

Crashed plane had prior problems

Passengers say aircraft dropped on previous flight

The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Relatives grief provided samples for DNA tests to help identify victims of the Lion Air jet crash that killed 189 people in waters off Indonesia, as accounts emerged Tuesday of problems on the jet's previous flight including rapid descents that terrified passengers.

Hundreds of rescue workers searched spots in the Java Sea, near where the plane crashed, sending more than three dozen body bags to identification experts, while the airline flew dozens of grieving relatives to the country's capital, Jakarta.

Aircraft debris and personal belongings including ID cards, clothing and bags found scattered in the sea were spread out on tarps at a port in Jakarta and sorted into evidence bags. The chief of the police's medical unit, Arthur Tampi, said it has received dozens of body parts for identification and is awaiting results of DNA tests, expected to take four to eight days.

The disaster has reignited concerns about safety in In-



Indonesian rescuers collect wreckage pieces at Tanjung Priok Harbour in Jakarta, Indonesia, yesterday.

donesia's fast-growing aviation industry, which was recently removed from European Union and U.S. blacklists.

Two passengers on the plane's previous flight from Bali to Jakarta on Sunday described issues that caused annoyance and alarm.

Alon Soetanto told TVOne the plane dropped suddenly several times in the first few minutes of its flight.

"About three to eight minutes after it took off, I felt like the

plane was losing power and unable to rise. That happened several times during the flight," he said. "We felt like in a roller coaster. Some passengers began to panic and vomit."

A similar pattern is also seen in data pinged from Monday's fatal flight. Safety experts cautioned, however, that the data must be checked for accuracy against the plane's "black boxes," which officials are confident will be recovered.

On Tuesday, distraught fam-

ily members struggled to comprehend the sudden loss of loved ones in the crash of a new plane with experienced pilots in fine weather.

Many went to a police hospital, where authorities asked they provide medical and dental records and samples for DNA testing to help with identification of victims.

Risko, who uses a single name, wept outside the building as he waited with relatives. "My father was onboard but

we still don't know. We're still hoping for the best because there hasn't been an official statement from Lion Air," he said. "So we're still hoping for the best."

Experts from Boeing Co. were expected to arrive in Jakarta on Wednesday to help with the accident investigation, Indonesia's National Transportation Safety Committee said. The Transport Ministry has ordered an inspection of all Boeing 737 MAX 8 planes in Indonesia.

Air accident investigator Ony Suryo Wibowo told a news conference that officials have only a small amount of information so far and don't know if it's correct. He implored the public to be patient.

"To all Indonesian people, we are saddened and offer condolences, but give us time to investigate why the plane crashed," he said. "Give us a chance to look deeply, to look at the whole problem, so the responsibility given to us by the government can be carried out."

Lion Air, a discount carrier, is one of Indonesia's youngest and biggest airlines, flying to dozens of domestic and international destinations. Earlier this year it confirmed a deal to buy 50 new Boeing narrow-body aircraft worth an estimated \$6.2 billion.

Second group of migrants enters Mexico



Honduran Oscar Hernandez, 22, carries his 11-month-old daughter Daniela as he walks to Tapachula, Mexico, yesterday.

The Associated Press

NILTEPEC, Mexico — More than 1,000 people in a second migrant caravan that forged its way across the river from Guatemala began walking through southern Mexico on Tuesday and reached the city of Tapachula — some 250 miles behind a larger group and more than 1,000 miles from the closest U.S. border.

Gerbert Hinestrosa, 54, a straw-hatted migrant from Santa Barbara, Honduras, was traveling with his wife and teenage son in the newest group. Hinestrosa said he realized how hard it would be to reach his goal.

"Right now I feel good," he said. "We have barely started, but I think it is going to be very difficult."

Members of the latest caravan say they aren't trying to catch up with the first because they believe it has been too passive and they don't want to be controlled. The activist group Pueblo Sin Fronteras has been accompanying the

first group and trying to help it organize.

The first, larger caravan of about 4,000 mainly Honduran migrants passed through Tapachula about 10 days ago and set up camp Tuesday in the Oaxaca state city of Juchitan, which was devastated by an earthquake in September 2017.

Levin Guillen, a 23-year-old from Corinto, Honduras, was part of the first caravan, whose members set off Tuesday morning walking and hitching rides on the highway through Mexico's narrow, windy southern isthmus. They stuffed themselves into truck beds and sprinted alongside semi-trailer rigs, trying to grab hold and pull themselves up.

Guillen, a farmer, said he had been getting threats in Honduras from the same people who killed his father 18 years ago. He has been on his own since his mom died four years ago, and he hopes to reach an aunt who lives in Los Angeles and have a chance to work and live in peace.

"We just want to a way to get to our

final goal, which is the border," he said.

The first caravan was still about 900 miles from the nearest U.S. crossing at McAllen, Texas, and possibly much farther if it heads elsewhere.

Worn down from long miles of walking and frustrated by the slow progress, many have been dropping out and returning home or applying for protected status in Mexico.

The group is already significantly diminished from its estimated peak at over 7,000-strong. A caravan in the spring ultimately fizzled to just about 200 people who reached the U.S. border at San Diego.

Representatives have demanded "safe and dignified" transportation to Mexico City, but the Mexican government has shown no inclination to assist — with the exception of its migrant protection agency that gave some stragglers rides to the next town over the weekend.

The second caravan entered Mexico on Monday, crossing the Suchiate River from Guatemala.