

Four dead, 12 feared trapped after Mumbai building collapse



Indian fire brigade personnel and rescue workers look for survivors after a building collapsed in Mumbai

Mumbai, India

Four people were killed and at least others 12 feared trapped under rubble after a building collapsed as heavy monsoon rains lashed India's financial capital Mumbai yesterday, officials said, the second such tragedy in two weeks.

Torrential downpours have swept away homes, triggered landslides and claimed at least 180 lives across South Asia.

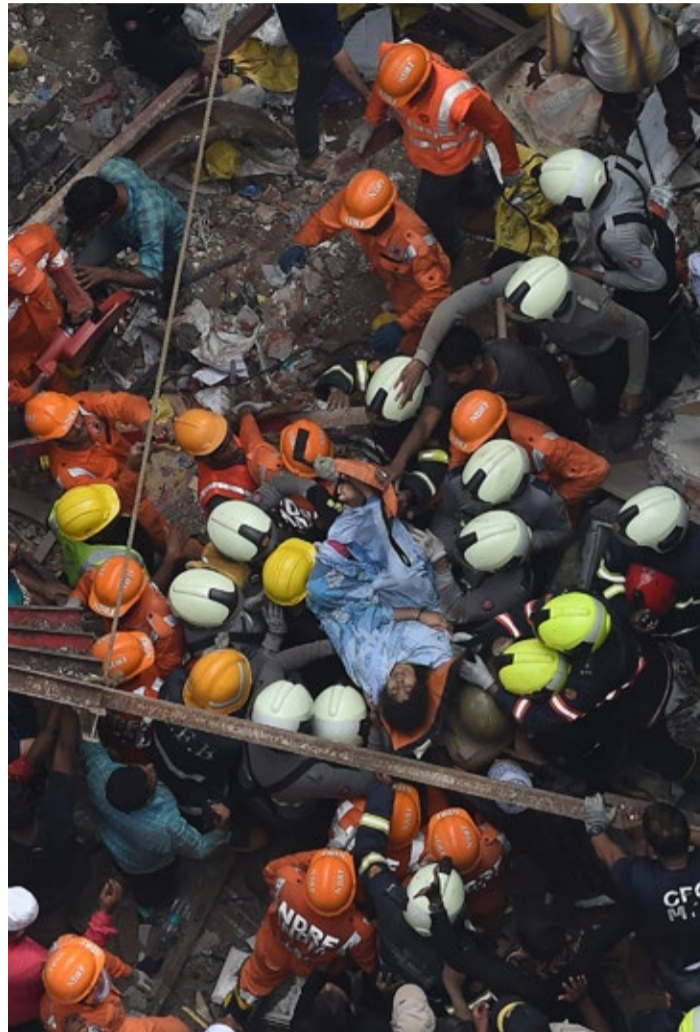
"Four people are dead and over 12 people are still stuck

under the rubble," disaster management spokesman Tanaji Kamble said of the building collapse in southern Mumbai's congested Dongri area.

"Eight injured have been sent to hospitals and rescue operations are ongoing."

Two teams from India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) as well as local volunteers, the fire department and police officials were scouring the rubble for survivors.

Volunteers could be seen recovering household items including furniture from the



Indian fire brigade personnel and rescue workers look for survivors after a building collapsed in Mumbai

debris.

"The building collapse sounded like an earthquake and we rushed to the spot to check the loud noise," a local resident told Indian news channel NDTV.

Another resident said the building was more than a century old and had 10 families living

inside despite its dilapidated condition.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted his condolences to the victims' families, describing the incident as "anguishing".

Earlier this month, a wall collapsed in the city, killing 29 people.

Pakistan reopens airspace, ending months of restrictions



The closure forced Pakistan International Airlines to suspend some of its flights

AFP | Karachi

Pakistan yesterday fully reopened its airspace for all civilian traffic, ending months of restrictions affecting major international routes including from India after clashes between the nuclear-armed rivals brought them to the brink of war.

"With immediate effect Pakistan airspace is open for all type of civil traffic," the state-run Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said.

A CAA spokesman confirmed that the eastern airspace along the border with India had been reopened.

Pakistan closed its airspace completely after aerial dog-fights in February ratcheted up tensions between Islamabad and New Delhi. It removed some restrictions a month later but kept constraints in place along its eastern border with India.

