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81 dead in India bridge collapse

Dozens injured; death toll may rise

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

At least 81 people were killed when a pedestrian bridge over a river in the Indian state of Gujarat collapsed yesterday, plunging hundreds of people into the water, officials said.

Authorities said more than 400 people were in and around the suspension bridge over the Machhu River in the town of Morbi at the time of the collapse yesterday evening.

TV footage showed dozens of people clinging onto the cables and twisted remains of the collapsed bridge as emergency teams struggled to rescue them.

Some clambered up the broken structure to try to make their way to the river banks, while others swam to safety.

"The death toll is 81," a senior government official told Reuters. At least 30 people had also been injured, other officials said.

State Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi said more than 150 people were on the narrow cable-stayed bridge, a tourist attraction that drew many sight-seers during the festive season, when Diwali and Chhath Puja are celebrated.

The 230-metre historic bridge was built during British rule in the 19th century. It had been closed for renovation



Children with lotuses in their hands race to pluck more flowers from the edge of Dibir haor in Sylhet's Jaintapur upazila. Due to its scenic beauty, the place is usually packed with tourists, who sometimes even buy the flowers from the children. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Student loses leg in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college student lost his right leg after a bus hit concrete slabs, kept roadside, flinging those onto the leg near ECB intersection in the capital's cantonment area yesterday evening.

Tanvir, 19, is a student of Adamjee Cantonment College in Dhaka.

Source said Tanvir was walking past the intersection around 6:30pm. The slabs were kept there for road development work.

Pedestrians rushed him to nearby a hospital where doctors amputated the leg, Kazi Shahhan Haque, officer-in-charge of Cantonment Police Station, told The Daily Star.

People seized the bus, but its driver and helper managed to flee.

Hearing the news, students of Adamjee Cantonment College staged demonstrations by blocking the road and

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BORDER TENSIONS Myanmar's BGP expresses regret

Momen tells parliament it's all due to Myanmar infighting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Myanmar's Border Guard Police (BGP) at a flag meeting with Border Guard Bangladesh has expressed sincere regret for all the recent incidents that took place in the Bangladesh-Myanmar border areas.

Lt Col Sheikh Khalid Mohammad Iftakhar, commanding officer of BGB-2 Battalion, said this after the meeting.

Called to discuss the recent border incidents, the meeting was held at the BGB-2 Battalion office in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila yesterday.

Both the BGB and BGP expressed their firm resolve to perform respective duties to maintain peace and order, and ensure the security of the people living in the border areas, Lt Col Iftakhar said at a press briefing.

Lt Col Kao Na Yan Shoo, commanding officer of the BGP Branch-1 of Myanmar's Maungdaw, led the seven-member Myanmar delegation, while Lt Col Iftakhar led the eight-member Bangladesh side.

However, the Myanmar delegation did not talk to the media.

Lt Col Iftakhar said there was a fruitful discussion on the volatile situation in the border area and the prevention of drug trafficking and the infiltration of Myanmar nationals into Bangladesh.

On September 16, a Rohingya boy was killed and five others were injured as a mortar shell fired by the Myanmar army exploded at a Rohingya camp located at the Zero Point of the border.

The same day, another Bangladeshi youth was injured

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Ukraine grain exports halted

EU urges Russia to reverse suspension of grain deal; Biden says 'outrageous' move will increase starvation

AGENCIES

Ukraine's maritime grain exports were halted yesterday after Russia suspended its participation in a landmark agreement that allowed the vital shipments, blaming drone attacks on its ships in Crimea.

The July deal to unlock grain exports signed between Russia and Ukraine and brokered by Turkey and the UN, is critical to easing the global food crisis caused by the conflict.

The agreement had already allowed more than nine million tonnes of Ukrainian grain to be exported and was due to be renewed on November 19. The centre coordinating the logistics of the deal said in a statement that no traffic was planned for yesterday.

"A joint agreement has not been reached at the JCC for the movement of inbound and outbound vessels on 30 October," it said. "There are more than ten vessels both outbound and inbound waiting to enter the corridor."

On Saturday, Russia said it was halting its participation after its

army accused Kyiv of a "massive" drone attack on its Black Sea fleet, which Ukraine labelled a "false pretext".

