

Malaysia Airlines Bodies Rained Down on Ukrainian Homes

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 18, 2014



Members of the Ukrainian Emergency Ministry search for bodies near the site of Thursday's Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 plane crash near the settlement of Grabovo, in the Donetsk region July 18, 2014.

First came the loud explosion that made buildings rattle: then it started raining bodies.

One of the corpses fell through the rickety roof of Irina Tipunova's house in this sleepy village, just after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 exploded high over eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russian separatists are fighting government forces.

"There was a howling noise and everything started to rattle. Then objects started falling out of the sky," the 65-year-old pensioner said in front of her grey-brick home.

"And then I heard a roar and she landed in the kitchen, the roof was broken," she said, showing the gaping hole made by the body when it came through the ceiling of the kitchen in an extension to the house.

The dead woman's naked body was still lying inside the house, next to a bed.

About 100 meters from Tipunova's home, dozens more dead bodies lay in the wheat fields where the airliner came down on Thursday, killing all 298 people on board.

Still visibly shaken by her experience, Tipunova said: "The body's still here because they told me to wait for experts to come and get it."

Another local resident in her 20s who refused to give her name said she ran outside after hearing the plane explode.

"I opened the door and I saw people falling. One fell in my vegetable patch," she said.

Red Rose and Plastic Sheets

It was not only bodies that fell from the sky. Chunks of metal, pieces of luggage and other debris came crashing down to the ground in this agricultural area about 40 kilometers from the border with Russia.

The front of the plane fell in a field of sunflowers about one kilometer from Tipunova's home. Debris, bodies and body parts were scattered for miles around.

Rescue workers say they have found most of the corpses, some of them largely intact, others mangled. Some have been piled together but others lie where they fell, the place identified by sticks placed in the ground with white cloth attached.

Some of the corpses have been wrapped in almost transparent plastic sheets, the corners held down with small mounds of soil or stones. Pairs of uncovered legs poke out from under some of the sheets, and at least one had a red carnation on top.

Among the dead were many women and children, including a boy of about 10 still lying beside the cockpit, his small body covered by a plastic sheet.

Much of the scene was in chaos 24 hours after the plane was brought down. Abandoned shoes lay all around, with boxes of tablets that spilled out of a medical cabinet, empty suitcases and articles of clothing strewn over the fields.

In an effort to clean up some of the carnage, body parts have been washed off the pot-holed road where they fell to the earth, along with parts of the fuselage and wings showing the red and blue Malaysia Airlines logo.

Emergency workers, few in numbers on Thursday, had arrived in force by Friday, setting up base in two large tents. Journalists and local residents wandered largely unimpeded through the ashes and charred wreckage.

Rebel fighters in combat fatigues watched the proceedings nervously. Kiev has accused them of shooting down the plane, but they have denied this and are pledging not to prevent an international investigation going ahead.

The constant sound of mortar fire and shooting in the distance served as a reminder of the conflict raging between the separatist rebels and the government forces who are trying to quell their three-month old revolt against rule from Kiev.

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