

Search continues after Pakistan building collapse kills 14

AFP:: Rescue teams pulled more bodies from the rubble of a five-storey building collapse in Pakistan overnight, taking the toll on Saturday to 14 as the recovery operation continued for a second day.

The residential block crumbled shortly after 10:00 am on Friday in the impoverished Lyari neighbourhood of Karachi, which was once plagued by gang violence and considered one of the most dangerous areas in Pakistan.

Abid Jalaluddin Shaikh, leading the government's 1122 rescue service at the scene, told AFP the operation continued through the night "without interruption".

"It may take eight to 12 hours more to complete," he said.

Police official Summiaya Syed, at a Karachi hospital where the bodies were received, told AFP that the death toll on Saturday morning stood at 14, half of them women, with 13 injured.

Up to 100 people had been living in the building, senior police officer Arif Aziz told AFP.

All six members of 70-year-old Jumho Maheshwari's family were at his flat on the first floor when he left for work early in the morning.

"Nothing is left for me now – my family is all trapped and all I can do is pray for their safe recovery," he told AFP on Friday afternoon.

Another resident, Maya Sham Jee, said her brother's family was also trapped under the rubble.

"It's a tragedy for us. The world has been changed for our family," she told AFP.

"We are helpless and just looking at the rescue workers to bring our loved ones back safely."

Shankar Kamho, 30, a resident of the building who was out at the time, said around 20 families were living inside.

He described how his wife called him in a panic that the building was cracking.

I told her to get out immediately," he told AFP at the scene.

"She went to warn the neighbours, but one woman told her 'this building will stand for at least 10 more years'," he said.

"Still, my wife took our daughter and left. About 20 minutes later, the building collapsed."