

Opposition MPs want Najib to explain MH370 search mission

Malaysian Insider

12 March, 2014

By Jennifer Gomez

The Prime Minister should come to Parliament tomorrow to give updates and explain the methods used in the search and rescue mission to find the missing Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flight MH370, opposition MPs said today.

This is because so far there has been conflicting information over various issues, including whether the Beijing-bound flight had made a turn back towards Kuala Lumpur, said First Admiral (R) Mohamad Imran Abdul Hamid.

"Don't give false hope to the people after five days," he said during the debate on a motion of thanks to the King. Imran was referring to Malaysia's air force chief denial as reported by Berita Harian that military radar had tracked the lost passenger jet turning back and flying to the Strait of Malacca.

The pro-government Bahasa Malaysia daily had quoted Tan Sri Rodzali Daud as confirming that the RMAF Butterworth airbase had detected the location signal of the airliner as indicating that it turned back from its original path to the direction of Kota Baru, Kelantan, and was believed to have passed through the airspace of the east coast of and northern Peninsular Malaysia.

"The last time the plane was detected by the air control tower was in the vicinity of Pulau Perak in the Straits of Malacca at 2.40am before the signal disappeared without any trace," he was quoted as saying by Berita Harian.

At this juncture Khalid Samad (PAS-Shah Alam) questioned why this information was only coming out days later.

"This gives a bad image of our capabilities and raises the question about the assets we have, whether they are sophisticated and able to come up with information fast," Khalid asked.

"What is the message we are giving out when we say we have followed SOP in checking the passports," he added, referring to the two Iranian nationals using stolen Austrian and Italian passports who were onboard MH370.

"What about verifying if they were stolen passports, in this modern age of technology, how difficult is it to run the passports against available databases?" he asked.

Tian Chua (PKR-Batu) added that two days ago, another pro-government paper, Utusan Malaysia gave five theories on what may have happened to MH370.

"The IGP had warned people not to spread unverified facts but this is being done by government newspapers," he said.

To this, Mohamad Imran said that Utusan Malaysia had become an expert analysis on aviation.

"Their five theories are unbelievable," he added.

Mohamed Hanipa Maidin (PAS-Sepang) also pointed out that the Home Minister had hit out at Immigration officers for not being able to distinguish between Western faces and Asian looks.

"This means a lot of issues are confusing," he said in support of the suggestion that the prime minister should attend Parliament tomorrow to update MPs on what is going on.

Khalid added that if this incident had occurred in Japan, the minister in charge would have resigned.

"If they keep issuing statements that are contradictory, the people are going to lose confidence in the government, so the government needs to be reprimanded," he said.

He added that another discrepancy in information from the authorities was the exact time they lost the Beijing-bound flight from its radar.

He said the information was only released in the morning after 7am.

"Why wait for the DCA chief to wake up, shouldn't they have alerted immediately when they lost the plane from the radar at 2am.

"They should have woken the prime minister at 3am and inform us that our plane is missing," he said, adding that it was unacceptable that an official announcement was only made after 1pm in the afternoon on Saturday.

Earlier, deputy speaker Datuk Ismail Mohamed Said rejected a motion filed by Mahfuz Omar (PAS-Pokok Sena) to discuss the missing flight saying that investigations were ongoing and that it could be brought up during debate time. – March 12, 2014.

Hakcipta © 2014 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/opposition-mps-want-najib-to-explain-mh730-search-mission>