US President Joe Biden denounced the move as "purely outrageous" and said it would increase starvation, while Secretary of State Antony Blinken said

"This is a completely transparent attempt by Russia to return to the threat of large-scale famine for Africa, for Asia,"
President Zelensky

Moscow was "weaponising food". The EU urged Russia to "revert its decision."

"Russia's decision to suspend participation in the Black Sea deal puts at risk the main export route of much needed grain and fertilisers to address the global food crisis caused by its war against Ukraine," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Twitter yesterday.

Ukraine's foreign minister said on Twitter that Russia was blocking "two million tonnes of grain on 176 vessels already at sea" that he said was "enough to feed seven million people."

He accused Moscow of having planned to "resume its hunger games" in advance and said the Black Sea explosions were "220 kilometres away from the grain corridor."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called for a strong response from the UN and Group of 20 (G20) major economies to what he called Russia's nonsensical move on the grain deal, reports Reuters.

"This is a completely transparent attempt by Russia to return to the threat of large-scale famine for Africa, for Asia," Zelensky said in a video address late on Saturday, adding that Russia should be kicked out of the G20.

Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, said: "It is vital that all parties refrain from any action that would imperil the Black Sea Grain Initiative which is a critical humanitarian effort."

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Long passenger train breaks world record

AFP, Berghün

The world's longest passenger train – an assembly of 100 connected coaches measuring nearly two kilometres – wound through breath-taking scenery in the Swiss Alps Saturday.

The Rhaetian Railway (RhB) announced that it had beat the world record for the longest passenger train, at an event marking the 175th anniversary of Switzerland's famous railway system.

The 1,910-metre (6,266-foot) train, composed of 25 separable multiple-unit trains, or 100 coaches, travelled through the Alps in the eastern Swiss canton of Graubünden.

"For me, this is just Swiss perfection," RhB chief Renato Fasciati told the Blick daily's live feed of the event, as the long, red train snaked slowly through the mountainous landscape.

While there are freight trains that are longer, with some measuring over three kilometres, Saturday's event featured by far the longest passenger train ever run.

It was several hundred metres longer than a train that held the unofficial previous record, in Belgium in the 1990s, an RhB spokesman told AFP.

With dazzling sunshine reflecting off its shiny, silver roof and with a digital destination sign on the front reading "Alpine Cruise", the train carried

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Ensure freedom of expression

UN envoy asks govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN special rapporteur on human rights and climate change has suggested that the Bangladesh government ensure freedom of expression, particularly on the issue of promoting and protecting human rights in the context of climate change.

"In the lead up to the next election, I encourage the government of Bangladesh to allow civil society to have a voice. Suppression of such voice will only lead to discontent," the UN Special Rapporteur, Ian Fry, said in a report.

Saleemul Huq, director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development, presented the report, prepared based on the visit of Fry to Bangladesh from September 4-15, at a discussion in a city hotel yesterday.

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Vehicles struggling to pass the area under the Bhulta overpass in Narayanganj's Araihaazar, as a make-shift bazar has sprung up there, occupying a portion of the Dhaka-Sylhet highway. The authorities have turned a blind eye to the problem. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ninth grader raped, dies 'from poisoning'

Four arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Four people, including three teenagers, were arrested yesterday for the rape of a ninth grader, who later died in hospital, in Jamalpur's Sarishbari.

The arrestees are Mahim, 19, two of his underaged friends, and Joynal Mia, the owner of the house where the rape took place on Thursday, police said.

Mohabbat Kabir, officer-in-charge of Sarishbari Police Station, said all four were arrested from different areas in the upazila's Pogoldigha union early yesterday.

He added the victim's father filed a case accusing six people including the arrestees yesterday noon.

According to case statement, Mahim had developed a romantic relationship with the victim a year ago, and married her seven months ago.

After two months of marriage, Mahim began pressuring the victim for Tk 4 lakh dowry. He then divorced her around two and half months ago after her family failed to give him the money.

On Thursday, Mahim promised to marry her again and asked her to come to Joynal's house to meet him. Once she reached, he and his friends raped her.

After she fell ill, they made her take poison to make it look like she attempted suicide, the victim's mother alleged.

Family sources said that locals informed them about

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