

Maldives: No trace of missing of MH370 here

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PETALING JAYA: Maldives National Defence Force today denied spotting Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 which went missing on a journey from Kuala Lumpur International Airport to Beijing on March 8.

The statement released in Dhivehi, Maldives said: “The Maldivian National Defense Force (MNDF), in monitoring the areas of the Maldivian territory, is conducting its surveillance efforts with a heightened level of vigilance, in connection to the disappearance of the Malaysian Airline MH370.

“Further to the surveillance conducted thus far, none of the military radars in the country has detected a trace of the missing plane. Furthermore, no trace of the MH370 Airline has been found from the data scrutinized thus far from radars stationed at the airports in the Maldives.

“Further, the MNDF is extending all necessary assistance to the efforts by the Maldivian police in its investigation of the [claim in the media reports] and searches that are conducted by international agencies, in connection to this incident,” the statement said.

Earlier, several residents at Maldives had claimed to have spotted a ‘low flying jumbo jet’ at their island on March 8, fuelling speculation that it could be the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

The United Kingdom based media, The Telegraph, was reported as saying that several witnesses in Dhaalu Atoll saw a plane heading south, which bore the red stripe and white background of Malaysia Airlines planes.

“I’ve never seen a jet flying so low over our island before. We’ve seen seaplanes, but I’m sure that this was not one of those. I could even make out the doors on the plane clearly,” a witness was reported saying.

The sighting was believed to have occurred more than seven hours after the plane lost contact with air traffic control in Kuala Lumpur and took a sudden westward turn towards the Straits of Malacca.

On March 8, flight MH370, which was carrying 12 crew and 227 passengers, lost contact with air traffic control in wee hours of the day.

The missing flight triggered a massive search and rescue effort, involving 25 nations which includes the US, Australia, China, across the Indian Ocean and Andaman seas.

According to The Telegraph, the witness said that he was not the only one who saw the low flying plane.

“Some people got out of their houses to see what was causing the tremendous noise too.” said the anonymous witness.

Last Saturday, Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak had confirmed that the missing MH370, en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, was deliberately re-routed from its original flightpath to Beijing.

He also said that someone had switched off the plane’s Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System (ACARS) and its transponder before changing the route.

The police have since raided pilot Zaharie Ahmad Shah’s home and seized his flight simulator device for investigation.

Police has yet confirm the details about the flight simulator to date.

Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean consisting of a double chain of twenty-six atolls, oriented north-south, that lie between Minicoy Island (the southernmost part of Lakshadweep, India) and the Chagos Archipelago.

The chains stand in the Laccadive Sea, about 700 kilometres south-west of Sri Lanka and 400 kilometres south-west of India.

This area falls within the southern corridor which the investigators said was a possible route that could have been taken by the vanishing plane.

Maldives Airport: No credible information

Meanwhile Maldivian newsportal Minivannews.com quoted spokesman for the Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) Hassan Areef as urging caution regarding the reported sightings in Kudahuvadhoo.

“We have no credible information about the plane in terms of radar or sightings,” said Areef.

“There are so many conspiracy theories – we have no credible information that the plane has come to us.”

One such conspiracy theory has the US base at Diego Garcia – which lies around 700 miles south of Kudahuvadhoo – as a potential landing site for the plane, though Malaysian authorities are said to have dismissed this rumour.

Another portal, Haveeru.com.mv has quoted a local aviation expert who said the possibility of any aircraft flying over the island was extremely low.

Source:

<http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2014/03/19/missing-plane-spotted-near-maldives/>