

Fireworks Factory Explosion Kills at Least 47, Injures Dozen

Two explosions and a fire at a fireworks factory in the western outskirts of Indonesia's capital killed 47 people and injured dozens on Thursday, police said, and the death toll was expected to rise.

Thick plumes of dark smoke billowed from a factory warehouse in the Tangerang district of Jakarta, an industrial and manufacturing hub on the island of Java, TV broadcasts showed.

Hours later the burnout factory was still smoldering and there was a strong smell of burning plastic and chemicals.

Witnesses said there were two explosions, one at around 10 a.m. (0300 GMT) and another about three hours later, both of which could be heard miles away, media reports said.

A grisly video of the scene inside the warehouse, which was widely shared on social media, showed onlookers counting badly charred bodies.

"From the manifest we obtained, there were 103 workers. Of those 103 workers ... there were 46 who were injured," Jakarta police spokesman Argo Yuwono told Metro Television. "We also found some who had died. There are 47 bodies."

An official had earlier put the death toll at 30.

Yuwono said 10 people on the manifest who were not accounted for may have left with light injuries or not been working at the time of the blasts.

The online video and media images of the PT Panca Buana Cahaya Sukses warehouse showed smoldering ash and debris, with the

roof missing in some parts.

A search and rescue official, Deden Nurjaman, said bodies were still inside and he expected the death toll to climb. "People were burned so badly you couldn't see their faces ... It was really bad," said Nurjaman.

Industrial safety standards in Indonesia are often low and rules poorly enforced. There have been a series of major fires this year, including one that engulfed one of Jakarta's main markets.

At the scene of Thursday's disaster, the grass was scorched in an area around 10 meters from the site.

Forensic police worked in the fading light to examine the debris and were trying to set up floodlights as night fell.

A nearby mosque was holding prayers for the victims.

Fiza, a doctor in the emergency unit at Tangerang General Hospital, told Metro TV he was treating seven people, some of them with burns to more than 80 percent of their bodies. Three were in critical condition.

Syamsudin, a relative of two women who were being treated at the hospital, said the pair had only worked four days in the factory's packing division.

The factory had been operating for only two months, media said.

"We are still looking into the cause of the fire," police spokesman Yuwono said, adding that for now police were prioritizing evacuating victims.

Police were also investigating the factory's permit, he said.
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