

7 hurt in blaze at railway quarters



Rescue operations in progress on Monday. (Source: Express photo by Ganesh Shirsekar)

By: [Express News Service](#) | Mumbai | Posted: December 16, 2014 1:45 pm

A major fire broke out at a 21-storeyed railway quarters near Mumbai Central railway station in South Mumbai Monday afternoon injuring seven people, fire officials said.

The fire broke out on the fourth floor of the railways officers' quarters behind Maratha Mandir theatre. The service duct near the common passage was clogged with furniture, which intensified the fire and the whole passageway was clogged with smoke. The fire was spreading both vertically on both the sides. There was a lot of panic among people who rushed to the terrace. We rescued around 65 people and fortunately there were no casualties," said deputy chief fire officer P S Rahangdale. While the common passageway has been completely damaged, the 17th to 21st floor also suffered major damage, the official added. Prima facie the cause of the fire is suspected to be a short circuit.

The fire officials also could not reach the spot promptly because of traffic. While four fire tankers were rushed to the spot at first, the fire department had to deploy around eight fire tenders and five fire tankers as the intensity of the fire increased. The department also used a 42-metre high ladder for the rescue operations. The official also stated that the internal

firefighting system of the building was not functioning, because of which the brigade had to face a lot of difficulty. “We will be serving them a notice for violating fire norms soon,” Rahangdale added.

Of the seven people admitted in the tertiary-care Nair hospital, four have been admitted in the medicine ward and are under observation.

“All four have inhaled smoke and it might cause damage to their lungs. We will have to monitor them to see if there is any deterioration,” said Dr R N Bharmal, dean at the hospital.

Three others suffered burns on their upper limbs. According to the dean, the victims suffered burns between eight and 15 per cent.” No one is critical,” Bharmal added.

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