

Malaysia demands black boxes handed over to MH17 joint team
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Malaysia has demanded that black boxes recovered from flight MH17's crash site in eastern Ukraine are left untouched and handed over to the joint international investigation team.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, who arrived in Ukraine last night, said this in expressing fears that the crash site was still out of bound for the Malaysian team which arrived on Saturday.

"Regarding reports that separatist groups have custody of the black boxes, Malaysia insists that these crucial pieces of evidence are not tampered with and are handed over to the international team," he said in a statement.

The recently-formed Joint International Investigation Team includes officials from the Netherlands, Malaysia, as well as aviation authorities from Britain and the US.

Reports have quoted pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine as saying that they were keeping what they believe to be the black boxes pending confirmation from experts

Ukraine has warned that the black boxes, which would have recorded the flight's final moments, could be handed over to Russia or tampered with by the rebels, to hide evidences of their involvement.

Meanwhile, Liow said the Malaysian team had yet to access the crash site in Donetsk.

"The Ukrainian government has informed the joint international investigation team that the crash site is under the full control of separatists," said Liow in a statement last night.

He said Kiev had yet to establish a safe corridor to the crash site for the international team, as it could not guarantee their safety.

"Malaysia demands that all human remains must be allowed to be recovered, identified and repatriated."

He also expressed concern over any interference in the crash site, despite assurances from a rebel leader controlling the area.

"Malaysia is very concerned that the sanctity of the crash site has been severely compromised.

"Malaysia demands immediate and unrestricted access to the crash site and guaranteed safety for its officials and those of the international team," said Liow.

Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 with 298 people was shot down over the restive eastern Ukraine, the second major tragedy to hit Malaysia this year since the Beijing-bound flight MH17 disappeared without a trace on March 8. – July 21, 2014.

- See more at:
<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/we-still-have-no-access-to-mh17-crash-site-says-liow#sthash.Xd1DEhJD.dpuf>

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