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## Malaysia passenger plane ‘shot down’ over Ukraine, 295 dead

7/17/2014



**A Malaysian passenger airliner has reportedly been ‘shot down’ over Ukraine near the border with Russia, with all the 295 people on board dead.**

The Boeing plane was en route from the Dutch capital, Amsterdam, to Kuala Lumpur on Thursday when it crashed at an altitude of 10 kilometers above eastern Ukraine.

Itar-Tass news agency said the airline was downed by a “ground-to-air missile.”

A Russian aviation industry source said the plane did not enter Russia’s airspace on schedule.

Anton Gerashenko, an adviser to Ukraine's interior ministry, says on his Facebook page the

plane was flying at an altitude of 33,000 feet when it was hit Thursday by a missile fired from a Buk launcher, the Associated Press reports.

BUK, also known as SA-17 GRIZZLY, is a mobile anti-aircraft system mounted usually on a tracked vehicle or truck that can simultaneously track and strike six targets flying from different directions and at different altitudes, according to military thinktank Globalsecurity.org.

The Boeing 777 aircraft was expected to touch down in the Malaysian capital at around 6:00 am on Friday (2200 GMT Thursday).

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said he was shocked by reports of the plane crash.

“I am shocked by reports than an MH plane crashed. We are launching an immediate investigation,” Najib wrote in a Twitter feed.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said the jet may have been downed near the city of Shaktarsk in the volatile Donetsk region.

“We do not exclude that the plane was shot down and confirm that the Ukraine Armed Forces did not fire at any targets in the sky,” Poroshenko said in a statement.

Pro-Russian activists fighting the Ukrainian government said the jetliner had been shot down by a Ukrainian jet.

“Witnesses watching the flight of the Boeing 777 passenger plane saw it being attacked by a battle plane of the Ukrainian forces,” the self-proclaimed Lugansk People's Republic (LPR) said in a statement.

“After that the passenger plane split in two in the air and fell on the territory of the Donetsk People's Republic,” it said.

Malaysia is still reeling from the mysterious disappearance of flight MH370 with 239 on board on March 8 following its diversion from its Kuala Lumpur-Beijing flight path.