

# What to know about the mystery of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 as the search resumes

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The Associated Press

More than a decade ago, Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 vanished without a trace, sparking one of aviation’s most baffling mysteries.

Despite years of multinational searches, investigators still do not know exactly what happened to the plane or its 239 passengers and crew.

In late December, the Malaysian government said a vessel began a new search operation for the missing plane, reigniting hopes the aircraft might finally be found.

A previous, massive search in the southern Indian Ocean, where the jet is believed to have gone down, turned up almost nothing. Apart from a few small fragments that washed ashore, no bodies or large wreckage have ever been recovered.

Here is what to know about the deadly aviation tragedy.

### Flight goes missing

The Boeing 777 disappeared from air-traffic radar 39 minutes after departing Kuala Lumpur for Beijing on March 8, 2014.

“Good night, Malaysian Three Seven Zero,” the pilot said in the last radio call to Kuala Lumpur and the final communication before the plane crossed into Vietnamese airspace and failed to check in with controllers there.

Minutes later, the aircraft’s transponder stopped broadcasting its location. Military radar showed the jet turn back over the Andaman Sea. Satellite data



**CONTINUED MYSTERY.** Flight officer Rayan Gharazeddine scans the water in the southern Indian Ocean off Australia from a Royal Australian Air Force AP-3C Orion during a search for the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, in this March 22, 2014 file photo. (AP Photo/Rob Griffith, File)

with additional fragments later found along the east coast of Africa.

The search was suspended in January 2017.

In 2018, U.S. marine robotics company Ocean Infinity resumed the hunt, under a “no-find, no-fee” agreement, focusing on areas identified through debris drift studies. The effort ended without success.

### The search faced enormous challenges

One reason why such an extensive search failed to turn up clues is that no one knows exactly where to look.

The Indian Ocean is the world’s third largest and the search was conducted in a difficult area where searchers encountered bad weather and average depths of around 2.5 miles.

It’s not common for planes to disappear in the deep sea, but when they do remains can be very hard to locate. Over the past 50 years, dozens of planes have vanished, according to the Aviation Safety Network.

### The hunt is renewed

Malaysia’s government gave the green light in March for another “no-find, no-fee” contract with Ocean Infinity to resume the seabed search operation at a new site stretching over 5,800 square miles of water. Ocean Infinity will be paid \$70 million only if wreckage is discovered.

However, the search was suspended in April due to bad weather. The government said that Ocean Infinity will resume the search intermittently from December 30 for 55 days in targeted areas believed to have the highest likelihood of finding the missing aircraft.

It is unclear if Ocean Infinity has new evidence of the plane’s location. The company has said it would utilize new technology and has worked with many experts to analyze data and narrow the search area to the most likely site.

suggested it continued flying for hours, possibly until fuel exhaustion, before crashing into a remote section of the southern Indian Ocean.

Theories about what happened range from hijacking to cabin depressurization or power failure. There was no distress call, ransom demand, evidence of technical failure, or severe weather.

Malaysian investigators in 2018 cleared the passengers and crew but did not rule out “unlawful interference.” Authorities have said someone deliberately severed communications and diverted the plane.

### The passengers came from around the world

MH370 carried 12 crew members and 227 passengers, including five young children. Most passengers were Chinese,

but there also were citizens of the United States, Indonesia, France, Russia, and elsewhere.

Among those aboard were two young Iranians travelling on stolen passports, a group of Chinese calligraphy artists, 20 employees of U.S. tech firm Freescale Semiconductor, a stunt double for actor Jet Li, and several families with young children.

Many families lost multiple members.

### The search covered a vast area

Search operations began in the South China Sea between Malaysia and Vietnam before expanding to the Andaman Sea and the southern Indian Ocean.

Australia, Malaysia, and China coordinated the largest underwater search in history, covering roughly 46,000 square miles of seabed off western Australia. Aircraft, vessels equipped with sonar, and robotic submarines scoured the ocean for signs of the plane.

Signals thought to be from the plane’s black box turned out to be from other sources and no wreckage was found. The first confirmed debris was a wing fragment, known as a flaperon, discovered on remote Réunion Island in July 2015,

## The first giant panda cub born in Indonesia squeals, squirms in video

By Edna Tarigan  
The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The first giant panda cub born in Indonesia is noisy, nursing well, and showing other signs of good health, the conservation park where he was born said in early December.

Indonesian Safari Park released video and photos showing the fuzzy newborn in an incubator and squirming and squealing while being cuddled by his mother.

The mother, 15-year-old Hu Chun, gave birth to Satrio Wiratama — nicknamed Rio — on November 27 at the park in Cisarua, West Java province.

The name symbolizes the hope, resilience, and shared commitment of Indonesia and China in protecting endangered species, the park said in a statement.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto announced the baby panda’s name and showed his photo when he met Wang Huning, a top Chinese political adviser and leading ideologist.

### BTS announces March comeback date, putting an end to a nearly four-year hiatus

(AP) — They’re going to light up 2026 like dynamite: K-pop group BTS’ comeback has an official date.

According to a note shared to social media by the entertainment company BigHit Music, the mega popular group will return on March 20.

That’s after a nearly four-year hiatus, as all seven members of BTS — RM, Jin, Jimin, V, Suga, Jung Kook, and j-hope — completed South Korea’s mandatory military service.

“March 20th comeback confirmed,” BigHit Music wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Rapper Suga was the last group member

Rio is stable and showing healthy early signs such as strong vocalization, effective nursing, and steady weight gain while being monitored constantly. He’s expected to develop better temperature control, fur growth, open his eyes, and move more.

The conservation park said it was prioritizing the health and welfare of the mother and baby and he would not yet be accessible to the public.

The adult pandas, Cai Tao and Hu Chun, arrived in Indonesia in 2017 on a 10-year conservation partnership with China. They live in an enclosure built for them at the park about 43 miles from Jakarta.

Pandas are widely considered as China’s unofficial mascot and its loans of the animals to overseas zoos have long been seen as a tool of Beijing’s soft-power diplomacy, also known as “panda diplomacy.”

Giant pandas have difficulty breeding and births are particularly welcomed. There are fewer than 1,900 giant pandas in their only wild habitats in the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu.

to be released — from his duties as a social service agent, an alternative to serving in the military that he reportedly chose due to a shoulder injury. That was in June 2025.

The six others, RM, V, Jimin, Jung Kook, Jin, and j-hope, served in the army.

BTS tiered their enlistments, giving ample time for its members to focus on solo projects while the group was on a break.

Last summer, the group teased a world tour and announced that a new album would be released in the spring of 2026. At the time, they said they would begin working on the project in July 2025.

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