

UK Police Say No Exact Grenfell Death Toll This Year



London, June 30 (RHC)-- The exact number of people killed in London's Grenfell block fire will remain unknown until at least the end of this year, police have confirmed.

The Metropolitan Police made the announcement as it released the latest findings of an investigation into the June 14th blaze that has taken at least 80 lives so far.

"What I can say is that we believe that around 80 people are either dead or sadly missing and I must presume that they are dead," Detective Superintendent Fiona McCormack said.

"It would have been impossible for anyone to produce a list before that showed exactly who was in Grenfell Tower that night -- which includes those people living there but also those visiting," she added.

The fire began from a malfunctioning bridge and spread all over the 2-story building through the cladding. The police chief said they have been able to speak to people from 106 of the 129 flats inside the building and confirm who had died there but the casualties from 23 flats remained unknown.

"At this stage, we must presume that no-one in those 23 flats survived," McCormack said, adding that they were preparing to let some families know that the remains of their loved ones were never going to be recovered.

In her report, the officer noted that some of the building's residents might have moved to upper floors in order to escape the flames, which means they could have gathered at one flat and lost their lives there.

The 23 flats in question were believed to be located between 11th and 23rd floors, the police report noted, adding that residents living on those floors had made 26 emergency calls.

Police said there were "utter devastation inside the flats" and there were still some apartments that were deemed too unsafe for further investigation.

The probe also found that at least 60 "companies and organizations" were involved in the building's refurbishment, the construction that is widely blamed for the quick spread of the fire.

Earlier, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn blasted Prime Minister Theresa May over her failure to re-house the Grenfell survivors two weeks after the tragedy. She had pledged to re-house everyone in the same area in three weeks.

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