Beat: Travel

Mozambican passenger plane carrying 34 goes missing in Namibia

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USPA News - Contact with a passenger plane flying from Mozambique to Angola was lost on Friday as it flew over a sparsely populated region of northern Namibia, airline and emergency officials said on early Saturday. The fate of the aircraft remains unknown.

LAM Mozambique Airlines flight TM 470 departed from the international airport in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, at 11:26 a.m. local time on Friday and was expected to land in the Angolan capital of Luanda at 2:10 p.m. local time. The flight, an Embraer 190 aircraft, did not land as scheduled, the airline said. "Information obtained indicates that the flight has landed in a location in northern Namibia," said airline spokesman Norberto Mucopa. He said the aircraft was near Rundu, a town that serves as the capital of the Kavango region in northern Namibia and is just a few hundred meters (feet) from the border with Angola, when it disappeared. Mucopa said flight TM 470 was carrying 28 passengers and six crew members, but their nationalities were not immediately known. "LAM, Aeronautical and Airport authorities are establishing contacts with the authorities close to the location in order to confirm this information," the spokesman added. Mozambique Airlines, along with all other air carriers that have been certified in Mozambique, are banned from operating in the European Union (EU). The country was added to the union`s list of banned airliners in April 2011, with EU officials saying the civil aviation authorities in the African country faced "significant deficiencies." That said, Mozambique Airlines has never suffered fatal accidents since it commenced operations in December 1937. The most recent incident happened in October 1998 when a South African Airways aircraft leased by Mozambique Airlines caught fire after taking off from Maputo, but the plane was able to carry out an emergency landing and none of the 66 people on board were killed.

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