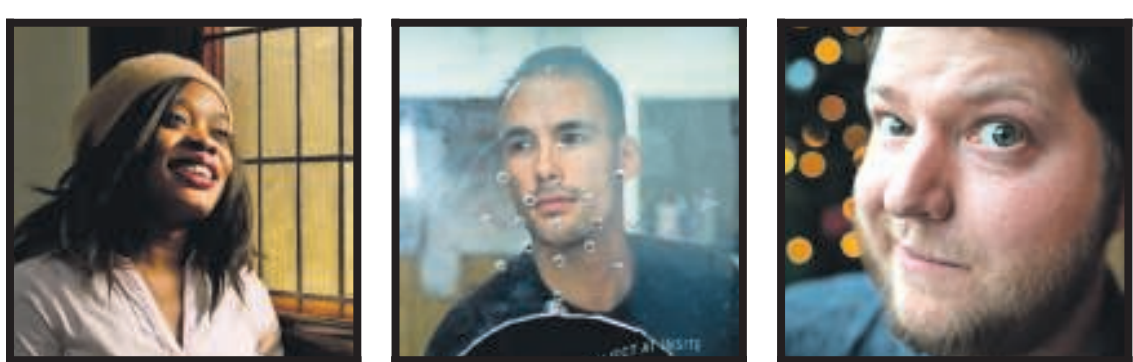




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AVIATION

Anguish and mystery after AirAsia jet disappears

Flight 8501, with 162 people aboard, vanishes over Indonesia



Family members of passengers on AirAsia Flight 8501 await news of the airliner in Juanda International Airport in Indonesia. BEAWIHARTA/REUTERS

THOMAS FULLER BANGKOK

A search-and-rescue operation resumed Monday for a commercial airliner with 162 people on board that lost contact with ground controllers off the coast of Borneo, an effort that evoked a distressingly familiar mix of grief and mystery nine months after a Malaysia Airlines jetliner disappeared over the Indian Ocean.

This plane, too, had Malaysian connections: The Airbus A320-200 that was reported missing Sunday was operated by the Indonesian affiliate of AirAsia, a regional budget carrier based in Malaysia.

And while it seemed premature to make such comparisons, the Indonesian authorities could not explain Sunday why the AirAsia jet disappeared from radar screens about 40

minutes after leaving the Indonesian city of Surabaya around 5:30 a.m.

By nightfall, more than 12 hours later, searchers facing bad weather had found no sign of the wreckage and the search was called off for the night, Indonesian officials said.

The weather along the path of Flight 8501 to Singapore was cloudy, and a United States-based weather monitoring



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Tom says,



