

Divers search for bodies in fuselage of QZ8501
MalaysiaKini.com
Jan 15, 2015

QZ8501 Indonesian navy divers searched for bodies today in the fuselage of an AirAsia airliner that crashed into the sea more than two weeks ago, killing all 162 people on board.

A military vessel found the fuselage yesterday, about 3km from where the tail of the aircraft was hauled up from the bottom of the Java Sea last weekend.

Indonesia AirAsia Flight QZ8501 lost contact with air traffic control in bad weather on Dec 28, less than halfway into a two-hour flight from the Indonesian city of Surabaya to Singapore.

The cause of AirAsia's first fatal crash is not yet known, but seasonal storms are believed to have been a factor.

Divers retrieved the flight data and cockpit voice recorders earlier this week from the plane's sunken wreckage. Indonesian investigators have started examining the black box recorders and hope to find clues on why the plane crashed within days.

Only 50 bodies have been recovered and searchers hope more of the victims, most of whom were Indonesian, will be found in the fuselage, the main section of the plane that holds passengers and crew.

If bodies are found in the fuselage, divers will need to determine whether the entire wreckage can be lifted by using large balloons or if bodies need to be retrieved separately.

"We will wait for the calculation results from the divers on which one is faster. If it's faster to lift (bodies), we lift one by one," Supriyadi, operations coordinator for the National Search and Rescue Agency, told reporters in the town of Pangkalan Bun, the base for the search effort.

Any recovered bodies will be flown to East Java's police headquarters in Surabaya for identification.

- Reuters