The closure disrupted Indian flights headed west, forced Pakistan International Airlines to suspend some of its flights, and effectively closed off major international routes in and out of Islamabad and Lahore, such as the Thai Airways route

from Islamabad to Bangkok.

The crisis between the countries was first sparked by a suicide bombing in Kashmir in February that killed 40 security personnel and was later claimed by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad.

Days later India responded with a cross-border air raid on Pakistan that kicked off a quick succession of attacks and dog-fights between the arch-rivals, spurring fears of all-out war.

Pakistani and Indian soldiers have continued to fire over the Line of Control, the de facto border, killing several civilians on both sides.

With immediate effect Pakistan airspace is open for all type of civil traffic

THE STATE-RUN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (CAA)

AIDS deaths down a third since 2010: United Nations

Paris

HIV-related deaths last year fell to around 770,000 -- some 33 per cent lower than in 2010 -- the United Nations said yesterday, but warned that global efforts to eradicate the disease were stalling as funding dries up.

An estimated 37.9 million people now live with HIV -- a record 23.3 million of those have access to some antiretroviral therapy

(ART), UNAIDS said in its annual report.

Highlighting the enormous progress made since the height of the AIDS epidemic in the mid-1990s, the report showed that the number of people dying from the disease fell from 800,000 in 2010 to 770,000 last year.

The figure was down by more than a third from 2010, when there were 1.2 million AIDS-related deaths.

But it also exposed weaknesses in the world's fight against AIDS.

While AIDS-related deaths in Africa, the continent most affected by the epidemic, have plummeted this decade, Eastern Europe has seen the death toll rise 5pc and the Middle East and North Africa 9pc.

Year-on-year, those same regions saw a 29pc and 10pc rise in new infections, respectively.



Decades of research have yet to yield a cure or vaccine for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which has infected almost 80 million people and killed more than 35 million since the early 1980s.

The UN said that more than half of new HIV infections globally come from "key populations" -- intravenous drug users, gay men, transgender people, sex workers and prisoners.

Despite this, the report said that under 50 percent of these at-risk populations were reached by HIV prevention services in more than half of countries.

Another vulnerable group is children, with more than 160,000 new HIV infections last year. The report also warned that a lack of political will coupled with decreasing finance risked undermining the progress made so far.

Macron pressed Putin for release of French investor

Paris, France

French President Emmanuel Macron last month urged his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to help release arrested French businessman Philippe Delpal, an aide to Macron said yesterday.

Delpal, a senior executive at Baring Vostok private equity group, was arrested in February along with its American founder and CEO Michael Calvey in a case that has shaken the Western business community in Russia.

Macron raised the case during talks with Putin during the G20 summit in Japan at the end of June, an aide said on condition of anonymity.

"We are continuing to work to secure his release," he said,



French banker Philippe Delpal arrives to a court hearing on whether to extend his detention in Moscow's Basmanny Court

adding the arrest "was damaging for Russia's image in the business world."

Delpal, who has lived in

Russia with his wife and two children for the last 15 years, has been accused of defrauding Vostochny Bank of 2.5 billion

rubles (\$38.7 million).

A court last month ruled that Calvey should be moved to house arrest, but Delpal and four others remain in pre-trial detention.

Calvey has argued that the case against him has been fabricated by a rival businessman using the criminal justice system for corporate benefit.

In a statement Monday, Baring Vostok said the arrested executives are key witnesses in an arbitration case over fraud set to be considered in London in January 2020.

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe also raised the case of Delpal with his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev during a meeting in northern France on June 24.

Duterte mulls cutting Iceland ties over UN probe

Manila

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is "seriously considering" cutting his nation's diplomatic ties with Iceland after it spearheaded a UN resolution to probe his deadly drug war, the leader's spokesman said.

Duterte bristles at any Western condemnation of his signature campaign, which has killed thousands and critics say could amount to crimes against humanity.

The comments late Monday from presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo came in response to the UN Human Rights Council last week backing the Iceland-proposed resolution to review the killings.



Rodrigo Duterte

"(Duterte) is seriously considering cutting diplomatic relations with Iceland," Panelo said in a statement.

"The adopted Iceland resolution is grotesquely one-sided, outrageously narrow, and maliciously partisan," he added. Duterte launched the anti-drug crackdown in 2016, and since then police say they have killed over 5,300 drug suspects.