



King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman extended their condolences to Indian President Droupadi Murmu, the families of the victims, and to the Indian people. They also wished the injured a speedy recovery.

The rear of the plane after it crashed into a building in Ahmedabad on Thursday. Reuters



AHMEDABAD DISASTER

300 killed in air tragedy

● Indian passenger jet had 242 on board ● More victims in building that plane crashed into

Reuters, AFP Ahmedabad

Nearly 300 people were killed on Thursday when a plane bound for London with 242 passengers and crew on board crashed shortly after taking off from Ahmedabad in India.

The dead included medical students and doctors who were having lunch when the Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plunged into their residential block. The

only known survivor from the plane, Ramesh Viswashkumar, 40, had been in seat 11A next to an emergency exit.

"Thirty seconds after take-off, there was a loud noise and then the plane crashed," he said from his hospital bed. "It all happened so quickly. When I got up, there were bodies all around me. I was scared. I stood up and ran. There were pieces of the plane all around me."

Video footage showed the plane taking off and then disappearing below the horizon before

FASTFACT

The worst air disaster in India was on Nov. 12, 1996, when a Saudi jet collided midair with a Kazakh plane in Haryana state, killing all 349 on board the two planes.

a huge fireball rose into the sky. Thick plumes of black smoke towered above the area after the crash, with parts of the plane's fuselage scattered around the

smouldering building and its tail emerging from the debris.

Krishna, a doctor who saw the crash, said: "The nose and front wheel landed on the canteen building where students were having lunch." Resident Poonam Patni said: "When we reached the spot there were bodies lying around and firefighters were dousing the flames. Many of the bodies were burned." Another resident said: "We saw people jumping from the second and third floors to save themselves.

The plane was in flames."

The plane's passengers comprised 217 adults and 13 children: 169 were Indian, 53 British, seven Portuguese and one Canadian. Among the dead was Vijay Rupani, former chief minister of Gujarat state, where Ahmedabad is the main city.

Gujarat is also Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state. "The tragedy in Ahmedabad has stunned and saddened us," he said. "It is heartbreaking beyond words."