



Scott Peterson/NewsMakers

Smoke billows from the top of the 1,772-foot Ostankino television tower in Moscow. The fire broke out in the tower, Europe's tallest structure, knocking out some television broadcasting and forcing the evacuation of a the tower's popular tourist restaurant. Russian President Vladimir Putin said the fire and the tower's subsequent floundering show a need to update Moscow's, as well as the country's, infrastructure, which is weak.

Firefighters douse blaze on Russia tower; 2 dead

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW - Firefighters put out a blaze that gutted Moscow's giant television tower and killed at least two people, officials said Monday.

Firefighters found the bodies of an elevator operator and a high-ranking firefighter in an elevator shaft, said Viktor Beltsov, a spokesman for the Moscow Emergency Situations Ministry. The two had been trapped in an elevator high up in the 1,771-foot Ostankino tower, the world's second-tallest freestanding structure.

Beltsov did not say if any others were thought to have been caught in the elevator. Various news reports had said up to four people had been trapped.

The fire knocked out most television service in the Russian capital, Europe's biggest city, and concern was rising that some parts of the landmark tower could fall, particularly the upper reaches of its thin spire.

President Vladimir Putin said the fire pointed to the need for economic reforms that can salvage Russia's widely dilapidated infrastructure.

"This emergency highlights what condition vital facilities, as well as the entire nation, are in," he said to government officials. "Only economic development will allow us to avoid such calamities in the future."

Firefighters wearing heavy rubber coats and breathing apparatuses had to climb hundreds of stairs, carrying heavy metal fire extinguishers and other equipment to battle the blaze. They succeeded in putting it out at 5:40 p.m., 26 hours after it broke out, Russian news agencies cited Moscow fire department chief Leonid Korotchik as saying.

Bundles of steel support cables running up the middle of the tower had been damaged, fire department deputy director Vyacheslav Mulishkin said.

Automatic firefighting systems within the tower appeared to have failed or had run

out of fire-suppressing foam, officials said.

More than 300 firefighters and other emergency workers were called in to battle the blaze, which broke out high on the tower's upper spire Sunday afternoon.

It was the latest in a series of disasters, including gas explosions, industrial accidents and breakdowns in the power grid, which have underscored the weakened state of Russia's infrastructure because of lack of money and poor maintenance. That weakness was further highlighted by an Aug. 12 accident that sank the nuclear submarine Kursk, killing the 118 men aboard.

Responding to fears that the tower could collapse, Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov said "a large danger arises from the physical condition of the concrete parts of the tower." But he said earlier that the risk of collapse "practically does not exist."

A Moscow city surveyor on the scene, Vladimir Aleksin, said the tower's upper spire had tilted slightly and that the tip of the structure was off-center by about 6 1/2 feet.

The fire started after a short-circuit in wiring belonging to a paging company.

Visitors were quickly evacuated from the tower's restaurant and observation deck, which were engulfed several hours later as the fire moved down the structure.

Interior Minister Vladimir Ruzhailo said authorities considered it unlikely that the fire was set intentionally.

Prosecutors opened an investigation Monday into whether criminal negligence was responsible for the fire, the Interfax news agency reported.

This emergency highlights what condition vital facilities, as well as the entire nation, are in.

Vladimir Putin
president

World/Nation Briefs

■ Texas

Drought finds way into record books

DALLAS - A history-making drought in North Texas has all the signs of continuing for days - or even weeks - and the rain forecast elsewhere in the state isn't much better.

With no precipitation in the forecast Monday, the record of 58 consecutive days without rain in the region - first set in 1934 during the Dust Bowl years - was vulnerable.

A rainless Sunday tied the record, which was repeated in 1950.

The National Weather Service forecast this week calls for continued temperatures at or exceeding the century mark along with dry skies.

■ Washington, D.C.

Caesarean sections on the rise again

Caesarean sections started dropping slowly in the early 1990s after an outcry that American women undergo too many - but now they're on the rise again.

