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UN High Commissioner for Refugees  
Filippo Grandi

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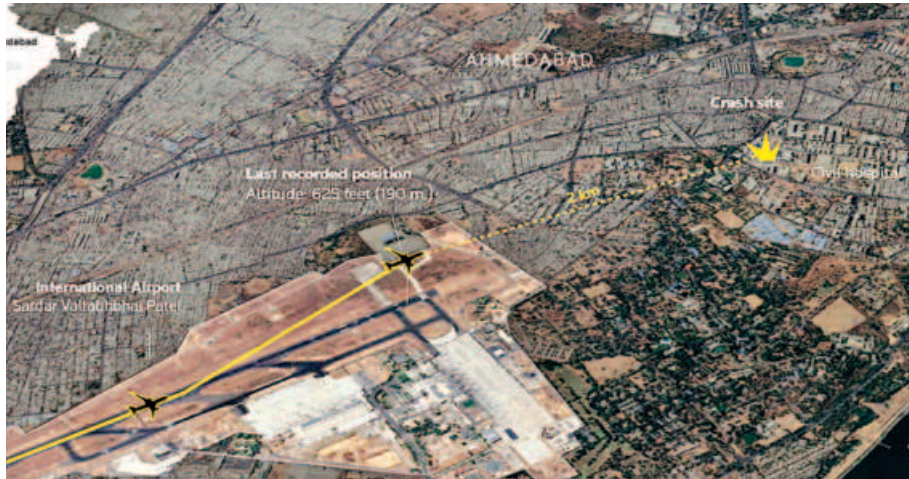
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# Over 260 killed in Air India plane crash

Dreamliner with 242 on board falls out of the sky on a medical college hostel in Ahmedabad; British passenger survives



Recreated flightpath of the Air India flight.

IMAGE: REUTERS

Flight was bound for London's Gatwick Airport

This is the first crash of a Boeing 787 Dreamliner

Air India owner Tata Group to provide Rs 1cr to each victim's family

## AGENCIES

At least 265 people were killed when an Air India plane, bound for London with 242 people on board, crashed on to a hostel for medical students in the western Indian city of Ahmedabad yesterday.

In the world's worst aviation disaster in a decade, the plane crashed minutes after taking off.

The plane came down on to the hostel of state-run BJ Medical College outside the Ahmedabad airport during lunch hour. The flight was headed to Gatwick, south of the British capital.

per the message we received."

However, Vidhi Chaudhary, a top state police officer, told Reuters, "Approximately 294 have died. This includes some students as the plane crashed on the building where they were staying."

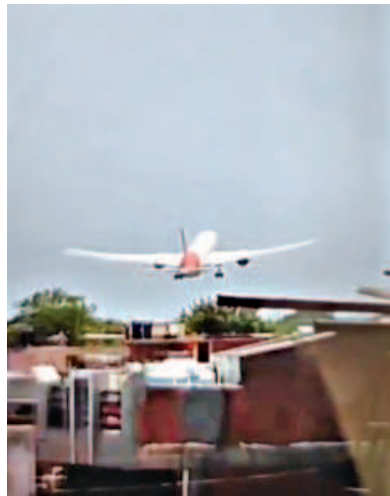
She said police found one survivor who was in seat 11A, next to an emergency exit, adding that there could be more survivors in hospital.

"Thirty seconds after take-off, there was a loud noise and then the plane crashed," 40-year-old Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, a British national, told the Hindustan Times, which showed a

He said that his brother, Ajay, was seated in a different row on the plane. "He was travelling with me and I can't find him anymore. Please help me find him," he said.

Ahmedabad police chief GS Malik said the bodies recovered could include both passengers and people killed on the ground. The dead included Vijay Rupani, the former chief minister of Gujarat state, of which Ahmedabad is the main city.

Relatives had been asked to give DNA samples to identify the dead, state health secretary Dhananjay Dwivedi said.



Moments leading to the tragic crash of an Air India flight bound for London at Ahmedabad. The first photo shows the aircraft losing altitude. The second, zoomed in, shows the plane very close to the ground and attempting to climb. The last photo is of the fireball after the crash.

PHOTOS: AFP/VIDEO GRAB

The dead included bystanders on the ground as the aircraft crashed on to the hostel during lunch hour.

