

Beat: Travel

Death toll in Bangladesh building collapse reaches 256

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USPA News - Rescue workers have so far recovered the bodies of 256 people after an eight-story building collapsed in Bangladesh, local authorities said on Thursday, as hopes of finding survivors among hundreds of people who may still be trapped began to fade. The deadly accident occurred in Savar, located on the outskirts of the capital Dhaka, when the building collapsed at around 9 a.m. local time on Wednesday.

It is believed no less than 3,000 people were working in the building, from which five clothing factories were operating. Emergency teams, consisting of firefighters, army personnel, and members of Border Guard Bangladesh, have continued to desperately search for survivors among the rubble. More than 2,000 people were rescued alive in the first hours after the collapse, but at least 256 bodies had been recovered by late Thursday evening. Thousands of local residents and family members are also at the scene, volunteering in relief work and supplying liquids and oxygen to those trapped under the rubble and to rescue workers. Local officials said they believed those trapped - believed to be several hundreds of people - could possibly survive until Saturday morning, but the chances of finding survivors are diminishing quickly. Charles Kernaghan, Institute for Global Labor and Human Rights chief, said building workers had discovered a large crack on Tuesday and left the building, but the owner claimed it was safe and warned workers that they would not be paid if they did not return to work. Savar Upazila Chairman Firoz Kabir said the building had been ordered to shut down until details about its condition were known, but police orders to evacuate were not followed. Similar accidents are not uncommon in Bangladesh due to poorly regulated safety standards, but Wednesday's accident appears the most deadly industrial accident in the country to date. At least 70 people were killed in 2005 when another garment factory collapsed on the outskirts of Dhaka.

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