

New data points to hijack, search continues
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2.35pm: Najib's press conference ends. No questions taken.

2.31pm: "Despite media reports that the plane was hijacked, I wish to be very clear, we are still investigating all possibilities as what caused MH370 to deviate from its original flight path," says Najib.

2:30pm: Najib says the latest confirmation that MH370 made a turn back and flew westwards means Malaysian authorities have changed its search area.

"This new satellite information has significant impact on the nature and scope of the search operation.

"We are ending our operation in the South China Sea and reassessing our deployment of our assets.

He says that the plane had possibly gone into one or two corridors, the northern part of corridor, from Kazakhstan to northern part of Thailand and from Indonesia to the Indian Ocean.

2:27pm: Najib confirms the unidentified aircraft found on military radar making a turn back and flying westwards is MH370.

"After much forensic work and deliberation, the FAA, NTSB, AAIB and Malaysian authorities, working separately on the same data concur."

2.25pm: "Based on new satellite communications, we can say with a high degree of certainty that Acars (transponder) was disabled before the aircraft reached the east coast of Malaysia," says Najib.

2.20pm: Najib says he instructed Malaysian authorities to share all information on the ill-fated jetliner with all relevant countries.

2.19pm: PM Najib addresses press conference.

1.55pm: Jagjit Singh, a officer of the Information Department, takes the podium.

"The prime minister will be making a statement on the development of MH370, however he won't be taking any questions," he said.

Jagjit urged reporters to submit questions to the media centre instead, and will be address at the 5.30pm press conference and will be furnished with technical details.

He did not respond to questions on why this is done.

1.46pm: There is an air of anxiety in the room, filled with nervous chatter of reporters.

It falls silent whenever doors at the front of the auditorium swing open, but there is still no sign of PM Najib.

1.35pm: Five minutes past the scheduled press conference, there is still no sign of PM Najib.

Reporters now fill even the space between rows of seats, squatting so not to block the view of those behind them.

1:30pm: Chinese ambassador to Malaysia Huang Hui Kang is at the press conference.

Also seen are two representatives from the Russian Embassy. Ukraine ambassador is reportedly also at the press conference.

Manifest for Flight MH370

153 Chinese

38 Malaysians

7 Indonesians

6 Australians

5 Indians

4 French

3 Americans

2 each from New Zealand, Ukraine and Canada

One each from Russia, Taiwan, Netherlands

Two men - one confirmed as Iranian - travelling under stolen Italian and Austrian passports

1.10pm: Reporters enter the press conference venue and are now all set for the press conference.

They number about 200, filling any and every space in Sama-Sama Hotel's auditorium.

12.33pm: Prime Minister Najib Razak is scheduled to hold a press conference at 1.30pm in Sama-Sama Hotel, Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

Journalists gather at the hotel awaiting the press conference.

Officials conduct a security sweep inside the press conference room, media personnel asked to leave until it is done.

12.20pm: Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 has been hijacked, according to a news report.

According to *Associated Press* (AP) report today, a Malaysian government official said that hijacking was no longer just a theory: "It is conclusive," read the report.

The official who is involved in the investigation were reported saying they have determined that either one of the pilots or someone else with flying experience has hijacked the missing jet.

However, the motive has not been established while it is unclear where the plane has been taken.

Speculation is rife that the Malaysian government will announce this at a press conference slated for 1.30pm.

The news comes amidst increasing clues pointing to **foul play** in the week-long mystery over the commercial Beijing-bound flight that went off the radars at 2.41am last Saturday.

While the plane disappeared from sight while over the South China Sea just off the coast of Vietnam, there is growing belief it may have detoured to the West towards the **Indian Ocean**.

According to AP, to steal a jetliner out of midair would require a pilot who knew how to elude detection by both civilian and military radar.

“It would take a runway at least a mile long to land the wide-body jet, possibly in the dark, and a hangar big enough to hide it. All without being seen.”

The report quoted Scott Shankland, an American Airlines pilot who spent several years as a co-pilot on Boeing 777s, who said a captain would know how to disable radios and the plane’s other tracking systems.

“But a hijacker, even one trained to fly a plane, “would probably be hunting and pecking quite a while - ‘Do I pull this switch? Do I pull that?’ You could disable a great deal’ of the tracking equipment, ‘but possibly not all of it’.”

Some of the plane’s data is transmitted automatically from equipment not located in the cockpit, making it even harder to avoid leaving electronic bread crumbs, he said.

Meanwhile, John Hansman, an aeronautics professor at MIT who is familiar with the Boeing 777, said it would be possible for an intruder to turn off the transponders, but knowing how to shut down other systems in a bid to be stealthy would be more difficult.

“If it was a hijacking, it was probably a hijacking gone bad,” he said.

Alan Diehl, a former National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) crash investigator, said if it was a hijacking, “they would have to be somebody who has detailed knowledge of the plane.”

“Could they get down below the radar and make a beeline to an abandoned airstrip somewhere? I suppose the short answer is yes. Even today, satellites don’t cover every square kilometre of the Earth.”

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