

## **Six Indians dead in Nepal brick kiln blast**

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**Kathmandu:** At least six Indians and two locals were killed and 24 others injured after a brick kiln chimney collapsed in Nepal after an explosion, police said.

The incident took place on Monday night at New Jaya Nepal Brick Factory in Itahari in eastern Nepal, police said, adding that the dead Indians were from West Bengal and Bihar.

Police have identified the deceased as Saddam Hussain, 14, Salun Miya, 16, and Rahul Miya, 12, from West Bengal and Mithalesh Paswan, 35, and Gariblal Paswan, 25, from Bihar. One Rustfa Miya from Bihar also succumbed to his injuries.

Of the 24 injured, 17 are reported to be critical and are being treated in different hospitals.

Around one million raw bricks were being baked when the explosion took place, after smoke could not pass out of the 105-foot chimney, resulting in its collapse.

Tikaram Chaudhary, a local resident, said that the upper part of the chimney was destroyed by the April 25 earthquake and it was repaired recently.

He said the incident could have occurred as wood and plastics kept in chimney holes during repair had remained there.

The kiln owner had distributed sweets to celebrate the reopening of the kiln on Monday.

"We heard a loud noise as we were having sweets. There was a stampede," said Jalil Hussain, adding: "The workers sustained injuries in the stampede."

- IANS