

Various Conspiracy Theories Undermined Efforts To Search For MH370

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 7 (Bernama) -- Abducted by aliens, hidden in Diego Garcia, stranded in the Bermuda Triangle, located in the Antarctic Ocean, taken away by the military of a superpower and having been changed into another aircraft.

Those are among the theories making the rounds on social media since Malaysia Airlines (MAS) Flight MH370 was reported missing a year back, challenging aviation experts to confirm or disclaim them.

Aviation expert Capt Abdul Rahmat Omar Tun Mohd Haniff said the conspiracy theories had to some extent, undermined efforts to find real indications on the whereabouts of the ill-fated flight.

"They do not realise that the authorities and the search teams need to convey the necessary information to the public without angering the families of the victims.

"But we cannot prevent them from coming up with new theories every day and we have to deal with them and explain each one wisely based on facts," he told Bernama.

The Malaysia Airlines' Boeing 777 aircraft was carrying 239 passengers when it disappeared from radar during its flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8, 2014. MAS lost 12 crew members and a staff of MASkargo.

On Jan 29, the Malaysian Government officially declared the incident an 'accident' under international aviation regulations and that all 239 people on board the aircraft were presumed dead.

When making the announcement, the government also stressed that the search for the aircraft remained a priority.

Rahmat, who is also a former Royal Malaysian Air Force officer, explained that aviation experts and academic figures also needed to match information and whatever theory obtained to be studied before it could be explained to the public.

"Once they (theories) are explained, there are those who doubt them and come up with other theories, unwilling to accept the truth and the facts," added Rahmat, who is often invited as a panellist in several local television shows relating to the disappearance of the flight.

Meanwhile, the Information Department's assistant information officer Jagjit Singh said that theories which came up to a certain extent compelled him to be more prepared whenever he became a moderator or held a press conference at the Sama-Sama Hotel in

Putrajaya last year.

According to him, there were local and foreign media, besides the victims' next-of-kin who directly asked him about a certain theory with a stigma of 'being close to authorities'.

While smiling, he said, "What I knew was only during the press conferences when the media asked questions from the theories that arised. Why would I want to hide the facts. That's what I explain every day," he said.

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