Most puzzling: Why C-sections are increasing in first-time moms, not just in women who previously had one. And where pregnant women live determines how likely they are to wind up on the operating table: C-sections are more common in the South than out West.

Now, with Caesareans inching back up to 22 percent of U.S. births, the nation's leading obstetricians' group is issuing new guidelines to reduce unnecessary C-sections and reserve the surgery for mothers and babies who truly need it.

There are many suspects in the C-section rise - state-by-state variation particularly suggests doctors' habits sometimes can overshadow medical need.

■ Georgia

For first time, Ramseys submit to questioning

ATLANTA - John and Patsy Ramsey submitted to police questioning for the first time in two years Monday, saying investigators "may never clear our names till they find the killer" of their 6-year-old daughter, Jon Benet.

A team of Boulder, Colo., police investigators planned to interrogate husband and wife separately at the offices of the couple's Atlanta lawyer.

Jon Benet Ramsey was found beaten and strangled on Dec. 26, 1996, in the basement of her family's Boulder home.

■ Tennessee

Congress starts inquiry into Firestone recall

NASHVILLE - Congressional investigators went to Bridgestone/Firestone headquarters Monday to quiz executives on their handling of safety problems with their tires.

The congressional aides are preparing for hearings in Washington next month that will examine the recall of 6.5 million Firestone ATX, ATX II and Wilderness AT tires.

The recall came after the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration began investigating reports of 62 deaths and more than 100 injuries in crashes that could be connected to the 15-inch tires.

Clinton tries to save talks between warring factions

■ The idea of peace between African Hutu and Tutsi factions has been elusive.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARUSHA, Tanzania - Lending U.S. prestige to an effort to prevent the collapse of Burundi peace talks, President Bill Clinton and Nelson Mandela lectured Hutu and Tutsi factions Monday on the consequences of failing to end seven years of ethnic warfare that has killed 200,000 people.

"When all is said and done, only you can bring an end to the bloodshed and sorrow your country has suffered," Clinton said.

Clinton, rounding out the second Africa tour of his presidency, flew to Tanzania after a two-day

visit to Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, which is still shedding the vestiges of corruption under autocratic rule.

After his stop in Arusha, Clinton was continuing on to Egypt for a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the Middle East peace process.

Negotiators in Tanzania had hoped that Clinton would witness the signing of a major Burundi peace accord. But the power-sharing agreement signed Monday wasn't approved by Hutu rebels, who hadn't participated in the talks, or by several small Tutsi parties.

Mandela, the former South African president and chief mediator, lashed out at the Tutsi parties that didn't sign, accusing them of ignoring "the slaughter of inno-

cent people inside Burundi."

They "are sabotaging this agreement," Mandela said.

As Mandela spoke, several seats on the stage remained empty. But, in a symbolic move, the Tutsi representatives filed back in to the auditorium to take their seats as Clinton addressed the group.

After the signing, Mandela lost his balance and fell forward. Several African leaders caught him and set him back on his feet. The 81-year-old Mandela waved it off, laughing.

Clinton avoided pointing fingers, calling on both sides to end the ethnic warfare.

"I do think it is absolutely certain that if you let this moment slip away, it will dig the well of bitterness deeper and pile the moun-

tain of grievances higher," he said.

Clinton stood with Mandela and African leaders - including President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana and the son of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi - in hopes his American presence would serve as a catalyst for peace.

But he arrived to find the peace talks, which have gone on for more than two years, in disarray. Clinton huddled with Mandela for about 20 minutes and had a 30-minute session with Burundian President Pierre Buyoya before joining the other leaders.

The White House insisted that Clinton was in Arusha simply to show his support for Mandela regardless of whether a peace agreement would be ready.

"We know this is a long-term

process, one way or another," said White House national security spokesman P.J. Crowley.

As soon as Air Force One touched down here, Clinton and Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa met briefly in an airport terminal in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro.

They walked to a stage beside the tarmac to watch their transportation secretaries sign an "open skies" agreement allowing unrestricted international airport-to-airport access between the United States and Tanzania.

