

**MAS To Release MH17 Passenger Manifest After All Next-Of Kind Informed - Liow
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 18 (Bernama) -- Malaysia Airlines (MAS) will release the passenger manifest of the ill-fated Flight MH17 once all next-of-kin have been contacted, said Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

"Malaysia Airlines is in the process of notifying all of the passengers' next-of-kin.

"The nationality of 21 of the unverified 41 passengers of MH17 has now been verified. The nationality of 20 passengers have yet to be verified," he told a press conference on the MH17 tragedy here today.

He said the latest breakdown of the nationalities of the passengers was Netherlands, 173; Malaysia, 44; Australia, 27; Indonesia, 12; United Kingdom, nine; Germany, four; Belgium, four; Philippines, three; Canada, one and New Zealand, one, with the nationality of 20 people yet to be unverified.

Liow said Malaysia Airlines would, however, release the MH17 cargo manifest later today.

Meanwhile, MAS Director of Operations Capt Izham Ismail said the airline did not have plans as yet to send the next-of-kin to Amsterdam at this point of time.

The airline had arranged for some 40 staff to be flown there to support the families while a total of 62 people - 30 SMART team members, 15 medical staff, 10 Royal Malaysia Air Force representatives, five Malaysia Airlines staff, two Department of Civil Aviation staff - were travelling to Kiev.

On the remains of those on board, Liow said the SMART team would retrieve all the remains at the crash site, but whether they would be brought to Malaysia would depend on the request of the next-of-kin.

MH17 was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur when it went down in Ukraine. It was carrying 298 people - 283 passengers and 15 crew.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said early today that Ukrainian authorities believe that the Boeing 777 was shot down.

MH17 had left Amsterdam at 12.15 pm (Netherlands time) Thursday and was to have arrived in Kuala Lumpur at 6.10 am (Malaysian time) Friday.

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