

WHAT DEBRIS CAN TELL US?

AFP, Sydney

An investigation team in France is examining a Boeing 777 flaperon which washed up on the French island of La Reunion. Malaysia yesterday confirmed that the part is from missing flight MH370. Analysts and experts say the wing part could shed light on how the plane entered the ocean after it vanished with 239 people on board in March last year en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.



Relative of passengers on missing Malaysia Airlines MH370 react outside the Malaysia Airlines' office in Beijing yesterday.

Q. What happened to the plane?

Investigators will be examining the condition of the flaperon, which aviation experts say is not badly damaged. The analysis could also reveal how the wing part detached from the jet and therefore how the plane entered the ocean, as well as how violent the impact was. Barnacles on the flaperon could also point to where it may have drifted from.

Q. How it crashed?

Australian aviation expert Neil Hansford says the decent condition of the flaperon, apart from what appears to be some laminations on the trailing edge, might point to the aircraft entering the water in a "controlled-type crash", which could suggest it landed on the water when the fuel ran out rather than hitting the ocean in a traumatic manner.

Q. How flaperon discovery can help find main debris field?

Jakarta-based aviation consultant Gerry Soejatman says the

discovery is a boost that the searchers need, proving they are not looking for the plane in the wrong area. Australian authorities say the drift modelling shows that material from the current search area could have been carried to La Reunion, among other locations. However, they add that reverse modelling to determine where the debris may have drifted from was almost impossible, and have reaffirmed their confidence that the main debris field is in the current search area.

Q. How close we are in solving the world's greatest aviation mystery?

Aviation analysts are cautious about how much the wing part could tell us about why the plane went missing. Hansford says what it can prove is that MH370 definitely crashed into the southern Indian Ocean, but why it went there in the first place can only be solved if and when the black boxes are recovered. Disaster experts note that it took more than 70 years to find the wreckage of the Titanic, the liner that sank in 1912 in the Atlantic.

