WORLD'S 10 DEADLIEST AVIATION DISASTERS OF ALL TIME

News / Airlines

How safe is flying? Are 2014's crashes one-off accidents or indicators of incipient problems in the aviation industry? A fortnight after AirAsia's flight QZ8501, carrying 155 passengers and seven crew members from Surabaya to Singapore, crashed into the Java Sea, the questions have got louder, the unease more evident.

Here are the 10 deadliest air travel disasters....

1. Tenerife Airport Disaster, 1977

Casualties: 583
Airlines: KLM and Pan Am
Cause: Heavy fog, failure in communication and pilot error on part of KLM.

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2. Japan Airlines Flight 123, 1985
Casualties: 520
Cause: Crashed into the ridges of Mount Takamagahara due to mechanical failure

3. Charkhi-Dadri mid-air collision, 1996
Casualties: 349
Airlines: Kazakhstan Airlines and Saudi Arabian Airlines.
Cause: The mid-air collision, which took place over the village of Charkhi-Dadri near New Delhi, was the result of an error by the Kazakhstan Airlines pilot.

4. Ermenonville Air Disaster, 1974
Casualties: 346
Airline: Turkish Airlines Flight 981
Cause: Crashed when the cables necessary to control the aircraft were severed due to the decompression caused by the poorly-secured cargo door.

March 4, 1974: People at the scene in Forest of Ermenonville, where a Turkish Airline DC-10 crashed killing all the passengers on board

5. Kanishka air disaster, 1985
Casualties: 329
Airline: Air India
Cause: Terror attack/bomb on board

6. Saudia Flight 163, 1980
Casualties: 301
Airline: Saudia
Cause: Pilot error, fire in the cargo hold

7. Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, 2014
Casualties: 298
Cause: Airline shootdown by pro-Russian separatists in Torez, Ukraine

8. Iran Air Flight 655, 1988
Casualties: 290
Cause: The plane was shot down by the USS Vincennes, a US Navy missile cruiser

9. Iran Ilyushin Il-76 crash, 2003
Casualties: 275
Airline: The Ilyushin Il-76 aircraft was carrying personnel from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard
Cause: Pilot error triggered by poor weather

10. American Airlines flight 191, 1979

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Casualties: 271
Cause: Engine detachment resulting from faulty maintenance, leading to loss of control just minutes after take off from Chicago's O'Hare Airport

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