

Most families of victims reject MH370 'find'

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Most families of MH370 victims still reject claims that parts of the missing aircraft have been found, pending more definitive analysis, according to the family support group Voice370.

It slammed Malaysian authorities for botching the handling of the incident "from Day One" and continuing to do so with Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's confirmation last week that suspected flaperon recovered on Reunion Island was from the aircraft.

It said such mishandling have led to doubts, capabilities, and intentions of Malaysian authorities, and said many of its announcements appear to be self-serving rather than in the families' best interests.

"In view of these concerns, we the families of those on board MH370 would like to appeal that all debris be analysed at a reputable place with the appropriate expertise and equipment, be it the French authorities or other advanced nations already on the Malaysia-led Annex 13 Investigation Team, like the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, (UK) Air Accident Investigation Bureau, or (US) National Transport Safety Bureau," it said in a statement today.

The support group also highlighted a report published by the BBC on Aug 7 that appeared critical of Malaysia's handling of the incident to back their point.

Without naming the BBC or identifying the article, Voice370 quoted it saying: "There are indeed real question marks over the way the Malaysian authorities have handled both the search for the plane and the release of information – marred by delay, confusion and apparent self-interest."

The suspected flaperon was found washed up on the coast of the French territory Reunion Island on July 29, and has since been sent to mainland France for analysis.

Najib held a press conference in the wee hours of Aug 6 to confirm that it had indeed come from MH370, but the announcement from US and French authorities hours later termed it less definitively, saying that there is a "very strong presumption" that it came from the missing aircraft.

This raised questioned on whether Najib had jumped the gun in his announcement.

MH370 had gone missing during a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8 last year. It was carrying 239 persons on board at the time.

Underwater search still underway

An underwater search for the Boeing 777-200ER aircraft is still underway, in the deep seas in Australia's maritime search and rescue zone.

A flaperon is a wing control surface that helps roll the aircraft left and right, and also helps generate extra lift during take-off and landing. The Boeing 777-200ER aircraft has two flaperons – one on each wing.

Meanwhile, Voice370 - which had been vocal in voicing their dissatisfaction in Malaysia's handling of the MH370 incident - asserted that it is not living in denial and is prepared to face any eventuality.

"However, we are not prepared to give up on our loved ones unless and until there is 100 percent certainty. We owe it to our loved ones," it said.

In its statement, Voice370 also raised concern that it is running out of time to bring legal claims against Malaysian Airlines, as the mystery of the missing flight's fate has yet to be uncovered.

Under the Montreal Convention of 1999 that amongst others deals with compensation issues for air incidents, there is a two-year limit for the affected parties to commence legal action.

"In the case of Missing Flight MH370, the two years may lapse before any conclusions are made. This adds to our burdens. Will the guilty party, should there be one, get away scott-free due to this time bar?

"The term 'unprecedented' has been used regularly to describe this incident. Given the novel nature of our circumstances, would commercial entities be magnanimous enough to extend the limitation period so that justice can be served?

"The MH370 families would appreciate any advice or support on addressing this shortcoming in the (Montreal Convention)," it said.