

## **113 feared dead in Indonesian military plane crash**

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**Jakarta:** All 113 people on board a Hercules C-130 military cargo aircraft were feared killed when the military plane crashed into a residential area in Medan city on Indonesia's Sumatra island on Tuesday, media reported.

A total of 101 passengers and 12 military crew members comprising three pilots, one navigator and eight technicians were on board the plane, Air Marshall Agus Supriatna told a TV channel in Medan.

The air force chief said 23 bodies have been identified in Adam Malik hospital in Medan from 49 body bags received by the hospital as of Tuesday afternoon, Xinhua news agency reported.

"In the PAUM (Military Air Transport Flight) mission, besides carrying logistics, the plane also carried troops transferred to serve in several regions along with their family members. We are yet to have information on how many family members each trooper had carried along in the plane," Agus said.

However, media reports said the plane was also carrying civilian passengers who were not from military families, and who were picked up from airports it stopped over prior to the crash.

Agus said the plane, serving Malang air force base, departed from Halim Perdanakusumah airport in Jakarta early Tuesday morning and made stopovers in Pekanbaru, Riau and Dumai to pick up troops being transferred to other regions.

He said the plane was enroute to transport logistics and personnel to Tanjung Pinang and Natuna islands.

An official at Indonesia's Search and Rescue (Basarnas) Medan branch told Xinhua earlier in the day that manifest of the crashed plane indicates that the plane was boarded by 55 persons.

That figure did not include 12 crew members operating the ill-fated plane.

According to Agus, the plane's pilot asked for RTB (Return to Base) procedure to air traffic control officers before the crash, which happened shortly before noon.

He said the request suggested that a problem had occurred in the plane. Indonesian military has set up a team to investigate the plane crash.

Agus said the plane was manufactured in 1964 and served the air forces' 32 Squadron based in Malang, East Java. Indonesia has 28 C-130 Hercules planes in service at the moment.

- IANS