

NEWS DIGEST

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1999

PAGE 2

Crews seek second black box

Findings show that EgyptAir Flight 990 was "uneventful" up until its autopilot disconnected.

WASHINGTON (AP) - The chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board said Wednesday that preliminary information from the flight data recorder from EgyptAir Flight 990 showed an "uneventful" flight until the plane's autopilot disconnected.

About eight seconds later, the plane "begins what appears to be a controlled descent," said Chairman Jim Hall, reviewing the final moments of the Oct. 31 flight.

The final five to 10 seconds of information on the flight data recorder are still being analyzed by safety board technicians, but Hall said the recorder showed the plane did not experience thrust reverser problems.

The announcement came moments after the safety board gave

the public its first glimpse of the badly dented orange housing that contained the recorder, as well as the beige tape recorder itself.

The tape was pulled out of the ocean Tuesday and flown immediately to NTSB headquarters in Washington for analysis.

The recorder was still dripping as officials from the board, flanked by Egyptian aviation officials and representatives of EgyptAir, held it up for photographers.

The tape could provide the best evidence yet into what doomed the Cairo-bound jet.

Flight 990 took off early Halloween morning from New York's Kennedy International Airport, rising to 33,000 feet before plunging into the sea near Nantucket Island, Mass. All 217 people aboard were killed.

Investigators are looking into all possible causes for the catastrophe, including mechanical failure, human error, sabotage and terrorism.

The flight data recorder captures as much as 25 hours of information

from 55 aircraft systems, telling investigators such things as the plane's altitude, speed, spin and roll, when electrical power was cut off and how the autopilot functioned.

During his news conference, Hall said the recorder showed that the plane did not hit supersonic speed in its initial descent.

He did not comment on how the airplane behaved after a brief climb shown by other radar data, or in its final plunge to the ocean.

He did dash speculation that the plane's plunge was caused by a problem with a thrust reverser - the cause of a 1991 crash of another Boeing 767. Thrust reversers are used to slow an airplane upon touchdown with the runway. One of EgyptAir's reversers was out of service at the time of the crash.

Hall said the safety board was forming a committee to review the flight recorder data, a routine action.

Hall also said that salvage crews seeking the plane's second so-called black box, the cockpit voice recorder,

were no longer confused by the presence of an audio pinger that had fallen off the flight data recorder.

He said the crews were "continuing to work on the debris pile that has the remaining pinging sound in it."

A remote-controlled underwater robot, Deep Drone, recovered the flight data recorder about 5 a.m. Tuesday and hauled it to the deck of the USS Grapple.

Deep Drone, a veteran of previous plane disaster recoveries, had been focused on the "pinging" signal emitted by the recorder, but Navy technicians watching video of the wreckage spotted the recorder nearby and maneuvered the robot to retrieve it. The box - which is actually bright orange, not black - is about 20 inches long, 5 inches wide and 6 inches high. It weighs 17 pounds.

On deck, investigators were surprised to find the box was missing its pinger. The transmitter is installed outside the box so its signal can be picked up better, but that means it also can become detached.

Mexican avocado field the site of jetliner crash

Mexico (AP) - A DC-9 jetliner fell from the sky in central Mexico, killing all 18 people on board shortly after most of its passengers had disembarked. Aviation investigators said Wednesday they had recovered the "black box" flight recorders.

"This is the most important thing of all," Andres Perez Zentella, Mexico's chief of aviation security, said of the flight recorders for Taesa Flight 725.

Dozens of investigators, soldiers and police were searching the avocado field where jagged chunks of the plane had fallen, hoping to find clues to what brought the plane down.

The flight took off Tuesday from the western border city of Tijuana with 91 passengers aboard. After stopping in Guadalajara and Uruapan, it was carrying 13 passengers and five crew members as it headed to Mexico City, 180 miles to the east.

One minute after the plane left Uruapan, the pilot radioed controllers to declare an emergency, according to Agustin Arellano Rodriguez, director of the state's Navigation Services in

Mexican Airspace.

"We did not have any more contact," he said by telephone. "We never knew what the type of emergency was."

Accounts of the crash varied.

Witnesses said they saw a brilliant light in the sky and the debris fall to the mountains six miles southwest of Uruapan, said inspector Juan Alfonso Lara of the Michoacan state civil protection agency.

Agustin Gutierrez, Taesa's manager in Michoacan, said the plane nose-dived before crashing into the avocado plantation.

The plantation caretaker, Felipe Guzman, told the state news agency, Notimex, that the rear of the plane was on fire as it hit the ground and exploded.

"After that, there were other explosions," he said.

Taesa spokesman Eduardo Cacho told a news conference the airline was not aware of any maintenance problems. He also said he had no information about communications between the crew and the flight control tower.

Oregon shooter gets 111 years

Kip Kinkel apologizes in court, saying 'self-loathing' was to blame for his actions.

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) - Kip Kinkel was sentenced Wednesday to 111 years in prison for gunning down his parents and opening fire in the cafeteria of Thurston High School, killing two students.

The sentence came after Kinkel apologized in court for the rampage, saying the acts took him to "a place of deterioration and self-loathing."

"I thought about what I could say to make people feel better. Nothing I can do can take away the pain and destruction I caused. I am truly sorry for all of this," he said.

Kinkel, 17, pleaded guilty to four counts of murder and 26 counts of attempted murder. He had agreed to serve 25 years in prison for the murders, but Judge Jack Mattison had the option of adding time for the attempted murders at the Springfield school.

