

No RCI, PSC on MH370 for now

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government today shot down Pakatan Rakyat's proposal to set up a Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) or Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) to investigate Flight MH370's disappearance.

Instead, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Shahidan Kassim told the Dewan Rakyat that the government will consider the calls only after the plane's black box is found.

"What matters now is the search for the black box," said Shahidan, when presenting his winding up speech on the Royal address.

"While we wait, we shall consider both proposals. We have discussed it at length because we are trying to avoid focusing on other issues aside from the black box," he said.

Shahidan said this in response to Anthony Loke (DAP-Seremban) who asked if the government had made a decision on Pakatan's proposal for a PSC.

Loke said AirFrance 447's black box was found two years after the flight crashed, and Malaysia need not have to wait that long to begin looking for answers.

"There are other things beyond the black box that can be discussed, such as safety, immigration, the flight's detection on the radar," added Loke.

"To answer criticisms from the international media, the PSC or RCI should be set up immediately.

"If the black box is not found, does that mean the government will nor form any committee whatsoever over MH370?" asked Loke.

Latest developments

Shahidan replied that the government was viewing the matter seriously and was discussing the formation of both bodies every week during its Cabinet meetings.

"We will take into account your points but our decision is this – we will consider forming an RCI or PSC only after we find the black box," he said.

But without an RCI or PSC, Azmin Ali (PKR-Gombak) wanted to know how the government would respond to questions while the black box remained missing.

"Are we going to turn to the bomoh for answers and fetch his coconuts?" he asked, alluding to shaman Ibrahim Mat Zin, who had appeared twice at KLIA to shed light on the MH370.

Shahidan replied that an RCI or PSC on MH370 now was unnecessary as acting Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein was already providing answers on the latest developments.

On Tuesday, Hishammuddin told Parliament that he would propose to the Cabinet the calls for an RCI but said the focus was on identifying the debris and locating the missing plane.

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