

Bad weather a deterrent

BEIJING: The search for MH370 may be extended to October due to unfavourable weather conditions in the southern Indian Ocean, says Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

The Transport Minister, who is here for a two-day visit, said he was informed that the delays were caused by “very extreme weather” and “cold and rough sea.” “We cannot subject the search team to the high risks.

The search will continue when the weather gets better,” he said. The team has so far combed 107,000 sq km. The original target was to cover the search zone of 120,000 sq km by next month, Liow said.

The search of the Malaysia Airlines plane was among the issues discussed during Liow’s meeting with his Chinese counterpart Yang Chuangtang here yesterday.

Liow said Yang had promised that Chinese vessel Dong Hai Jiu would continue to be part of the search team. “China’s commitment is high. They will complete the mission,” he said, adding that a ministerial level meeting would be held next month.

Liow urged the public not to speculate on the debris found along the African coast. “The countries in the region will first analyse if the plane parts belong to Boeing 777.

If they are, we will then bring them back and examine whether they are part of MH370,” he said. In Kuala Lumpur, a two-day special tripartite meeting on the missing jetliner was held among high-level officials from Australia, China and Malaysia at the Transport Ministry.

Concerned that the massive search would be terminated once the designated search area of 120,000 sq km was fully covered, Voice 370, the MH370 family support group, urged the search to go on.

“A decision to end the search is a cruel response to a desperate human crisis,” the group said in a statement posted on its Facebook page.

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