

# Unit 9

## News of Disasters

### What Is News of Disasters?

Disasters can be grouped into two categories:

1. Man-made accidents such as car crashes, train and plane crashes, air piracy, shipwrecks, fires, and the collapse of buildings or other structures.
2. Natural disasters such as floods, flash floods, storms, thunderstorms, rainstorms, snowstorms, avalanches, forest fires, drought, hurricanes, tornadoes, tremors, monsoons, earthquakes, aftershocks, volcanic eruptions, and starvation.

### Car Crashes

Related vocabulary:

to crash	to collide head-on with.. . . . .	
to crush to death	to skid off the road	to swerve
to smash into	to ram into	to tailgate
to fail to overtake a car	to injure	to wound
to avoid <b>an</b> on-coming car/ an approaching car		to bump into
to be slightly/ seriously injured		
to flee the <b>scene</b>	slippery road	a drunkard
to be killed instantly	to be killed on the spot	collision
to be trapped in the wreckage		a drunken man

bicycle/ tricycle/ car/ sedan/ taxi/ 6-wheel truck/ lo-wheel truck/ van/  
minivan/ lorry/ **coach**/ bus/ **train**/ **tram**/ skytrain/

**Example:**

*11 killed in truck collision*

Eleven workers travelling home in a truck to vote in a village election **were killed** in a **head-on collision** with another truck, police said yesterday.

Twelve **were injured** in the accident in Danchang District of **Suphan** Buri on Sunday night, **AP** reports.

**5 Ws and H:**

- who:** Eleven workers.
- What:** They were killed in a truck.  
A truck collided head-on with another.
- Where:** In Danchang District, **Suphan** Buri Province.
- When:** Yesterday
- why:** going to a village election.
- How:** It was a head-on collision.

**Floods**

Related vocabulary:

torrential rain	thunderstorm	tropical storm
typhoon	widespread shower	downpour

rainfall	to inundate	to recede
to stand on rooftops	to be marooned	to rescue
to drain water out	to make effort	to drain water out
to submerge	to perch on rooftops	to drown
to claim	to kill	to sweep away
flood-affected/ stricken area		flood victims
flooded area	rescue team	relief operation
knee-deep level	waist-deep level	the flood
ankle-deep floodwater	roads cut off	flat-bottom boat
electricity poles/ lines	cattle perished in	
flood makes people homeless/ stand on rooftops		
donations of food, medical supplies and blankets		
ad-hoc committee	the death toll/ calamity rises to.. . . . . .	
flood control center	the worst-hit district of.. . . . . .	

The meteorological Department

**Example:**

*Floodwaters claim 35 in Bangladesh*

*Associated Press*

**Dhaka--** Nearly two million people *have been marooned* in Bangladesh, with floodwaters *inundating* new areas and *killing* at least 35 people in northern parts of the country, **officials** and news reports said yesterday.

## 5 Ws and H:

- Who:* Nearly two million have been marooned.
- What:* Floodwater killed 35 people and made almost two million of them homeless.
- Where:* In the northern parts of Bangladesh.
- When:* Yesterday or a few days ago
- Why:* Because of the floodwaters.
- How:* Floods inundated many areas in the northern parts of Bangladesh. The news was reported by officials and Associate Press.

## Plane Crashes

Related vocabulary:

to crash	to nose down	to plough into
to plunge into	to burst into flame	to slam into
to disintegrate into pieces		to land
to land on its fuselage		to take off
bad weather	poor visibility	lightning
mid-air explosion	engine trouble	pilot error
pilot	co-pilot	cabin crew
crash site	victim (s)	survivor (s)
charred bodies	the ill-fated plane	casualty/ casualties
death toll		

## Example:

### *No survivors from air crash in Laos*

Hanoi-- Vietnam's official news agency confirmed that its top general and everyone else aboard *were killed* when a Lao military jet *crashed* near the plain of Jars in Laos on May 25.

## 5 Ws and H:

**Who:** Vietnam's top general and other military men.

**What:** A Laos military jet crashed killing one Vietnamese top general and other military men.

**Where:** Near the plain of Jars in Laos.

**When:** On May 25.

**why:** It was a plane crash in mid air.

**How:** The plane crashed ploughing into the plain.

## Fires

Related vocabulary:

to blaze	to burst into flames	to gust	to gut
to raze	to engulf in flames	to spread	to choke
to suffocate	to extinguish	to control the fire	to rage
to escape through the fire exits/ emergency doors			to put out
panic	to suffer a third degree burn		to hit
to bring the <b>fire</b> under control		fire alarm	holocaust
fireman	firefighter	fire extinguisher	

**Example:***Fire razes garment factory*

A fire caused by electric short circuit yesterday **blazed** a textile factory at Nong Kham resulting in strong **fumes** and massive **clouds demolishing** the factory, **killing** at least two workers and **injuring** many people, police reported.

