

## **'Deputy Defence Minister should resign'**

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PETALING JAYA: DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang today called for the resignation of Deputy Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Bakri for his “irresponsible” and “reckless” statements made over the last two days.

“He should resign or be sacked for plunging the government and country into a greater credibility crisis in the long-running MH370 disaster,” said Lim in a press statement.

Abdul Rahim on Tuesday told Parliament that the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) did not probe the unidentified aircraft signal caught on the military radar in the wee hours of March 8 because it ‘assumed’ the flight had been ordered to make the turn back by the civilian air traffic control tower located at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

Yesterday however, Abdul Rahim admitted that he had erred in responding to questions regarding the plane. The Deputy Defence Minister acknowledged that his statement was merely an assumption.

Lim said it was unacceptable that the country has a “bumbling and bungling” Deputy Defence Minister who could be so irresponsible especially since the country was in an international crisis.

“It is not good enough for him to make a U-turn after more than 24 hours of shaming the RMAF, the government and the nation, and say that his remarks were based on his own assumptions,” said Lim.

### **RMAF and DCA action questioned**

The Gelang Patah MP also stated that it was unacceptable for Abdul Rahim to say that conclusive answers will only be available when debris from the plane is found.

“Is he now claiming that unless the black box is recovered, it is not possible to find out why there were no follow-up actions by the RMAF when MH370 disappeared from civilian radar but was detected by the military radar?”

Lim stressed that Malaysians are entitled to know why there was no follow-up action taken by both the RMAF and the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) air-traffic controllers when the Malaysia Airline flight MH370 first disappeared.

Although admitting that there was no room for petty politics or differences, Lim pointed out that the crisis should not be used to ignore or deflect the thousand-and-one-questions that has cropped up as a result of the disaster.

Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 went missing on a routine flight from the Kuala Lumpur

International Airport to Beijing, China, with 239 passengers and crew on board.

The Boeing 777-200ER jetliner vanished from the civilian radar after take off and an hour later was detected by the military radar to be near Pulau Perak, heading towards the Andaman Sea.

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