

Australia to continue MH370 search: Tony Abbott

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Canberra: Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott on Thursday said the search for Malaysia Airlines flight 370 will continue, following Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak's announcement that the piece of wreckage which washed up on Reunion Island was from the missing jet.

He told 3AW radio that Australia's search for the missing Boeing 777-200ER would continue in the current search area.

"We do continue to search. I think so far we have allocated \$100 million toward the search costs in the distant Indian Ocean," he said.

"The fact that this wreckage does now very much look like it is from MH370 does seem to confirm that it went down in the Indian Ocean," the prime minister added.

"It does seem very consistent with the search pattern we've been using for the last few months and let's hope we can turn something up."

Abbott said Australia "owes it to the families" of the missing passengers to continue to search for the ill-fated jet, which was carrying 239 people including six Australians, according to Xinhua news agency.

"We owe it to the families of the people lost on that plane to try to solve the mystery (and) we owe it to the travelling public who obviously want to be confident of their safety in the air," he told 3AW.

Abbott's comments came after the announcement made by the Malaysian prime minister, who revealed the news from Paris early on Thursday.

"Today, 515 days since the plane disappeared, it is with a very heavy heart that I must tell you that an international team of experts has conclusively confirmed that the aircraft debris... is indeed MH370," Razak said.

The "flaperon" was a piece from the wing of the jet that was recovered on Reunion Island, off the coast of Madagascar in the western Indian Ocean, last week.

It was taken to Paris for examination by French authorities and representatives from Boeing and Malaysia Airlines.

MH370 was a flight bound for Beijing from the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur on March 8, 2014. It has been declared missing after losing radio contact with the ground shortly after take-off.

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