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SURABAYA, 28TH JANUARY 2015 – The National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) Republic of Indonesia today announced its commitment to continue the search and rescue (SAR) operations following the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI)'s decision to withdraw their forces and assets from the search and evacuation site yesterday.

BASARNAS stated that the search and recovery efforts will resume on Saturday (31/01), allowing them two days to consolidate all resources. The operation will be conducted for a period of seven days, after which BASARNAS will determine the next course of actions.

BASARNAS ensured that their focus remains on the search of QZ 8501 passengers. The search and recovery operations will be supported by SAR vessels, helicopters, a fixed-wing aircraft provided by AirAsia, divers, and salvage experts.

Earlier today, local fishermen in West Sulawesi located two remains in the sea near Majene which are suspected to be that of QZ 8501 passengers. The remains are on its way to Makassar and will be transported to Surabaya for identification purposes. In addition, the fishermen also located a bag in proximity of the area where remains were found – approximately 1,000 kilometres from the aircraft's lost contact point – which is suspected to be one of the passengers' belongings.

The Disaster Victim Identification Police Department Republic of Indonesia (DVI POLRI) today announced that one passenger was identified as: Marianne Claudia Ardhi (female). AirAsia Indonesia has officially handed over the remains to her family this afternoon.

To date, BASARNAS has confirmed to have recovered a total of 72 remains of which 56 remains have been identified by DVI POLRI, 14 remains are still being identified and 2 remains have yet to arrive at Bhayangkara Hospital, Surabaya.

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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