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SURABAYA, 18TH JANUARY 2015 – AirAsia Indonesia wishes to update the latest development on search and recovery operations led by The National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) Republic of Indonesia.

The SAR operation continued this morning although high waves and strong currents still hampered the SAR divers to access the fuselage wreckage which currently sits at the depth of 28 meters on the Java Sea floor. The sea divers had attempted to descend in order to observe the wreckage but had to turn back due to rough sea conditions.

Nevertheless, BASARNAS assured that the search and recovery mission of QZ 8501 passengers still becomes the main priority as it is suspected that more passengers might be still trapped under the wreckage. Hence, the SAR operation will be continued tomorrow.

In addition, BASARNAS also confirmed to have recovered two additional remains located in the primary searched area. The two remains are now being transported on a SAR vessel to Pangkalan Bun.

The Disaster Victim Identification Police Department Republic of Indonesia (DVI POLRI) announced that there is no identification release today. DVI POLRI said that the team is currently gathering more DNA evidence that are required to match between the ante-mortem and post-mortem data toward the six remaining passengers.

To date, BASARNAS has confirmed to have recovered a total of 53 remains of which 45 remains have been identified by DVI POLRI, 6 remains are still being identified and 2 remains have yet arrived at Bhayangkara Hospital.

AirAsia Indonesia would like to take this opportunity to urge the public seeking progress on the search and evacuation and identification process of QZ 8501 passengers to refer solely to official information from BASARNAS and DVI POLRI.

You may also obtain substantiated information only from authorised AirAsia social media accounts: Facebook (www.facebook.com/AirAsia) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/AirAsia)

Our thoughts and prayers remain with the families and friends of our passengers and colleagues on board QZ 8501.

Note to Editors: We ask that members of the news media do not call the AirAsia Emergency Call Centre, as this line is reserved for family members seeking information about those who may have been on board.

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