

# Huge sinkhole swallows bus, kills six in China



A bus and several passersby fell into the huge sinkhole as it spread



Chinese rescuers watch as a bus is lifted out after a collapsed road in Xining in China's north-western Qinghai province

AFP | Beijing

An enormous sinkhole swallowed a bus and pedestrians in northwest China, sparking an explosion, killing six people and leaving four more missing, state media said yesterday.

Footage showed people at a bus stop running from the collapsing road as the vehicle -- jutting into the air -- sank into

the ground.

Several people disappeared into the sinkhole as it spread, including what appeared to be a child. The incident also triggered an explosion inside the hole, video showed.

Sinkholes are not unknown in China, where they are often blamed on construction works and the country's rapid pace of development.

The incident occurred at

around 5:30 pm (0930 GMT) on Monday in Xining, the capital of Qinghai province, the state-run broadcaster CCTV said.

A search and rescue operation involving more than 1,000 people and 30 vehicles was underway, according to the official *Xinhua* news agency. An investi-



The sinkhole opened up at a bus stop in Xining, north west China

gation into the cause has been opened.

Video footage published by state broadcaster CGTN showed a person being pulled from the hole by rescue workers.

The collapse left an 80-square-metre (860-square-foot) pit in the street outside a

hospital.

The 16 injured were taken to hospital and are in a stable condition, *Xinhua* added, citing a local emergency management official.

An earlier report indicated that 10 people were missing but *Xinhua* said four were unaccounted for.

In 2016, at least three people fell into a huge sinkhole in

central Henan province, which swallowed a section of road and passersby.

An initial investigation showed the collapse might have been caused by water pipes buried under the road breaking up due to the rain.

In 2013, five people died when a 10-metre (33-foot) wide sinkhole opened up at the gates of an industrial estate in Shenzhen.

## How the world discovered the Nazi death camps

Paris

Images of what the Allies found when they liberated the first Nazi death camps towards the end of World War II brought the horror of the Holocaust to world attention.

Many of the ghastly pictures were at first held back from the broader public, partly out of concern for those with missing relatives.

The concentration and extermination camps were liberated one by one as the Allied armies advanced on Berlin in the final days of the 1939-1945 war.

The first was Majdanek in eastern Poland, which was freed on July 24, 1944 by the advancing Soviet Red Army.

But it was only the following year that media coverage was encouraged by the provisional government led by General Charles De Gaulle set up after the liberation of France.

### 'Death Marches'

In June 1944, as it became



Although the first arrivals at Nazi death camps like Auschwitz documented the horrors they found there, some of the more disturbing images were initially kept back from publication

clear that Germany was losing the war, Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler ordered that camps be evacuated before they were reached by Allied troops, and that their prisoners be transferred to other camps.

This mainly concerned camps

in the Baltic States that were most exposed to advancing Soviet troops. Officers of the SS paramilitary in charge were ordered to cover up all traces of crimes before fleeing.

The sprawling Auschwitz-Birkenau complex

in southern Poland, liberated by the Red Army on January 27, 1945, was gradually dismantled from mid-1944 and its more than 60,000 prisoners evacuated.

When the Soviets arrived, only 7,000 prisoners remained, unable to walk and to follow

their comrades on what became known as "Death Marches" to other camps.

### Images not widely shared

The discovery of the first camps had little impact on the public at large because the images were not widely shared.

Russian and Polish investigators photographed the camps at Majdanek and Auschwitz, and US army photographers made a documentary on Struthof, the only Nazi concentration camp based in what is now France.

But France in particular did not want them broadcast to avoid alarming people with relatives who were missing after being deported, captured or conscripted.

A turning point came on April 6, 1945 with the discovery of Ohrdruf, an annex of the Buchenwald camp in Germany.

### 'Indescribable horror'

When American forces --

accompanied by US war correspondent Meyer Levin and photographer Eric Schwab -- entered Ohrdruf, they came across a still-blazing inferno and skeletal prisoners executed with a bullet to the head.

The Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, Dwight Eisenhower, visited the camp on April 12, describing afterwards "conditions of indescribable horror".

The Allied leadership decided immediately that all censorship should be lifted so the world could see evidence of the Nazi atrocities.

That evening France's communist daily *Ce Soir* published on its front page a picture of a mass grave.

Days later Eisenhower said journalists should visit camps "where the evidence of bestiality and cruelty is so overpowering as to leave no doubt in their minds about the normal practices of the Germans".

## Canada yet to decide if it will pay Harry, Meghan security costs

Montreal

The Canadian government has yet to decide whether it will assume the security costs associated with Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's decision to split their time between Canada and Britain, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said yesterday.

"I think that is part of the reflection that... needs to be had, and there are discussions going on," Trudeau said in an interview with Canadian television channel Global.

"We're not entirely sure what the final decisions will be, where the dispositions are and those are decisions for them," he said.



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said there are 'discussions going on' as to whether his country will cover security costs for Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle (pictured November 2017) as they split their time between Canada and Britain

Harry and Meghan caught the world off guard last week when they announced their intention to step back from frontline royal duties.

According to Trudeau, Canadians are "very supportive" of having the royal couple live in Canada, but there are still "lots of discussions to have."

"We haven't spent any time thinking about this issue," said Canadian finance minister Bill Morneau, who was interviewed earlier Monday about British press reports that Trudeau had assured Queen Elizabeth II that Canada would cover security costs for Harry and Meghan.

"We obviously are always looking to make sure, as a member of the Commonwealth, we play a role," Morneau said.

British press had reported Canada would contribute \$650,000 (500,000 pounds) per year.

Canadian media have estimated that protecting the couple and their baby son Archie would cost about \$1.3 million (Can\$1.7 million) per year.

Canadian taxpayers have traditionally contributed towards security costs when members of the Royal Family visit the country.

Prince Harry and Meghan, formally known as the Duke and

Duchess of Sussex, have said their official plan is to continue to "fully support" the queen and honour their duties to the Commonwealth and their patronages.

But they want to make 2020 a transition year to carve out their new role and launch their new Sussex Royal charitable entity and seek to raise their own sources of income.

On Monday, Queen Elizabeth II allowed her grandson Harry and Meghan to split their time between Canada and Britain.

But she frankly admitted that the couple's decision was not welcome news.