

# Solar Impulse plane lands in Japan, waits out bad weather

By Mari Yamaguchi  
The Associated Press

**T**OKYO — A solar-powered plane attempting to circle the globe without a drop of fuel made an unscheduled landing on June 1 in Japan to wait out bad weather.

Swiss pilot André Borschberg took off from Nanjing, China a day before on what was supposed to be the longest leg of the journey, a six-day, 5,079-mile flight to Hawai'i.

Instead, the Solar Impulse 2 made an unscheduled visit in central Japan and landed safely at the Nagoya Airport.

The Japanese transport ministry and Nagoya airport officials arranged for the landing to occur after the airport's usual closing hours to accommodate the plane which has a wide wingspan.

A live internet feed on the website of the organizer, <solarimpulse2.airlive.net>, showed crewmembers in the control room applauding and cheering for the landing. Borschberg, who emerged from the cockpit with a full smile, was mobbed by the project's ground staff welcoming his safe arrival.

Bertrand Piccard, initiator, chairman, and co-pilot of the Solar Impulse 2, told the organizer's live feed, Solar Impulse TV, that it was unfortunate the weather turned bad when the flight was going very well.

"You know, it's one of these strange moments of life between elation and



**SAFETY STOP.** Staff members of the Solar Impulse project gather around the Solar Impulse 2 aircraft after it landed at the Nagoya Airport in Toyoyama, near Nagoya, central Japan. The solar-powered plane, which is attempting to circle the globe without a drop of fuel, made an unscheduled landing June 1 in Japan to wait out bad weather. Swiss pilot André Borschberg took off from Nanjing, China the day before on what was to be the longest leg of the journey — a six-day, 5,079-mile flight to Hawai'i. (Takuya Inaba/Kyodo News via AP)

disappointment ..." he said. "It's just the weather doesn't fit. Everything we could do has been done and was successful. What we cannot control is the weather. So we land in Nagoya, we wait for better conditions, and we continue."

Elke Neumann, a spokeswoman for the Solar Impulse project, said the team had noticed the weather more than a day ago.

"We thought we might go through it," she said. "But between Japan and Hawai'i, there's no place to stop."

The safety of the pilot and the plane are

a priority, she said.

Solar Impulse 2 needs room to land, so it generally avoids times when commercial flights are operating, Neumann said. The plane also usually lands at night, because the winds tend to be lower. It needs wind to be no more than 10 knots, she said.

"We are a little bit sad, because everything's functioning perfectly — the batteries are charging, there's enough sun, the pilot is in good health, he's in good condition — it's all working well," Neumann said.

At the time of landing, the plane's batteries were still 74 percent charged, according to the organizer website.

The solar-powered plane encountered yet another challenge after wind gusts damaged a wing on the grounded aircraft, but pilot Borschberg said it was not a major issue.

The journey started in March in Abu Dhabi, and the plane has stopped in Oman, India, Myanmar, and China. The flight from Nanjing to Hawai'i was the seventh of 12 flights — and the riskiest.

## Relatives weep at morgue after China's Yangtze ship disaster

By Paul Traynor  
The Associated Press

**J**IANLI, China — Many relatives wept openly as they arrived at a morgue for a last look at the bodies of loved ones among the more than 430 people killed in the Yangtze River capsizing of the *Eastern Star* cruise boat.

One man carried a framed picture inside a white plastic bag of his relative, as smoke rose from the morgue's nearby crematorium in the Hubei province riverside community of Jianli. Authorities identified bodies from DNA samples donated by relatives, who had the option of a last look before cremation.

Under Chinese tradition, families will have the bodies cremated at a local morgue and then bring the ashes to their home communities for burial.

The death toll in the June 1 disaster near Jianli stood at 434 following a thorough search of the now-upright ship. Eight people are still missing; authorities have said they will search downriver more than 600 miles as far as



**MOURNING THOSE LOST.** Rescuers bow during a commemoration service near the raised *Eastern Star* ship on the Yangtze River in Jianli county of southern China's Hubei province. More than 430 people were killed in China's worst boat disaster since the sinking of the *SS Kiangya* off Shanghai in 1948. (AP Photo/Andy Wong)

Shanghai. Some relatives of the passengers say they believe authorities have not focused enough on the possibility of human error, including misjudgement about carrying on with the cruise during the storm rather than anchoring.

The overturning of the multi-decked, 251-foot *Eastern Star* is China's worst boat disaster since the sinking of the *SS Kiangya* off Shanghai in 1948 during a civil war, which is believed to have killed anywhere from 2,750 to nearly 4,000 people.

AP writer Christopher Bodeen in Jianli contributed to this report.

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