Mattison said emotional statements made by victims and their families convinced him "this case needed accountability for each of the wounded."

Victims, allowed to speak Tuesday, told of their lingering confusion, fear, pain and anger.

"I don't care if you're sick, you're insane or crazy," said Jake Ryker, who tackled Kinkel despite being shot in the chest. "I can't stand here and look at you without wanting to kill you."

The judge told Kinkel that, if he met his own goal of being a model prisoner and helping others behind bars, he may one day qualify to have his sentence commuted.

In addition to the 25-year sentence for the murders, Mattison crafted a combination of concurrent and consecutive sentences on the 26 attempted murder counts that added up to another 86.67 years in prison.

Defense lawyer Mark Sabitt Wednesday urged Mattison to give Kinkel hope of eventual freedom, recounting testimony that Kinkel was

"I don't care if you're sick ... I can't stand here and look at you without wanting to kill you."

JAKE RYKER
victim of school shooting

psychotic and driven by hallucinatory voices to commit the murders in May 1998.

Kinkel insisted he loved his parents, who were killed after he was expelled from school for having a stolen gun in his locker.

Ryker was one of the 50 victims - most of the wounded students and many of their parents - who stood one by one to express with tears and anger their desire that Kinkel spend the rest of his life in prison.

Many parents cried, and one had to be told by the judge not to threaten Kinkel.

Students described how their grades had gone down, old friends had deserted them and they were haunted by nightmares.

Despite his heroism, Ryker said he was plagued by guilt for not acting quickly enough to save his friend, Mikael Nickolauson, who lay dead underneath a cafeteria table before Ryker tackled Kinkel.

"I question whether I should have pulled the trigger" and killed Kinkel, Ryker said.

A few expressed forgiveness, but none expressed any greater understanding of what had happened.

"I ask myself every day, 'Why, Kip, why?'" said Rebecca Lynn, whose daughter, Betina, was almost paralyzed from a bullet to the back. "Why did I take Betina to the doctor every week for five months? Why did you shoot her? Why did you feel such need to destroy lives?"

World and Nation Datelines

Washington
Army says two divisions unprepared for major war

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Army has assessed two of its 10 divisions as unprepared for a major war, the first time in years any Army division has dropped to the lowest of four possible readiness levels, officials said Wednesday.

A recent classified assessment placed the 10th Mountain Division, based at Fort Drum, N.Y., and the 1st Infantry Division, based in Germany, at "C-4," the lowest level of readiness, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki said.

Shinseki confirmed the lower ratings in a meeting with defense reporters. He said the problem was mainly a shortage of military personnel rather than a lack of equipment or a deterioration in training.

West Bank
Barak approves partial West Bank withdrawal

HAVAT MAON, West Bank (AP) - Prime Minister Ehud Barak's Cabinet on Wednesday approved a troop withdrawal from 5 percent of the West Bank, hours after Israeli troops dragged hundreds of Jewish settlers, some kicking and others hurling red paint, out of a key encampment.

Settlers climbed on rooftops, clung to door frames and flung themselves to the ground, making it harder for unarmed soldiers and police officers to forcibly evacuate them from the barren hilltop to waiting buses.

Washington
Clinton delays, shortens his visit to Greece

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Clinton will delay and shorten a trip to Greece amid security concerns and the prospect of anti-American protests, the White House said Wednesday.

Presidential spokesman Joe Lockhart said the delay had been requested by the Greek government. Clinton will travel to Athens on Nov. 19 and 20; he was to have arrived there on Saturday for a state visit at the beginning of a European trip. Instead, he will leave Washington on Sunday morning and fly to Turkey.

Washington
Supreme Court ponders nude dancing laws

WASHINGTON (AP) - In a courtroom session far more colorful than most, the Supreme Court toured the far reaches of free-speech law Wednesday as it pondered what constitutional protections cloak nude dancing.

"Nude entertainment has become a significant staple of the American scene ... 3,000 adult clubs nationwide," lawyer John Weston contended as he attacked a public-indecency ordinance in Erie, Pa., that required women who work as barroom dancers to wear at least pasties and a G-string.

Justice Stephen G. Breyer suggested that some forms of nude dancing "have as much to do with expression as turning a mouse loose in a house."

The nation's highest court ruled in 1991 that nude dancing is a form of expression within the First Amendment's "outer perimeters."

Daily Nebraskan

Questions? Comments?
Ask for the appropriate section editor at (402) 472-2588 or e-mail dn@unl.edu.

Editor: Josh Funk	General Manager: Daniel Shattil
Managing Editor: Sarah Baker	Publications Board Chairwoman: Jessica Hofmann, (402) 477-0527
Associate News Editor: Lindsay Young	Professional Adviser: Don Walton, (402) 473-7248
Associate News Editor: Jessica Fargen	Advertising Manager: Nick Patsch, (402) 472-2589
Opinion Editor: Mark Baldrige	Asst. Ad Manager: Jamie Yeager
Sports Editor: Dave Wilson	Classified Ad Manager: Mary Johnson
A&E Editor: Liza Holtmeier	
Copy Desk Chief: Diane Broderick	
Photo Chief: Lane Hickenbottom	
Design Chief: Melanie Falk	
Art Director: Matt Haney	
Web Editor: Gregg Stearns	
Asst. Web Editor: Jennifer Walker	

Fax number: (402) 472-1761

World Wide Web: www.dailynet.com

The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 20, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year, weekly during the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.

Subscriptions are \$60 for one year.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 20, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.

ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1999

THE DAILY NEBRASKAN