**5 Ws and H:**

**who:** Two workers and many people.

**What:** A **fire** killed two workers and injured many people

**Where:** In a garment factory at Nong Khaem.

**When:** Yesterday.

**Why:** There was an electric short circuit.

**How:** The short circuit caused a fire to blaze. The strong flames and massive clouds choked and charred two workers and many were injured.

## Activities:

### Exercise 1

Fill in the following blanks with the words given below.

<i>smashing</i>	<i>exploded</i>	<i>crash</i>	<i>crashed</i>
<i>killed</i>	<i>killing</i>	<i>skidded</i>	<i>fires</i>
<i>injured</i>	<i>struck/hit</i>	<i>were burned</i>	<i>guttled</i>
<i>perched</i>	<i>ripped</i>	<i>submerged</i>	

1. A Laotian helicopter on a joint mission with Thai authorities yesterday ..... in Bor Klua district, ..... six men.
2. A **container** of chemical substances belonging to a gas company in Mab Ta Pud Industrial Estate ..... yesterday morning.
3. More tropical forests ..... around the world in 1997 than at any other time in recorded history, a report said yesterday.
4. Blaze caused by a cigarette butt ..... a French consulate late last night.
5. Thousands of marooned people remained ..... on rooftops.
6. Floodwaters ..... the Lad Prao and Bangkapi areas.
7. The haze from Indonesian forest ..... blanketed Southeast Asia.
8. Princess Diana dies in a car ..... , in Paris in 1997.
9. A strong earthquake ..... Russia's Far Eastern Kamchatka peninsula yesterday, emergency officials said.

10. A tornado . . . . ., through a small South Dakota town early yesterday.
11. A bomb . . . . . two and . . . . . one in Colombia yesterday.
12. A Toyota car . . . . . the road before . . . . . into a barricade blocking in front.

## Exercise 2

Arrange the following information into the correct order by writing **1,2,3,**. . . . . in the space provided.

..... Beijing-- Two minor earthquakes bumped Beijing within minutes of each other last night, but caused no casualties or damage to buildings, China's State Seismological Bureau reported.

..... The quakes were centered in the city's southwestern district of **Fengtai** and were felt by some people in the western part of the Chinese capital. The seismology bureau said. -Associated Press.

..... ***Two tremors hit Beijing.***

..... The first of the pair of preliminary magnitude 3.1 quakes struck at 7.37 p.m. (6.37 p.m. Bangkok time) and the second five minutes later, the **official** Xinhua Agency reported.



### Exercise 3

Use the following information to write a good lead. Develop the news focal point. Do not exceed 35 words.

- Who:** Thousands of people in India.
- What:** Almost 3,000 of them died. Thousands of them were hospitalized.  
The death toll of people, 2,919, nationally reported, was the worst figure ever recorded in Indian history.
- Where:** In Orissa and Andhra, the eastern and southern states of India respectively.
- When:** In summer
- Why:** People died because of the worst heat wave. The temperature in summer was 51 degrees Celsius. It was the worst and hottest weather ever to hit Orissa and Andhra.
- How:** There was a heat wave. The weather was very hot. There was no rain and the temperature kept going up.
- Source of news:** A news agency in India, Indian weather authorities and Indian rescue team reported to **Agence** France-Presse.

(Adapted from *The Nation*, Friday, June 12, 1998)

**Indian heat wave toll 3,000**

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**Exercise 4**

Identify the following headlines by indicating the number of words and type of accidents.

Headlines	Number of words	Type of business
1. Japanese rescue train crashes	.....	.....
2. 11 killed in plane crash	.....	.....
3. Record fires reported	.....	.....
4. Two tremors hit Beijing	.....	.....
5. Five dead, 150 injured as twister hits S Dakota	.....	.....
6. Bomb mars Colombia polls	.....	.....
7. Chemical container blast causes skin irritation	.....	.....
8. Six hurt as copter crashes	.....	.....
9. 15 more piers 'unsafe'	.....	.....

10. Floodwaters likely to hit

Bangkok ..... ..

11. Diana dies in car crash ..... ..

12. Blaze guts French consulate ..... ..

13. Floods leave 17 dead in  
Vietnam ..... ..