At least one passenger is known to have survived, police said, and the man told Indian media that he had heard a loud noise shortly after take-off.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Kanan Desai told PTI, "265 bodies have reached the city civil hospital as

boarding pass for seat 11A in that name online. "It all happened so quickly," he told the paper from his hospital bed.

"When I got up, there were bodies all around me. I was scared. I stood up and ran. There were pieces of the plane all around me," he said.

"Someone grabbed hold of me and put me in an ambulance and brought me to the hospital."

"The building on which it has crashed is a doctors' hostel... we have cleared almost 70 percent to 80 percent of the area and will clear the rest soon," a senior police officer told reporters.

Parts of the plane's body were scattered around the building into which it crashed, photographs and

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## Economy to face 7 challenges in FY26

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and AHSAN HABIB

The finance ministry has identified seven major challenges including tight monetary and fiscal policies, taken to tame elevated inflation levels for more than three years, in next fiscal year that may increase unemployment.

The challenges are high inflation, Trump tariffs, low tax-GDP ratio, weak financial sector, aftermaths of LDC graduation and climate risks.

The challenges are high inflation, imposition of tariffs by Donald Trump's administration, low tax-GDP ratio, weak financial sector, aftermaths of LDC graduation and climate risks, according to the finance ministry's Medium-term Macroeconomic Policy Statement.

Due to high inflationary pressure, the government is taking tight fiscal and monetary policies but the tight policy stance has engendered a constrained business environment, characterised by elevated market interest rates stemming from higher policy rates.

If inflation does not decline in the coming months, private investment may slow and foreign direct investment inflows could remain subdued.

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PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

An almost empty Farmgate yesterday as many dwellers of the capital have yet to return from their hometowns after the Eid holidays.



Britain's King Charles III welcomes Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of Bangladesh's Interim Government, for an audience at Buckingham Palace in London yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Hope abounds as Yunus, Tarique meet today

Polls timing to take centre stage

### SAJJAD HOSSAIN

As Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman meet today in London, many hope the stalemate over the timing of the next election will finally end.

It is likely to be a one-on-one meeting, but Yunus and Tarique may decide if more people should attend, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday said.

"This is going to be a very important meeting for Bangladesh ahead of the election .... We are hoping that all issues will be discussed because one of them is the chief of the interim government and the other is the chief of the largest political party of Bangladesh," he told reporters without going into details.

Yunus is now on a four-day visit to London, where Tarique has been living for nearly two decades.

Ever since the chief adviser's UK visit was announced on June 4, speculations ran rife about the meeting, even though

it was not in the CA's itinerary.

On Tuesday, BNP General Secretary Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said the chief adviser had invited Tarique for a meeting at his hotel, The Dorchester. He confirmed that the meeting was happening.

As the CA recently said the election will be held in early April, Tarique may tell him that the election should be held sooner because the month of Ramadan will end in mid-March and those weeks would not be ideal for electioneering, said party

insiders.

The current political situation, July Charter, and reforms may also come up for discussion, Shafiqul said.

The BNP maintains that the polls must be held by December this year, saying the reforms can be implemented much earlier.

Contacted, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said, "Politics is the art of compromise. By making compromises, both sides can make arrangements for early elections

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## Yunus receives the Harmony Award from King Charles

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday received the prestigious "King Charles III Harmony Award 2025", a special honor to recognise long-term commitment to creating a world where people, places and the planet can live in harmony.

The king presented the award to Prof Muhammad Yunus, a 2006 Nobel Peace Laureate who has founded more than 50 social business companies and encouraged sustainable projects, at a ceremony at St James's Palace in London.

"The award is a huge honour for Prof Yunus and the people of Bangladesh," said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, while speaking to media in London.

Established in 1990, The King's Foundation, a UK-based charity founded by the then Prince of Wales, bestows the prestigious award annually on individuals with outstanding achievements in sustainable development and humanitarian causes.

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## No barrier to Tarique's return Says home adviser

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

There is no obstacle to BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman returning to Bangladesh, said Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday.

"He is a citizen of Bangladesh -- he is free to return whenever he decides," Jahangir said in response to a question on whether Tarique's return would be easier following the upcoming meeting with the chief adviser.

Jahangir went on to urge journalists not to publish partial quotes.

"Please report everything I say in full. Partial reports often lead to misrepresentation. Neighbouring countries sometimes circulate false reports based on such incomplete information,"

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