

DCA: Communications transcript not accurate

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SEPANG: The voice recording transcript, released by a British daily today, between the main control tower and flight MH370 minutes before the aircraft went missing is inaccurate.

“I can tell you that the transcript is not accurate,” Department of Civil Aviation director general Azharuddin Abdul Rahman Azharuddin said today.

He, however, refused to divulge details on the matter when pressed by the media at the daily press conference on the missing MH370, today.

The Daily Telegraph published a report of the last 54 minutes of communications between the pilot and the control tower saying that the plane was flying at 10,700m.

The transcript runs from the time the Boeing 777-200ER was taxiing to its last-known position thousands of metres above the South China Sea and includes exchanges from the point where investigators believe the plane had already been sabotaged.

Acting Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein at the same press conference revealed that the original transcript is currently being analysed by the investigation team and said, the details of the communications cannot be disclosed to the public.

He, however, confirmed that there was nothing abnormal in the communications between the two parties.

“The original transcript is with the investigation team. They need to analyse it, however, the details cannot be published to the media,”

“I can confirm to you that there was nothing abnormal in it,” he added.

Non hazardous batteries

Meanwhile, MAS CEO Ahmad Jauhari Yahya defended his earlier statement that the missing flight MH370 was carrying highly flammable lithium-ion batteries in its cargo as the batteries were non hazardous and in accordance with international regulations.

He said MAS followed international guidelines to handling the cargo.

“It is non-hazardous as long as you handle the cargo in accordance to very strict guidelines and compliance,” Jauhari said.

Yesterday, an aviation security expert, Billie Vincent affirmed his belief that flames started in the cargo hold of MH370, destroying the aircraft’s communication systems, then filling the cabin

with toxic fumes, result of the batteries.

This came after MAS revealed that the missing MH370 was carrying lithium-ion batteries in its cargo.

The former head of security for the US Federal Aviation Administration said the fumes would have overwhelmed passengers but may have given the pilots a chance to divert the aircraft for an emergency landing.

Money not a concern

Hishammuddin, who is also Defence Minister, said none of the 27 nations involved in the search for the plane have spoken about spending budget of the operations.

He said this when asked how much was spent in the search for the jetliner which has been missing with 239 passengers and crew since March 8.

“That is the best part about this mission, that no one from any of the countries involved have talked about dollars and cents,” he added.

Fourteen days after the jetliner went missing, there has been no sign of the missing aircraft and the search for the plane now stretches all the way to the Southern Indian Ocean, some 2,500km from the eastern Australian city of Perth, after earlier search and rescue operations in the South China Sea, the Straits of Malacca, the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal failed to bear fruit.

The Boeing 777-200ER jetliner went missing an hour into its flight. The plane was last spotted by civilian radar heading towards Vietnam over the South China Sea. Its transponders, which sends signal to air traffic control on the plane’s location, was switched off from inside the jetliner soon after the last contact was made.

The plane was spotted by the military radar an hour after that heading towards the Andaman Sea, on the western side of peninsular Malaysia. Some 27 nations have joined in the search for the missing plane. Malaysian authorities have said the plane flew in either one of the two routes. One was towards the Indian Ocean and the other across continental Asia, from northern Thailand to Kazakhstan.

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