

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.

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

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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