

US senator: No terror link in MH370 case

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PETALING JAYA: The US has ruled out any terror link with the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, now believed to have crashed in the Indian Ocean.

Senator Dianne Feinstein, the chairperson of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said there was no evidence of terrorism with the missing jetliner which disappeared more than three weeks ago en route to Beijing.

“So far, there’s been none,” Feinstein was **quoted as telling** CNN’s Candy Crowley Sunday on ‘State of the Union’ programme.

“There’s speculation, but there’s nothing,” she added.

She was however hesitant to speculate on its fate or difficulties with the search, now entering its third week.

“This is a very difficult mission,” she said. “The fact that so many nations are participating ... it also indicates that there is no method of calculation that’s functioning” very well.

Asked if more sophisticated satellites could be used in the area, she said she was not sure.

“I’m not going to go into what we do have or what we don’t have,” she said when asked about American capabilities. “You have to understand that American intelligence doesn’t gear itself to be ready for plane crashes.”

Feinstein’s remarks come just as Acting Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein told the media on Saturday that the British spy agency MI6 and US’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were assisting Malaysian authorities and working closely with the Chinese spy agency in the investigations of the missing MH370.

It is understood that MI6 were involved in examining the ‘pings’ emitted from the plane as disclosed by British satellite operator Inmarsat.

MI6 had also assisted in the extensive individual background checks on the 239 passengers and crew on board the plane but nothing suspicious has emerged.

The involvement of MI6 and the CIA lead to speculations that a criminal act rather than mechanical failure may be the cause of the missing MH370.

The Malaysia Airline Boeing 777-200ER aircraft went missing on March 8 during a routine flight from Kuala Lumpur International Airport to Beijing, China.

MH370 vanished from the civil aviation air traffic control radar screen and lost communications

one hour into the flight while over the South China Sea.

Terror conspiracy

Two weeks ago UK's Daily Telegraph reported that an Al-Qaeda supergrass had previously warned MI6 that four to five Malaysian men had been planning to take control of a plane by using a shoe bomb.

Saajid Badat, a British national and former al-Qaeda member had testified in a New York court that he had met a group of Malaysians, which included a pilot in 2001, and claimed they had planned to execute a 9/11-style hijacking.

According to Badat, he had been instructed at a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan to give the Malaysians a shoe bomb.

Badat said that before he handed the shoe bomb to the Malaysians for their 'operation' he had two shoe bombs for his own terror plot.

For whatever reason, it appears the Malaysian plot never took place and Badat did not name the group in question in his testimony.

Badat was arrested in England in 2005 and pleaded guilty to an act of "conspiracy with others to destroy a passenger airliner whilst in flight by igniting a high-explosive device".

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