

Liow: Important to enhance global civil aviation security

PETALING JAYA: It is important to strengthen international co-operation so that safety and security in global civil aviation can be improved, says Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

The Transport Minister said safety and security were all the more important with the rise in terrorism and cyber threats.

“We need not be reminded how important these policies and procedures are following the unprecedented tragedies of MH370 and MH17. “What we do now will help ensure that the world does not see a repeat of those catastrophes,” he said in his speech at the International Civil Aviation Organisation’s (ICAO) 39th general assembly in Montreal, Canada yesterday.

In a statement issued later, Liow said based on the MH17’s Joint Investigation Team (JIT) and Dutch Safety Board reports, Malaysia is ever more resolute to seek justice.

“As part of the JIT, Malaysia remains single-minded in our pursuit to prosecute those who are responsible in this unfortunate tragedy through appropriate effective prosecution mechanism,” he added.

On the country’s new Air Traffic Control Centre, Liow said Malaysia would enhance its air traffic management in both the peninsula, and Sabah and Sarawak.

He said this was important as Malaysia had seen a dramatic growth in aviation last year with 86.5 million passengers and a million tonnes of air cargo.

“Malaysian aerospace industry is also expected to generate in excess of US\$13bil (RM53.76bil) in revenue and provide more than 32,000 skilled jobs by 2030.

“In 58 years as a member nation of ICAO, Malaysia has seen tremendous growth with a strong commitment to the initiatives by both government and industry players,” he added.

Liow said the Department of Civil Aviation and Malaysian Aviation Commission would also help to ensure and expedite the evolution of Malaysia into a regional aviation hub.

He said the Malaysian Aviation Academy had attained full membership status in the ICAO Trainair Plus Programme and has fully sponsored and trained nearly 400 aviation personnel from 71 countries.

“This is a testament to our support of ICAO’s ‘No Country Left Behind’ and ‘Next Generation of Aviation Personnel’ initiatives,” he said. Meanwhile in Wismar, Germany, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Malaysia wants firm action taken against those responsible for the downing of MH17.

“The Joint Investigation Team has concluded that MH17 was downed by a Russian-made missile that was fired from rebel-controlled territory (in Ukraine).

“Based on the two findings, Malaysia wants firm action to be taken. We have promised that those who were responsible will be brought to justice. “We owe it to the families. The families want justice.

So, we will pursue this,” he told the Malaysian media. Najib said Malaysia would call for a meeting with other countries which lost their citizens, namely the Netherlands and Australia. “Together, we will decide the next course of action and see to it that those responsible are punished,” he said.

MH17 was shot down in the Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine, on July 17, 2014, killing all 298 people onboard, including 44 Malaysians.

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