

# MH17 probe team close to wrapping it up

> Investigator recalls challenge of war zone duty in harsh cold climate

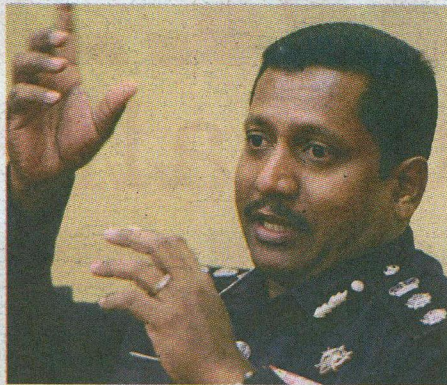
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**PUTRAJAYA:** The Malaysian team investigating the MH17 tragedy has almost completed its assignment in the Ukraine of identifying the remains of Malaysian victims on board the flight.

The Malaysian Disaster Investigation and Identification (DVI) team carried out its difficult task in a war zone under harsh cold weather conditions.

ACP Hussein Omar Khan (pix), who was one of the first Malaysian investigators to arrive at the location near the Russian border to help identify the remains, described the hardships involved in working in an unfamiliar environment.



He said the work to bring back the remains of the Malaysians was 99% completed

“We had an orthodontist and other specialists like fingerprint experts to assist with the identification process.

“We made sure all procedures were followed and the identification process

was done properly and accurately,” he said at the International Conference on Environment Forensics organised by Faculty of Environmental Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) yesterday.

He said the biggest challenge the investigators faced was working in a conflict zone where they could hear gunfire and there was always the hazard of booby traps.

“In fact, during the final mission in April this year, only the Netherlands and Malaysia went ahead with the search for remains and other personal belongings,” he said. “Australia didn’t participate as it was a very high risk area for booby traps.”

On July 17, last year, MH17 lost contact about 50km from Ukraine’s border with Russia and crashed near Torez in the Donetsk Oblast region of Ukraine. All 283 passengers and 15 crew members were killed. There were 43 Malaysians on board the flight.