

I was voicing everyone's concerns, says DAP's Nga on his MH17 posts
Malaysian Insider
July 21, 2014
BY EILEEN NG

Perak DAP chief Nga Kor Ming, who demanded Malaysia Airlines to explain why flight MH17 was over the Ukrainian airspace, today shrugged off criticisms against him, saying he was merely voicing a concern on people's minds.

On Friday, a day after the Boeing 777 was shot down killing all 298 on board, the lawyer posted "Can Malaysia Airlines explain this?" on his Facebook and Twitter accounts, accompanied by a screenshot of an article which reported that several airlines had moved their routes away from the Ukrainian airspace.

In defending his postings, Nga (pic), a two-term Taiping MP, said they were based on the advisory by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which earlier this year banned American airlines from flying over Crimea, the Black Sea, and the Sea of Azov.

TIME magazine had reported that the area where flight MH17 went down was not part of the restricted airspace.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai had also cited the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), both confirming that MH17 was not flying in restricted airspace and that commercial airliners from 15 Asia-Pacific countries had used the same flight path.

Nga said FAA's advisory was adopted by several airlines, including Korean Air and Asiana Airlines but MAS, however, did not follow suit.

"As such, based on such advisory, I merely ask: can MAS explain this? Nothing more, nothing less.

"It was not even a comment, I only posed a question," he said in a text reply to The Malaysian Insider.

Saying he was aware of the storm of protests, Nga said he stood by his views.

"I humbly accept all constructive criticisms. I really believe many have the similar questions like I have but dare not speak up. Voicing concerns is valid, it is part of freedom of expression and part of the democratic exercise," he said.

He stressed that prevention was better than cure and that the safety of passengers should be of paramount importance.

"I do not wish to blame anyone but it is also time for reflection for all airlines, the keypoint is: passenger safety is above all.

"The issue here is simple: whether our airline took all the precautionary measures and whether the industry's best practices had been adopted. The public has the right to know," he said.

Nga refused to be drawn into whether he would apologise or withdraw his posts, and said his posts were just "a question, nothing more".

Malaysians had lambasted Nga over the posts, saying that MAS should not be blamed for the incident.

Facebook user Mona Haslina called Nga's statement "tasteless and degrading" and urged him not to politicise the incident as it was a national tragedy.

Wan Frany Muhtaddin Masbak blasted Nga, telling him that at times, "silence is better part of valour".

"Dear YB (Yang Bodoh), there are times when we can inquire for the truth, however, there are times where it would be wise to keep our mouth shut rather than pointing fingers who's fault although it has been repeated many times in the mainstream news that the route is safe. [...] And if you think that it is

your right to demand for the truth, I guess it is our rights to bashing you for being a YB.

"Admit your mistake, apologise and move on, that's the least you can do now. Don't be a BS (Bodoh Sombong) now."

Taren Tang, meanwhile, said it was not the right time to argue about the right or wrong routes, as those on board the ill-fated aircraft had died. – July 21, 2014.

- See more at:
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