

PAC probe on stolen jet engines to be tabled
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A paper on the investigation conducted by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on the disappearance of the two F5-E fighter jet engines is to be tabled in the Dewan Rakyat this month, Defence Minister Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said today.

He said that besides the PAC, the case of the missing engines was also investigated by the police.

"The government gives the assurance that the investigations were conducted in an orderly and transparent manner so that the offenders will be subjected to the appropriate penalty," he said when replying to a question from Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Bagan) in the Dewan Rakyat.

jet engine air force rmaf tudm northrop f-5 tiger ii 231209Lim had asked the minister to state the outcome of an internal inquiry as well as investigations conducted by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the police on the two missing engines which were traced to Uruguay.

Ahmad Zahid said the case involved theft by low-ranking personnel without the knowledge and involvement of any senior officer of the Defence Ministry.

"A report on the missing engines was made to the police in August 2008, within seven months from the date their disappearance was known, and not 18 months later as claimed by (the Member of Parliament for) Ipoh Timur (Lim Kit Siang of the DAP)," he said.

He said the disappearance of the engines was known four months later and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) conducted an internal inquiry, which took three months, before the police report was made.

He attributed the factors contributing to the disappearance of the engines to the negligence of several individuals and the security regulations in force as well as the implementation of a computer system upgrading by the RMAF at that time.

White Paper not necessary

Ahmad Zahid said the RMAF had stepped up the security measures and ensured that all security directives and procedures were streamlined in the effort to overcome weaknesses and prevent a recurrence of the incident.

"The ministry feels that it is unnecessary to issue a White Paper on the case of the missing engines because the ministry has provided adequate explanation through the mass media," he said.

He said the disappearance of the engines did not at all affect the capability of the RMAF in discharging its responsibilities because the F5-E fighter jets were not frontline assault aircraft.

NONEReplying to another question from Lim, on the alleged incapability of the military submarine to dive, Ahmad Zahid said a minor fault which developed was rectified as the submarine was still under guarantee.

"It was not that the submarine could not dive. The minor fault has been rectified. I invite Yang Berhormat (Lim Guan Eng) to go diving together (in the submarine), he said to Lim, who had wanted to know the effect on the security of military equipment.

Lim replied: "I am ready to take up the challenge of Yang Berhormat (Ahmad Zahid)."

- Bernama

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