

It's MH370, says Najib
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By KC Nazari

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak confirmed that the plane debris discovered on French island, Reunion, belonged to Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 which disappeared en route to Beijing 17 months ago.

"Today, 515 days since the plane disappeared, it is with a heavy heart I must tell you that an international team of experts have conclusively confirmed that the aircraft debris found on Reunion Island is indeed from MH370," Najib told reporters at the Putra World Trade Centre early this morning.

"We now have physical evidence that, as I announced on 24th March last year, flight MH370 tragically ended in the southern Indian Ocean.

"This is a remote, inhospitable and dangerous area, and on behalf of Malaysia, I would like to thank the many nations, organisations and individuals who have participated in the search."

Najib's widely expected announcement ends an agonising wait for families of the 239 passengers and crew who have demanded concrete proof of what happened to their missing loved ones.

But next-of-kin, investigators, and the aviation industry are still left with the vexing question of what caused the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 aircraft to inexplicably divert on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8, 2014.

The flight apparently veered out over the Indian Ocean, flying for hours after its communications and tracking systems were shut off, in what remains one of the biggest mysteries in aviation history.

Najib gave no indication that the analysis of the debris yielded any clues into the cause of the disappearance.

While saying that the burden faced by the families of the MH370 passengers had been "unspeakable", Najib hoped that the confirmation would bring "certainty" to the families.

"They have our deepest sympathy and prayers," he said.

The flight disappeared from civilian radar after crossing Malaysian airspace and after a lengthy investigation and analysing of data, Malaysia announced that the flight had diverted from its original route and instead headed towards the southern Indian Ocean.

Months of intense search last year proved fruitless.

"I would like to assure all those affected by this tragedy that the government of Malaysia is committed to do everything within our means to find out the truth of what happened. MH370's disappearance marked us as a nation. We mourn with you, as a nation," he said.

He said that Malaysia will "always" remember and honour those who were lost on board the flight.

MH370 was cited as one of modern aviation's greatest mysteries, despite more than a dozen countries helping Malaysia in its search and rescue operations.

The aircraft's flaperon was discovered by residents of Reunion Island on July 29. It was believed to have washed up on the shores of the island, which faces the vast Indian Ocean. – August 6, 2015.

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