

Horrific Delhi factory blaze kills 43

- Nearly 150 fire personnel carried out the rescue operation

- Pulled out 63 people from the building

- Two fire personnel also sustained injuries

- Many of those killed and injured were fast asleep when the fire broke out

- Most of the people died due to asphyxia

- PM Modi announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakhs each from Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for next of kin of those who have lost their lives due to tragic fire in Delhi. PM has also approved Rs 50,000 each for those seriously injured in the fire

AFP | New Delhi

At least 43 people have died in a factory fire in India's capital New Delhi, with the toll expected to rise, police said.

The blaze broke out in the early hours in the city's old quarter, whose narrow and congested lanes are lined with many small manufacturing and storage units.

"We... have since rescued at least 50 people," Sunil Choudhary, New Delhi's deputy chief fire officer, said.

They were "labourers and factory workers sleeping inside this four-or-five storey building," he said, adding that the fire had been extinguished but rescue operations were ongoing.

A senior Delhi police official said eight or nine people were carried out later, bringing the overall number rescued to at least 58.

Fire officials said it was very difficult to access the dark, poorly lit premises in the commercial hub of Sadar Bazar.

Local news channels aired footage of firemen carrying people out of the narrow lanes to nearby emergency vehicles.

The building was filled with school bags and packing material, fire officials said, but cautioned that they were still unsure about the cause of the blaze.

Monika Bhardwaj, the deputy police commissioner of Delhi's north district said that the death toll from the incident had jumped to "43, with 16 others still admitted at the local hospitals."

"Fire department has completed the rescue work. There are no more bodies at the site. We don't yet know the cause of fire but know that it was aggra-



Members of India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) head towards the site of a fire that swept through a factory where laborers were sleeping, in New Delhi



Firemen made their way through narrow lanes



A fire engine is seen at the site of the fire



The site of the fire



Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal met the injured

Fireman saves 11 people trapped

PTI | New Delhi

One of the first firemen to enter the blazing building in Anaj Mandi area, Delhi Fire Service personnel Rajesh Shukla saved 11 people from the inferno on Sunday.

Shukla injured his legs in the rescue operation and is recuperating in LNJP Hospital.

Delhi Home Minister Satyendra Jain met Shukla at the hospital.

"Fireman Rajesh Shukla is a real hero. He was the first fireman to enter the fire spot and he saved around 11 lives. He did his job till the end despite of



Delhi Home Minister Satyendra Jain visting Shukla

his bone injuries. Salute to this brave hero (sic)," Jain tweeted.

vated because of plastic packing pouches, bags and other such material there," Bhardwaj added. "Most who've died were sleeping when the fire broke out

and died due to asphyxiation," Sadar Bazar's assistant commissioner of police said.

Many factories and small manufacturing units in big Indi-



Onlookers gathered waiting for news from authorities following the blaze

an cities are often located in old, cramped quarters of the cities, where the cost of land is relatively cheaper. Such units often also serve as sleeping quarters

for poor, mostly migrant labourers and workers, who manage to save money by sleeping overnight at their workplaces.

Lack of planning and lax en-

Narendra Modi
@narendramodi

The fire in Delhi's Anaj Mandi on Rani Jhansi Road is extremely horrific. My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones. Wishing the injured a quick recovery. Authorities are providing all possible assistance at the site of the tragedy.

Amit Shah
@AmitShah

Tragic loss of precious lives in the fire accident in New Delhi. My deepest condolences with families of those who have lost their loved ones. I pray for the early recovery of the injured. Have instructed concerned authorities to provide all possible assistance on urgent basis.

Arvind Kejriwal
@ArvindKejriwal

We have lost more than 40 innocent lives to the tragic fire. I've ordered a magisterial inquiry into its cause, no culprit will be spared. We can't bring back lost lives, but Delhi govt will provide 10 L assistance to families that lost their loved ones & 1L for the injured.

Rahul Gandhi
@RahulGandhi

I am hurt with the deaths of several people and injuries to many in a major fire in Delhi's Anaj Mandi. I express my condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of those injured.

forcement of building and safety regulations often leads to such deadly accidents.

"The fire in Delhi's Anaj Mandi on Rani Jhansi Road is extremely horrific. My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones," Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on Twitter.

"Wishing the injured a quick recovery. Authorities are providing all possible assistance at the site of the tragedy," he added.

Arvind Kejriwal, the chief minister of Delhi, described the incident as "very very tragic news."