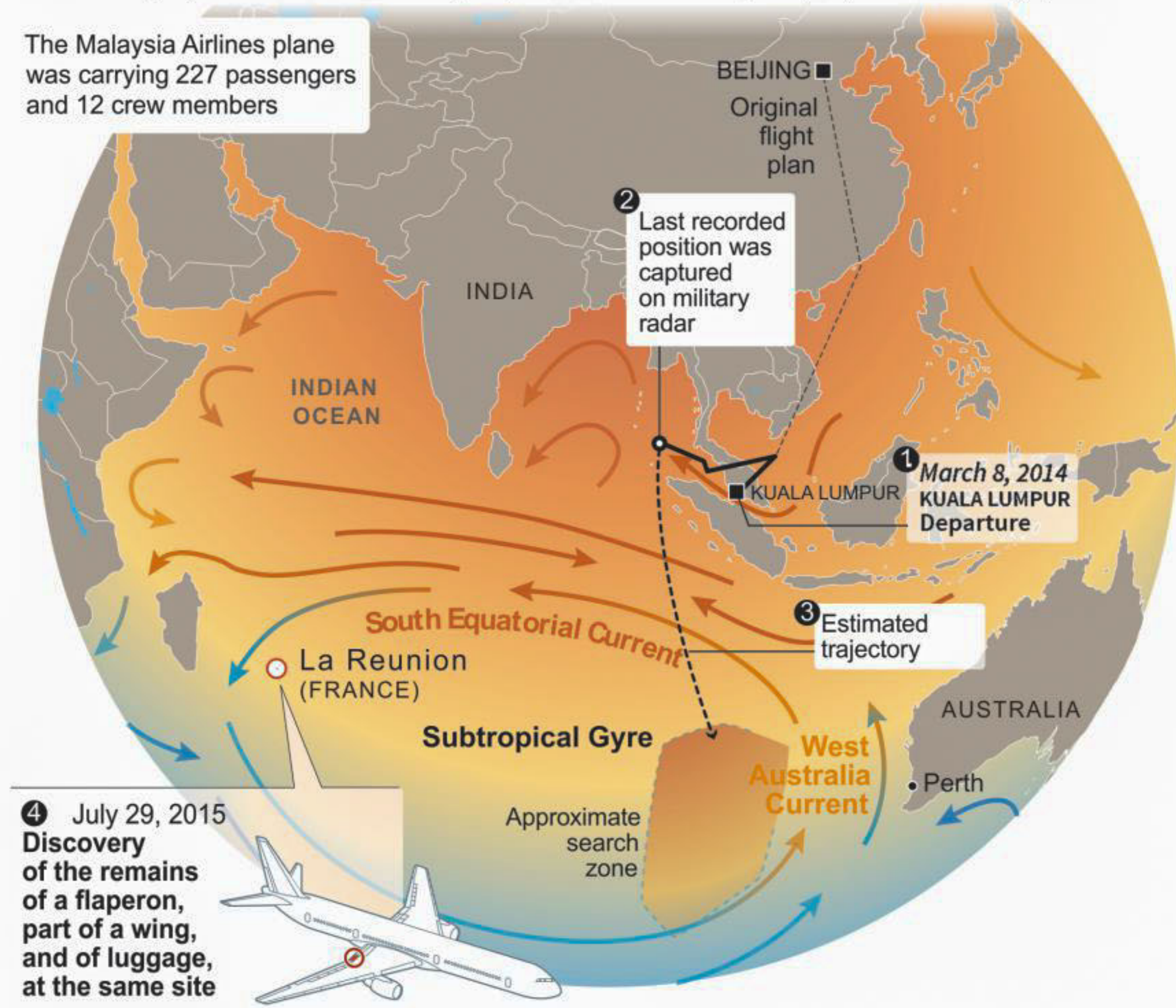


PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

HOW THE DEBRIS REACHED REMOTE REUNION ISLAND

Satellite imagery of marine currents may help locate the crashed plane, says one oceanographer

The Malaysia Airlines plane was carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew members



Sources: Marine Physics and Ocean Climate Group, National Oceanography Centre

South Sudan rivals restart peace talks

AFP, Addis Ababa

South Sudan's rival forces began peace talks yesterday, as international pressure mounts ahead of an August 17 deadline to strike a deal to end 19 months of civil war. The conflict has left tens of thousands dead and has been marked by widespread atrocities on both sides. "We have now reached a critical juncture whereby participants of this phase will make decisions that may impact the destiny of the people of South Sudan," chief mediator Seyoum Mesfin said at an opening ceremony. Delegates met in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, under mediation from the regional eight-nation bloc IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. South Sudan's civil war began in December 2013 when President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy Riek Machar of planning a coup, setting off a cycle of retaliatory killings that has split the poverty-stricken, landlocked country along ethnic lines. Regional mediators, backed by US President Barack Obama during his recent visit to Kenya and Ethiopia, have given Kiir and Machar until August 17 to halt the civil war. Kiir and Machar, who are expected to appear later in the process, effectively face an ultimatum, a "final best offer," according to one senior US administration official. Failure to strike a deal could lead to a range of punitive measures including an arms embargo and targeted sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes. At least seven ceasefires have been agreed and then broken within days, if not hours.

Nuke deal rejection would spell war

Obama warns as he defends his signature foreign policy move to Congress

AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama made an aggressive case for his signature nuclear deal with Iran Wednesday, telling lawmakers that rejecting diplomacy would lead to war and destroy US credibility. Casting it as "the most consequential foreign policy debate" since the Iraq War, Obama said Congress must not waver under pressure from critics whom history had already proven wrong. "Congressional rejection of this deal leaves any US administration that is absolutely committed to preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon with one option: another war in the Middle East," he said. "Many of the same people who argued for the war in Iraq are now making the case against the Iran nuclear deal," he added, urging lawmakers to instead choose a forsaken American tradition of strong diplomacy. Obama was swept into office on a tide of anger over George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq. The invocation of the Iraq War will touch a nerve in Congress, particularly among the Senate Democrats whose 2002 vote for war helped launch the bloody eight-year conflict and marked their record.

Still, Obama said the vote this time round was bigger than any political career. "If Congress kills this deal, we will lose more than just constraints on Iran's nuclear program or the sanctions we have painstakingly built," he warned. "We will have lost something more precious. America's credibility as a leader of diplomacy."



America's credibility as the anchor of the international system." Positing the now unpopular Iraq war as a cautionary tale, Obama recalled president John F. Kennedy's diplomatic efforts to engage a nuclear Soviet Union as a more worthy example to follow. Obama's remarks were made at the American University, in Washington, where in 1963 Kennedy

used a commencement address to argue vehemently for peace amid a drumbeat of calls for military buildup against the Soviet Union. Speaking a year after the Cuban missile crisis and months before his death, Kennedy cautioned against the use of US power to bring about "peace of the grave or the security of the slave." Obama, brandishing his own record as evidence he is not weak or willing to appease, said: "I have ordered tens of thousands of young Americans into combat. I've sat by their bedside sometimes when they come home. I've ordered military action in seven countries." He added: "There are times when force is necessary" and that time may yet come if Iran does not respect the deal -- but not yet. The agreement would give Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program, which Washington long believed was cover for building a bomb. Congress is expected to vote on the issue within weeks. The United States and Iran severed ties following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which saw 52 American embassy staff and citizens held hostage for 444 days.

MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS 224,000 crossed sea in 2015: UN

AFP, Geneva

Some 224,000 migrants and refugees have crossed the Mediterranean to Europe so far this year, the United Nations said yesterday, a day after more than 200 people were feared drowned trying to make the perilous journey. "What we have at Europe's doorstep is a refugee crisis," UN refugee agency spokesman William Spindler told AFP in an email. He said that by the end of July, around 224,000 refugees and migrants had arrived in Europe by sea. Nearly all of the people crossing the Mediterranean during the first seven months of the year, often in rickety boats and at the mercy of human traffickers, have landed in Greece (124,000) and in Italy (98,000), he said. During that period, more than 2,100 people drowning or going missing, Spindler said. He stressed though that this figure did not take into account the some 200 people believed to have perished in a shipwreck off the coast of Libya on Wednesday. Their fishing boat, believed to have been carrying more than 600 people, ran into difficulty about 15 nautical miles off Libya. Irish patrol vessel Niamh, first on the scene of the disaster, arrived in Palermo Thursday with 367 survivors, including 12 women and 13 children, as well as 25 bodies recovered from the sea.

REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN 'SEX JIHAD' ISIS executes 19 women in Mosul

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Isis militant group has executed 19 women in its Iraqi stronghold of Mosul for refusing to have sex with fighters, a Kurdish official has claimed. Said Mimousini, a spokesperson for the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), said that Isis's treatment of women and dealings with money were proving to be increasingly divisive within the organisation's own ranks. The official said that the executions, which could not be independently verified, took place during the weekend of the 1 and 2 August. "ISIS [has] executed 19 women in the city of Mosul during the past two days," he told Iraqi News on Monday. "The penalty decision came on the background of the refusal to participate in the practice of sexual jihad." Mimousini's claims come just days after a UN official said she had witnessed the circulation of a child slave "price list" among Isis fighters in Syria and Iraq. Zainab Bangura, the UN's Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict, told Bloomberg that girls get "peddled like barrels of petrol", and are sometimes bought so they can be sold to their families for thousands of dollars in ransom money. Meanwhile, Isis was reported to have seized a key town in central Syria. The densely populated town of Qaryatayn represents the most significant strategic gain for the militant group since it took the historic city of Palmyra, not far to the



Paper lanterns float on the Motoyasu River in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome (background) in Hiroshima, yesterday. Tens of thousands gathered for peace ceremonies in Hiroshima on August 6 on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing that helped end World War II, but still divides opinion today over whether the total destruction it caused was justified.

PHOTO: AFP

Abe to express 'remorse' over WWII

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's prime minister Shinzo Abe yesterday said he would express "remorse" over World War II this month, as a government panel condemned the country's past aggression against its Asian neighbours. Abe is preparing his closely watched remarks for the 70th anniversary of the end of the war, expected to be released ahead of August 15, the date Japan surrendered to the Allies. The wording of Abe's statement will be heavily scrutinised by China and Korea, which still dispute Tokyo's version of its wartime history and who are waiting to see if he repeats earlier apologies for Japan's militarism in the 20th Century. "I will express remorse over the past war, our post-war path as a pacifist nation, and how Japan should further contribute to the Asia-Pacific region and the world in the future," Abe told reporters.



whole". That has set alarm bells ringing in China and Korea, which suffered under Japan's imperial expansion and say any attempt to tone down explicit apologies made by previous leaders should be

discouraged. Abe's comments yesterday, on the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bombing, came the same day as a panel set up to advise on the wording of the war statement condemned Japan's colonial past. Japan colonised the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945, and the group also pointed to the country's aggression in China from 1931. China says more than 20 million of its citizens died as a result of Japan's invasion, occupation and atrocities. Japan "caused much harm to various countries, largely in Asia, through a reckless war," the 38-page report said. The 16-member panel made up of mostly academics and journalists also dispensed with claims from some on Japan's right that it had liberated Asian nations from Western powers. "It is inaccurate to claim that Japan

US boy, 11, 'shot 3 yrs old'

BBC ONLINE

An 11-year-old boy has been charged with manslaughter, accused of using his father's gun to shoot a three-year-old boy in Detroit, US media reports say. The boy was visiting his father in the east of the city on Monday when he took a handgun from the bedroom. He is said to have thrown the gun out into the back garden, retrieved it and jumped into a parked car. Later, the three-year-old boy went into the car, was then shot in the face and later died, prosecutors say. The older boy appeared in a juvenile court for a preliminary hearing on Wednesday afternoon.

US, Russia agree on Syria chem arms resolution at UN

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday said he had reached an agreement with his Russian counterpart that could see the UN set up a panel to identify those behind deadly chlorine gas attacks in Syria. "We also talked about the UN resolution and indeed I believe reached an agreement that should try to see that resolution voted shortly, which would create a process of accountability which has been missing," Kerry said a day after talks with Russia's Sergei Lavrov in Malaysia. The UN Security Council could vote this week on a resolution to establish the panel, aimed at bringing to justice whoever was behind the use of the chemical weapons. The United States has presented a draft resolution to the 15-member UN Security Council that calls for it to set up a taskforce

to "identify to the greatest extent feasible, individuals, entities, groups, or governments" involved in the use of chemical weapons. But doing so would need support from Moscow, a staunch ally of Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad. Russia, like the United States, wields a UN Security Council veto. Pressure has been mounting on the Security Council to take action in Syria, where the war is now in its fifth year and has claimed more than 230,000 lives. Meanwhile, US on Wednesday launched its first airstrike from Turkey on an Islamic State target in Syria, as Ankara vowed it was ready to step up its own fight against jihadists. The drone had taken off from Turkey's southern Incirlik air base, which Ankara has now opened to the US military for armed attacks on IS targets in Syria just 200 kilometres away, the source added.