Beat: Miscellaneous

Death toll from Brazil nightclub inferno reaches 240

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USPA News - The death toll from a fire that broke out at a crowded nightclub in southern Brazil in late January has risen to 240 after a young man died in hospital, doctors said on Saturday. It was one of the worst ever fires in the history of South America.

ConceiÃ£o Hospital Group said 25-year-old Pedro FalcÃ£o Pinheiro died on late Saturday morning at Cristo Redentor Hospital in the southern city of Porto Alegre. The Franciscano University Center student had been considered the most critically injured survivor as he was suffering from serious burns, kidney problems, and other medical issues that kept him on a ventilator. Franciscano University Center said Pinheiro would be buried at a cemetery in the city of Santana do Livramento on Sunday morning. "Unifra (Franciscano University Center) wishes strength and faith for the family and friends of the victim at this difficult time," the school said in a brief statement. The deadly inferno happened at around 2 a.m. local time on January 27 at the Kiss nightclub in Santa Maria, a city in Brazil`s southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul. Authorities said around 2,000 people were inside the building at the time of the fire, far exceeding the club`s maximum capacity of 1,000. Investigators believe the fire broke out when pyrotechnics during a band`s concert went wrong, causing material in the ceiling to catch fire. Survivors have also accused security guards of blocking the club`s only exit as people tried to flee, as it is usual practice for visitors to pay their bill when they leave a club. Four men, including both owners of the nightclub, the singer of the band, and the band`s manager, were arrested a day after the blaze and remain in custody as the investigation continues. Investigators have said the building did not have enough emergency exits, was overcrowded, and did not have the proper permission to use fireworks. With 240 fatalities and 168 people who were injured, the Kiss nightclub inferno was one of the worst fires in the history of South America. The devastating tragedy, which claimed the lives of mostly young people between the ages of 16 and 20, came as Brazil continues to prepare to host the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games.

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483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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