

Survivors found as bulldozers begin cleaning up rubble

BHACHAU, India (AP)—Rescue workers pulled out more survivors Wednesday just as bulldozers began breaking down the walls of wrecked buildings — raising fears that people buried alive by a devastating earthquake could be killed by machines and explosives. The confirmed death count reached 12,000.

State officials said they believe 13,000 additional dead are buried in the rubble. Much of the relief effort now has turned to caring for the living, with volunteers setting up a huge Red Cross field hospital. At least 29,000 people were injured in the 7.9 magnitude quake that hit the western state of Gujarat on Friday. Haren Pandya, the Gujarat home minister,

said his toll of 25,000 dead was based on reports gathered from government agencies of bodies recovered, people reported missing and the estimated number still lying under debris.

Heavy construction equipment and explosives experts have been brought in to clear debris as rescuers give up hope of finding more survivors. Many experts say few people could survive more than 100 hours buried in the rubble — a mark that was crossed Tuesday afternoon.

Still, rescuers working in the rubble, dust and the stench of decaying flesh found a few survivors Wednesday.

Just as bulldozers smashed into the wall

of a damaged three-story apartment building in Bhachau, Russian rescuers heard a woman screaming. The 71-member Russian team stopped the bulldozers and began searching, and saw her hand grabbing at them from under a flattened concrete wall.

One Russian rescuer held the woman's hand until the masonry was moved, then pulled Kuntal Thakkar, 22, to safety. She was rushed to a hospital. Her brother-in-law, Anil Thakkar, then crawled into the hole in the rubble. He emerged, saying Kuntal's husband had replied from inside the ruins, "I can see the light. I'm OK."

"He's telling me he wants water, that he's

safe, only his left hand is blocked so he can't come out," Thakkar said while the Russians worked to free his brother.

"For six days, they talked to each other," he said of the couple after the husband was pulled out, put on a stretcher and announced he was "feeling fine."

A block away, the same Russian team rescued another man earlier in the day.

In Bhuj, the town closest to the epicenter, an army team rescued a 12-year-old girl named Prianka. A demolition team hammering its way through a destroyed apartment block in Ahmedabad discovered 55-year-old Joyotsna Gandhi still alive, next to the body of her teen-age son.

A search team based in Wales headed for India on Wednesday.

"In other disasters we've been to we've always found this to be the case, that people have come out days and days after most teams have given up and gone home. So we feel that there is so much that hasn't been searched, we should give it a go," Russ Vaughan, leader of the eight-man team, said at Heathrow airport near London.

The international response included volunteers from Germany, Finland, Belgium, India and the United States who put up tent poles Wednesday for what will soon be the largest field hospital the Red Cross has ever run.

Libyan sentenced to life for terrorism

CAMP ZEIST, Netherlands (AP)—In a verdict that linked Libya to terrorism, a Scottish court gave a life sentence Wednesday to a Libyan intelligence agent for the murder of 270 people in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 but acquitted a second Libyan.

Tears and jubilation from victims' relatives greeted the guilty verdict read out by presiding judge Lord Randal Sutherland. The three-judge court said it was allowing Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, 48, the prospect of parole in 20 years in view of his age and the fact that he was serving his sentence in a foreign country.

The court said it accepted "the evidence that (al-Megrahi) was a member of the JSO, occupying posts of fairly high rank." The JSO is the Libyan intelligence service.

It convicted al-Megrahi of charges that he carried out a "criminal purpose to destroy a civil passenger aircraft and murder the occupants in furtherance of the purposes of said Libyan intelligence services."

The statement bolstered claims of victims' relatives that Libyan Col.

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— Bert Ammerman
brother of victim

Moammar Gadhafi and his government are responsible for the bombing of the New York-bound flight over Lockerbie, Scotland on Dec. 21, 1988. The conviction could also give impetus to civil actions that the relatives have filed against Libya.

"Al-Megrahi being found guilty, that to me shows and points all the evidence to Gadhafi's feet," said Bert Ammerman of Riverdale, N.J., the brother of victim Tom Ammerman. He watched the telecast with about 85 others in New York.

The verdict was the climax of an \$80 million trial and nearly nine months of hearings at a special court in the Netherlands. The White House said U.N. and U.S. sanctions on Libya would remain in place, and U.S. and British officials said they will keep investigating the bombing.

President Bush said at a Cabinet Room meeting with members of Congress that Libya should remain isolated until Gadhafi agrees to "accept responsibility for this act and to compensate the families."

Jeremy Greenstock, the British U.N. ambassador, said the main focus of coming discussions between the United States, Britain and Libya will be on compensation and the Libyan government's accepting responsibility for the actions of its officials.

Libya stuck to its denials of official involvement. State television cast the trial as a triumph for the Libyan people "over arrogance, aggression and imperialism and all attempts to make them bow down." Many people in downtown Tripoli, Libya's capital, sat around television and radio sets.

Abuzed Dorda, Libya's ambassador to the United Nations, said Libya respected the verdict. But in an interview with the Associated Press, he added that the case in no way implicated the government, saying Libya "has nothing to do with the Libyan officials."

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