

MH370 Multinational Search Efforts Testament Of Malaysia's Good Diplomacy

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KUALA LUMPUR, (Bernama) -- Since the Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flight MH370 went missing on 8 March, many countries from all over the world have extended their expertise in locating the plane.

Hitherto, 26 nations, including Malaysia have come together to search for the missing aircraft and unravel the mystery behind its disappearance.

Among the countries helping Malaysia include Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, United Kingdom, United States, France, Vietnam and Singapore.

These countries had extended assistance voluntarily, in the spirit of goodwill.

MALAYSIA SEEN FAVOURABLY

It is inspiring to see these 25 nations offering their help knowing well it is going to be a costly affair.

According to Prof Datuk Dr Mohamed Mustafa Ishak, the head of the Politics, Security and International Affairs Cluster of the National Professor Council, their quick response was very much due to Malaysia's warm bilateral ties with them and their appreciation for Malaysia.

He opined that Malaysia is seen as a friendly nation and an important ally though it is only a small nation.

Malaysia too had assisted other nations in times of calamities and played an active role in international diplomacy, thus putting itself on an enviable platform.

"It is fortunate that the other nations with the capabilities and equipment were ever ready to help Malaysia on the basis of friendship," he said.

DR WAN AZIZAH'S CLAIMS BASELESS

Meanwhile, despite the appreciation shown by Malaysia for the vast international wholehearted support, Parti Keadilan Rakyat's (PKR) President Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail begged to differ.

She felt this was not due to Malaysia's good collaboration with other nations but out of necessity.

Mohamed Mustafa described Dr Wan Azizah's statement illogical and politically motivated.

"How can a small nation compel others to help?," he asked.

Dr Wan Azizah was also critical on how the government handled the crisis and hit out at the standard operating procedures, radar systems and the stolen passport used by two of the passengers on MH370.

Mohamed Mustafa noted that Dr Wan Azizah's claims were no more than to run down the country, its ability and the efforts to look for the plane.

WORKING VISITS DO HELP

He also said that working visits undertaken by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, his deputy and other ministers to other nations to forge close ties have to continue in the future to keep renewing and maintaining the ties.

While many had criticised that such visits are a waste of tax payers' money, they failed to see the long term benefit and especially when unexpected events turn up and foreign help is needed.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES ARE COMMITTED

Meanwhile, the Japanese ambassador to Malaysia Dr Makio Miyagawa noted that his country would continue extending its assistance in the search and rescue mission (SAR) launched by Malaysia and there was no time limit set in ending the search.

"I believe the aircraft will be available as long as the Malaysian government needed it," he said on Wednesday.

Japan has provided a P-3C Orion aircraft for the SAR operation.

American Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel noted that Washington is ready to provide further assistance upon Malaysia's request in looking for the plane.

The Boeing 777-200ER enroute to Beijing from Kuala Lumpur, carrying 227 passengers from 14 nations and 12 crew, vanished from the radar screen while flying over the South China Sea. It was supposed to have landed in Beijing at 6.30 a.m. the same day.

A multinational SAR operations was initially mounted in South China Sea before the SAR operations were extended to the Indian Ocean after radar data analysis indicated the plane had made a turn back.

On March 24, on the 17th day of the SAR operations, the prime minister announced that further satellite data analysis conducted by the Britain's satellite operator Inmarsat and Air Accident Investigation Branch indicated the MH370 flight had ended in the Indian Ocean.

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