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1. London fire: Frantic search for loved ones missing in Grenfell Tower inferno; Screams heard as residents were trapped in the burning 24-storey tower

London fire: Frantic search for loved ones missing in Grenfell Tower inferno; Screams heard as residents were trapped in the burning 24-storey tower

The Independent (United Kingdom)

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Body

Witnesses have described people screaming from windows as a massive fire broke out in a tower block in west London in the early hours of the morning.

People are still frantically searching for loved ones as the London Fire Commissioner confirmed there have been "a number of fatalities" as the fire engulfed nearly all 24 storeys of Grenfell Tower after it began at around 1am.

Dany Cotton said she had "never ever seen anything on this scale" in 29 years as a firefighter.

Sadiq Khan, the London Mayor, said at 10am that "a lot of people" remain unaccounted for.

[Read more](#)

[Deaths reported in Grenfell Tower fire](#)

[Grenfell Tower residents warned of potential 'major disaster' in 2016](#)

[Huge inferno at London tower block leaves 'many trapped'](#)

More than 200 firefighters and 40 fire engines attended the scene and more than 50 people have been taken to five hospitals.

The fire is believed to have begun on one of the lower floors before spreading rapidly up a corner of the building.

Pictures from the scene showed flames engulfing the block and a plume of smoke visible across the capital, while others showed residents looking out of windows in the block.

The leader of Kensington and Chelsea Borough Nick Paget-Brown said "several hundred" people would have been in the block when the fire broke out.

Witnesses at the scene described fear and panic with one woman at the scene reportedly "screaming and crying" outside the police cordon.

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Jody Martin said he got to the scene as the first fire engine arrived and saw a desperate mother holding her baby out of the window.

He told the BBC: "I watched one person falling out, I watched another woman holding her baby out the window... hearing screams, I was yelling everyone to get down and they were saying 'We can't leave our apartments, the smoke is too bad on the corridors'."

One woman shared an image of her 13-year-old niece, Jessica Urbano, who lives on the 20th floor and became separated from her family during the evacuation.

She said Jessica does not have a phone and they are still looking for her.

#GrenfellTower my 13 year old niece Jessi has become separated from her family during evacuation. Please DM me if you see her pic.twitter.com/WRgQhw8wa4

- Sandra (@Sandragr372) June 14, 2017

#missing #latimerroad #pleasehelp #GrenfellTower
pic.twitter.com/HTzYdDf8NQ

- Millie Hayward (@millie_hayward) June 14, 2017

Suha has an elderly relative missing, who lives on the 20th floor of the Grenfell Tower @LBC pic.twitter.com/uDRzWNRuDT

- Rachael Venables (@rachaelvenables) June 14, 2017

Many of the missing are believed to be elderly.

Bayan Sied and Nadia Yosuf, who live on the 15th floor, said they were still waiting for news about family members who live on floors above.

Mr Sied told BuzzFeed News: "We've got family inside, we still don't know, there are a lot of people missing. They live on the 23rd floor, the 19th floor, there are children missing. We haven't seen many survivors.

"There's a lot of people we know, we haven't seen them, we don't know what's going to happen. We still have family and friends missing. We're hearing stories some people are being treated at St Mary's Hospital for burns, but that's it. We're just standing here waiting."

Another resident, who gave his name as Daniel, said a friend's mother was missing.

He said they had been speaking on the phone for the first few hours while she was trapped upstairs but the phone line had been cut off and he had not heard from her since.

Residents have been told to head to a nearby community centre, the Harrow Centre, for help and shelter.

People are being advised to look for missing loved ones there or call a special line set up by the Metropolitan Police on 0800 096 1233.

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Additional reporting by PA

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