provide any accommodation for them.

The Chinese nationals, whose family members were on board the aircraft which disappeared on Mar 8 last year, have been holding a protest outside the MAS headquarters since Thursday afternoon.

According to the coordinator for the group, who wants to be identified as 'Kelly', the next-of-kin said that MAS has been ignoring their welfare while they are in Malaysia.

"MAS was inhumane and completely did not show any concern or try to put us up somewhere," Kelly, who lost her husband, told Malaysiakini when contacted today.

She said the families are feeling "helpless".

"While waiting for the response from MAS over our petition, I think MAS should settle us somewhere appropriate," Kelly said.

Help from Malaysian families

Kelly, however, complained that MAS did not provide any place to stay for the next-of-kin after the Thursday meeting.

The relatives stayed at a hotel near Bukit Jalil Thursday night, aided by a Malaysian friend.

She said the relatives checked out of the hotel yesterday afternoon and decided to protest outside the MAS headquarters again due to MAS' indifference.

"The relatives have to stay outside all day under the hot sun with no shelter and no food offer from MAS.

"MAS has not provided any place to stay nor has given any food to us," lamented Kelly.

MAS had on Thursday met with three representatives who submitted a petition to CEO Ahmad Johari and gave the carrier three days to respond.

The airline issued a statement on the same day, according to a Bernama report, saying it had offered "caregiving assistance by Mandarin-speaking staff to the next-of-kin".

MAS, Bernama quoted, "is in no position to provide any further clarification or technical

information on the fate of MH370, other than what is already available in the public domain."

More relatives to arrive before CNY

Nevertheless, Kelly said some of the Malaysian MH370 next-of-kin – concerned with the situation faced by the family members from China – sent food, drinks and medicine.

However, Kelly said the Malaysian relatives were questioned by the police before they left.

"This is regretful. We did not demand much or make noise.

"We just want answers from MAS. Why are they so inhumane?

"Last night was hot and there were a lot of mosquitoes. The relatives put some cloth on the ground and slept on that. They were tossing and turning all night," said Kelly.

Fourteen of the MH370 relatives arrived in Malaysia from China and held a protest outside the MAS headquarters on Thursday.

Since then, the group has grown to 20, with more expected to arrive in the next few days just before Chinese New Year.

The Malaysian Airlines flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing went missing on March 8 last year.

The Department of Civil Aviation had declared on Jan 29 that all 239 passengers and crew on board MH370 are presumed to have "lost their lives", but promised that the search for the aircraft would continue.