

Need for Malaysia to upgrade defence system – Hishammuddin

KUALA LUMPUR: In light of the Malaysia Airlines MH370 tragedy, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein notes there is a need to upgrade the country's defence system to strengthen its security in the future.

He said such a move was needed in view of the necessity to disclose sensitive military radar information in the search for the Boeing 777-200ER aircraft which vanished on March 8.

"We've made a very courageous decision to put aside

national security and interests by disclosing some of our sensitive military radar information in the early stages of the search and rescue mission.

"The situation now requires us to relook our needs in the future and, more importantly, we're also looking in the context of the Asean region as a group," he said.

He told reporters this after witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Global Komited Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the

Weststar Group of Companies, and Thales UK here, yesterday.

Aimed at promoting, marketing and distributing a wide range of ground-based air defence systems to the Malaysian armed forces, the MoU was inked at the Defence Services Asia Exhibition and Conference (DSA) 2014.

To a question, Hishammuddin said that surveillance technology was an area of interest, given what had happened in the MH370 incident.

Analysis of satellite data indicated that the aircraft, which veered thousands of kilometres off its intended flight path, flew along what is called the 'southern corridor' in the direction of the Indian Ocean.

Noting that Malaysia was due to take over Asean's chairmanship next year, Hishammuddin said one Asean country on its own would not be able to deal with future threats.

"We need creativity in our approach, working more closely towards preventing threats that may jeopardise the security of our region," he said.

The minister said the sector also promised more job opportunities and might contribute in strengthening Asean's economic outlook.

Hishammuddin pointed out that at the end of the day, the defence industry was not just about making money as it should also be about making the world a more peaceful place.

On DSA 2014, he said the timing of the event was just right, given that it gathered all relevant hardware under one roof.

Earlier, Hishammuddin toured the booths at DSA 2014, billed as Asia's largest defence exhibition. The four-day show ends on April 17 at the Putra World Trade Centre. - Bernama

Bluefin-21 Autonomous Underwater Vehicle

Weight: 750 kg Length: 493 cm Diameter: 53 cm

Applications

- Offshore survey
- Search and salvage
- Archaeology and exploration
- Oceanography
- Mine countermeasures
- Unexploded ordnance

Navigation Including

- **Inertial navigation system** -- uses accelerometers and gyroscopes to track position and orientation relative to known starting point
- **Ultra-short baseline** -- uses acoustic pulse from vehicle, bounced off a transponder in a fixed position
- **GPS**

Antennae: Iridium satellite, GPS, radio frequency

Endurance: 25 hours

Electronics integrated into tail cone control propeller speed, rudder and elevator angles. Provides stability, control, and allows for tight turns

Speed: 4.5 knots

Sonar Creates detailed picture of the ocean floor

Max depth: 4,500 m

Source: Bluefin Robotics

Fact file on the Bluefin-21 undersea search vehicle, set to be deployed "as soon as possible" in the search for missing MH370 – AFP Graphic