

《失联90多小时仍无马航线索》

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BEIJING, March 11 (Xinhua) -- China has made great efforts to search and rescue the Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 with almost two-thirds of the passengers from China, however no solid clues have been found so far.

The largest patrol vessel in South China Sea "Haixun 31" has arrived the sea at 4:58 p.m. Tuesday where the Beijing-bound MH370 flight from Kuala Lumpur might have lost contact, and the shipboard helicopters started the air searching mission on 5:10 p.m., according to Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration.

Meanwhile, the second Chinese naval warship "Jianguangshan" cruised into position on Tuesday morning, formed a unit with "Mianyang" and promptly started searching operations. And the South China Sea rescue vessel with hull number 115 has joined the search on Tuesday as well.

According to the Chinese navy, another warship is expected to reach the area on Wednesday morning, and a depot ship has been ordered to prepare for moving into the Gulf of Thailand to replenish the searching vessels.

Contact with the Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 was lost along with its radar signal at 1:20 a.m. Beijing time on Saturday as it was flying over the Ho Chi Minh City air traffic control area in Vietnam.

The flight was carrying 12 crew members and 227 passengers, including 154 Chinese.

The first batch of family members of the passengers on the missing flight arrived in Kuala Lumpur from Beijing on Tuesday morning.

According to the joint working group of the Chinese government who received the family members at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, there are 12 relatives of the passengers, including nine Chinese and three Indians.

The family members did not meet with the media waiting for their arrival and they have been accommodated by the Malaysia Airlines in hotels around Kuala Lumpur. The carrier has arranged an assistant for each relatives and pledged to keep them informed.

The company has offered a "special consolation payment" of 31,000 yuan (5049.9 U.S. dollars) for each family of the passengers on board the missing flight. The money has been sent to the families on 6 p.m.

Although the company said the consolation payment is not the final compensation, some relatives of the passengers were still cautious about the money and refused to take it at the moment.

At Hotel of Lido in Beijing, where most of the relatives are staying in, volunteers were there to provide psychological support and keep them company.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Dozens of ships and planes from around 10 countries and regions are scouring the waters around Flight MH370's last known location, but no solid clues have been found so far.

The U.S. Navy said Monday it has dispatched one more Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, USS Kidd, to join the USS Pinckney in the search efforts.

The USS Kidd brings its two MH-60R Seahawk helicopters designed for search and rescue, as well as anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, surveillance, communications relay, naval gunfire support and logistics support, the U.S. Navy said.

Other countries, including Thailand and New Zealand, also sent search and rescue missions to the targeted sea area. A Thai navy boat was searching the lower part of the Andaman Sea off southern Thailand, while a New Zealand air force P3 Orion aircraft is en route to join the search.

Taiwan authorities have sent a warship, transport plane and patrol ships to the search area for the missing airliner.

Vietnam's search and rescue mission also pledged on Tuesday to further extend the search area in cooperation with other involved countries though the chances of locating the missing passenger plane are remote.

According to the airline, the search for the missing plane has extended to land. The search and rescue teams have expanded their scope beyond the flight path with the focus now on western peninsular Malaysia at the Strait of Malacca, the company said in a statement.

The authorities are looking at the possibility of an attempt made by MH370 to turn back to Subang International Airport, and all angles are being looked at, it said.

NO CLUES

There is still no trace of the aircraft which vanished early on Saturday, said a spokesman for Malaysian Airlines in Beijing on Tuesday.

Rescue efforts are ongoing, covering eastern and western parts of peninsular Malaysia, but there is "no finding of the aircraft," said the spokesman, at a press conference in a hotel near Beijing Capital Airport.

The search and rescue teams have analyzed debris and oil slicks found in the waters, and it has been confirmed that they do not belong to MH370.

And latest maintenance checks showed the aircraft had no safety concerns, the company said.

The B777-200 aircraft underwent maintenance 12 days before the March 8 flight, and its next check is due on June 19, 2014, the statement said.

The maintenance showed "there were no issues on the health of the aircraft," it said.

The aircraft was delivered to Malaysia Airlines in 2002 and has since recorded 53,465.21 hours with a total of 7,525 flights.

According to the company, all Malaysia Airlines aircraft are equipped with a continuous data monitoring system called Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System, which transmits data automatically.

However, there were no distress calls and no information was relayed.

Malaysian police said Tuesday afternoon that one of two passengers using stolen passport on board a missing Malaysian Airline flight last Saturday has been identified as an Iranian with no link to terrorism.

The 19-year-old Iranian, identified as Pouria Nour Mohammad Mehrdad, boarded the plane using a stolen Austrian passport.

However, he did not rule out terrorism as a possible cause of the disappearance of the plane.

Referring to the police probe, Malaysia's national police chief Khalid Abu Bakar said the authorities are mainly looking into four areas: hijacking, sabotage, psychological problems of the passengers and crew and personal problems among the passengers and crew.

Elaborating on the personal problems, the official said there may be passengers on the flight who has bought huge sums of insurance or owed a lot of money.