

Investigation Into A321 Jet Crash Enters Final Stage, Putin Says

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A child's shoe is seen in front of debris from a Russian airliner which crashed at the Hassana area in Arish city, north Egypt, Nov. 1, 2015.

President Vladimir Putin announced Monday during a meeting with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi that Moscow's official investigation into the crash of a Russian airliner last month was coming to a close, the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

"Our investigation of the evidence has entered the final stage," Putin was quoted as saying.

According to Russian media, the declaration contradicted earlier statements from presidential head of administration Sergei Ivanov, who had suggested that the probe was unlikely to yield conclusions before the end of 2015.

"I have taken part in the investigation of several aviation disasters before, and I strongly doubt [results will be in] this year," he was reported as saying by the Gazeta.ru news website last week.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov had previously declined to comment on any statements related to the crash due to "an abundance of false information" and "hoaxes," Gazeta.ru reported.

On Oct. 31, a Kogalymavia airplane traveling from Egypt's Sharm el-Sheikh to St. Petersburg crashed in the Sinai Peninsula, killing all 224 people on board.

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