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## UK

# Lightning kills women in park



Two women found dead in London's Hyde Park were struck by lightning.

The tragic deaths occurred as severe storms swept across the capital on Wednesday evening and as violent weather caused mayhem across southern England.



The BBC's Paul Curran reports: "The bodies were discovered by a cavalry officer"

The bodies, believed to be two oriental women in their 20s, were found close to a tree in a wooded area by an army officer exercising his horse just after 0700 BST.

A huge area of the park was sealed off while the bodies - clothed and lying on grass - were examined then removed for a post mortem examination.



Police sealed off a huge area of

Police initially said the deaths were "suspicious" but later confirmed the women had been hit by lightning.

The bodies were discovered lying close on a section of relatively clear ground, about 200 yards from the busy rush-hour traffic on Serpentine Road, just north of the Rose Gardens

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the park

entrance.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy Trotter, in charge of crime in central London, said: "They appear to be of Far Eastern origin. They were lying on the grass and clothed."

In the UK, 24 people are struck by lightning and five are killed every year, the Met Office says.

Scientists say lightening bolts can generate currents of up to 100,000 amps.

### **Tornado's trail of destruction**

The fatalities occurred on a night of violent weather in southern England.

The Met Office has warned the North of England and Scotland to be prepared for adverse weather as the storms move up the country.

There are fears of more bad weather to come after a mini tornado left a trail of destruction at Pagham, West Sussex.

More than 70 firefighters, police and representatives from the Environment Agency were called in after the tornado hit in the early hours of Thursday morning.

Hundreds of branches were left strewn across roads, a boat was blown into a tree and garage roofs were blown off.

In London, a mopping up operation was launched after the thunderstorms and heavy rain caused widespread disruption and some flooding across the capital.

More than half an inch of rain fell in half an hour.

Flooding on platforms closed Victoria station on Wednesday night, as well as several underground stations.

Drivers experienced long delays out of the capital, especially on the M25. The Fire Brigade said flooding in south-west London was caused by leaves blocking drains.

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