"He has supported our efforts at finding... African solutions to African problems," he said. "An African proverb says, 'Only the owner can free his home from mice.' Indeed, that is as it should be."

2 die in university shootings

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. - A longtime professor and a graduate student who had been taking classes for 10 years were shot to death Monday at the University of Arkansas in an apparent murder-suicide on the first day of the fall semester, authorities said.

Associate Professor John Locke, 67, died in his English department office on the second floor of Kimpel Hall, a classroom and office building.

Officers responding to several 911 calls from the building said they spoke briefly with a man behind the locked office door, University Police Capt. Brad Bruns said.

Less than five minutes later, another shot rang out. Police found the two men dead.

Bruns identified the other victim as James Easton Kelly, 36, of Marianna, a graduate student in the comparative literature program in which Locke taught.

Police hadn't determined the motive for the shootings or who pulled the trigger, Bruns said. He said the gun found at the scene belonged to Kelly.

Kelly had been taking courses in a doctoral program for 10 years and had a pattern of enrolling in comparative literature courses and then dropping them, Bruns said.

On Aug. 21, a committee of six professors voted to dismiss him from the degree program but to allow Kelly to continue to take classes as a non-degree student. Locke was on the committee but abstained from the vote, Bruns said.

Hazing may start in high schools

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Almost half the high school students who answered a nationwide survey said they were made to eat disgusting things, abuse alcohol or drugs or perform humiliating or illegal acts to join athletic teams, the band, even church groups, university researchers said Monday.

The researchers at Alfred University in Alfred, N.Y. - known for studies of hazing among college sports teams, fraternities and sororities - said the report on high schools shows a willingness among younger people to do violence or break laws for a sense of belonging.

It demonstrates, as well, that young people's social activities should have greater adult supervision and gives proof that no group is immune, the researchers said.

"Students may already be deeply immersed in the culture of hazing before they arrive on our campuses as freshmen," said Charles Edmondson, president of the private liberal arts university in western New York. "Our challenge is much greater than anyone appreciated."

In the survey - a two-page mail-in questionnaire sent to 11th and 12th graders this spring - students said they were most likely to be hazed by a sports team or gang.

They also reported being hazed for music, art and theater clubs and church groups. Every high school organization except school newspaper and yearbook staffs had high levels of hazing.

The university-funded survey does not represent the teen population at large. Only 1,541 of those mailed surveys returned them, just over 8 percent, but the project's lead researcher, Nadine Hoover, said further studies could build on the findings.

The results nevertheless furthered a

"Students may already be deeply immersed in the culture of hazing before they arrive on our campuses as freshmen."

Charles Edmondson
small-university president

debate over whether hazing is more a time-honored rite of passage or a dangerous trend that sends increasing numbers of children to hospitals or jails.

In Winslow, Ariz., eight high school athletes face charges they sexually assaulted or helped other students assault about a dozen basketball and track athletes; the basketball coach also was indicted, accused of knowing about some of the abuses and failing to stop them.

Schools need to do more, said Linda Murtie, an Essex, Vt., parent who campaigned against hazing after her 16-year-old daughter, Lizzie, was hazed on the school gymnastics team.

The team progressed from having new members dress up in silly clothes to her daughter's being forced to eat a banana protruding from a boy's pants zipper.

Some schools - institutions including the Upper St. Clair, Pa., school district and the University of Vermont - are cracking down on hazing, creating strict policies and punishments.

More than 40 states with anti-hazing laws, although researchers said the laws do not appear to limit hazing significantly.

Hazing was defined by researchers as any humiliating or dangerous act expected of new group members, regardless of willingness to participate.

Daily Nebraskan

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DAILY NEBRASKAN

Correction

Karen Janovy, the curator of education at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, was misidentified in a story in Monday's Daily Nebraskan.

Weather

TODAY
Partly cloudy
high 83, low 65
TOMORROW
Partly sunny
high 85, low 70