

Learn more about **REFINITIV**

India

 My View  Following  Saved



This video will resume in 5 seconds

BAHANAGA, India, June 3 (Reuters) - At least 288 people have died in India's worst rail crash in over two decades, officials said on Saturday, after a passenger train went off the tracks and hit another one in an accident a preliminary report blamed on signal failure.

One train in Friday's accident also hit a freight train parked nearby in the district of Balasore in Odisha state in the east of the country, leaving a tangled mess of smashed rail cars and injuring 803.

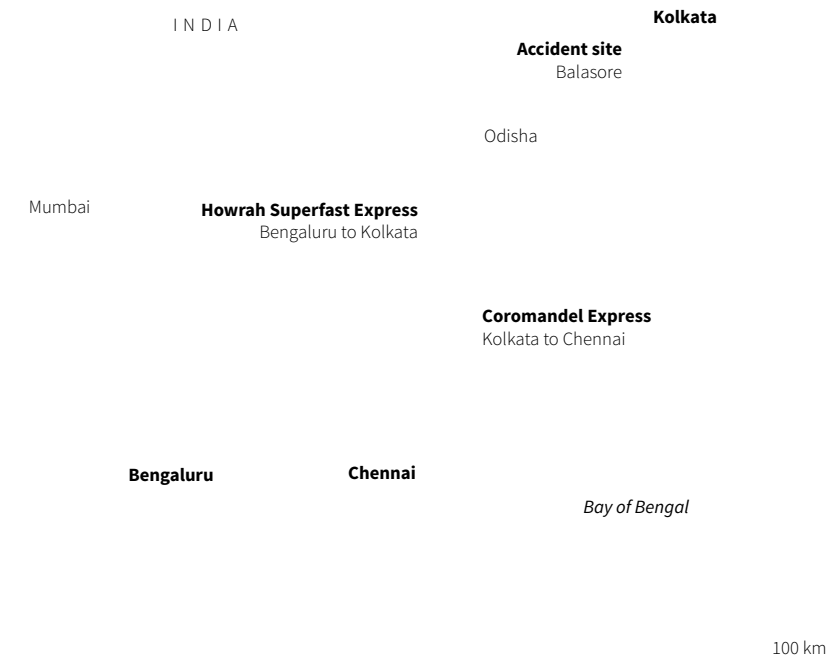
Advertisement · Scroll to continue

Feedback

The death toll has reached 288, said K. S. Anand, chief public relations officer of the South Eastern Railway.

Train accident kills hundreds in India

At least 275 people died in an accident involving two long-distance passenger trains in eastern Indian state of Odisha on June 2.



Sources: Indian Railways; Natural Earth
Vijdan Mohammad Kawoosa | Reuters, June 5, 2023

Dead bodies are still trapped in the mangled coaches and the rescue operation is continuing, a Reuters witness said, while the death toll is expected to rise.

A preliminary report indicates that the accident was the result of signal failure, Anand said.

"The Coromandel Express was supposed to travel on the main line, but a signal was given for the loop line instead, and the train rammed into a goods train already parked over there. Its coaches then fell onto the tracks on either side, also derailing the Howrah Superfast Express," he said.

Advertisement · Scroll to continue

Feedback

Surviving passenger Anubha Das said he would never forget the scene. "Families crushed away, limbless bodies and a bloodbath on the tracks," he said.

Video footage showed derailed train coaches and damaged tracks, with rescue teams searching the mangled carriages to pull the survivors out and rush them to hospital.

Dead bodies were lying on the bloodstained floor of a school used as a makeshift morgue, and police helped relatives identify the bodies, covered with white cloths and placed inside chained bags.

Advertisement · Scroll to continue

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived at the scene, talked to rescue workers and inspected the wreckage. He also met the survivors at hospitals.

"(I) took stock of the situation at the site of the tragedy in Odisha. Words can't capture my deep sorrow. We stand committed to providing all possible assistance to those affected," Modi said.

A witness involved in rescue operations said the screams and cries of the injured and the relatives of those killed were chilling. "It was horrific and heart-wrenching," he said.

Advertisement · Scroll to continue

Families of the dead will receive 1 million rupees (\$12,000), while the seriously injured will get 200,000 rupees, with 50,000 rupees for minor injuries, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. Some state governments have also announced compensation.



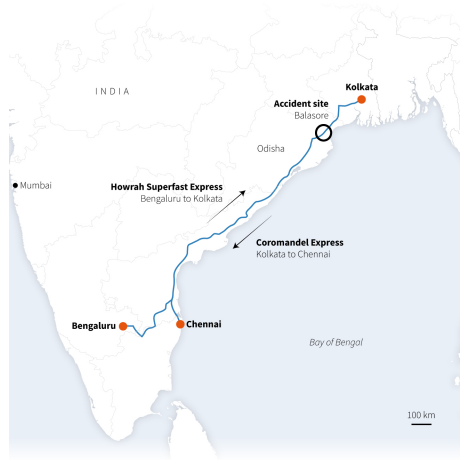
[1/20] Rescue workers search for survivors at the site of a train collision after the accident in Balasore district in the eastern state of Odisha, India, June 3, 2023. REUTERS/Adnan Abidi



"It's a big, tragic accident," Vaishnaw told reporters after inspecting the accident site. "Our complete focus is on the rescue and relief operation, and we are trying to ensure that those injured get the best possible treatment."

Train accident kills hundreds in India

At least 275 people died in an accident involving two long-distance passenger trains in eastern Indian state of Odisha on June 2.



Sources: Indian Railways; Natural Earth
Vigdan Mohammad Kawoosa | Reuters, June 5, 2023

At least 261 people died in an accident involving two long-distance passenger trains in eastern Indian state of Odisha on June 2.

DISMEMBERED BODIES

"I was asleep," an unidentified male survivor told NDTV news. "I was woken up by the noise of the train derailing. Suddenly I saw 10-15 people dead. I managed to come out of the coach, and then I saw a lot of dismembered bodies."

Video footage from Friday showed rescuers climbing on one of the mangled trains to find survivors, while passengers called for help and sobbed next to the wreckage.

"We rescued at least 30 people, and some of them managed to survive, but three or four of them died," said Sanjeev Rout, an electrician. A few metres away, rescue workers tried to cut their way into a damaged red-coloured coach.

The collision occurred at around 7 p.m. (1330 GMT) on Friday when the Howrah Superfast Express from Bengaluru to Howrah in West Bengal collided with the Coromandel Express from Kolkata to Chennai.

Indian Railways says it transports more than 13 million people every day. But the state-run monopoly has had a patchy safety record because of ageing infrastructure.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik described the crash as "extremely tragic".

Opposition Congress party leader Jairam Ramesh said the accident reinforced why safety should always be the foremost priority of the rail network.

Modi's administration has launched high-speed trains as part of plans to modernise the network, but critics say it has not focused enough on safety and upgrading ageing infrastructure.

Experts said Friday's train accident came as a blow to Modi's [makeover plans](#) for railways.

[India's deadliest](#) railway accident was in 1981 when a train plunged off a bridge into a river in Bihar state, killing an estimated 800 people.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and French President Emmanuel Macron expressed condolences over the accident.

(\$1 = 82.40 rupees)

Additional reporting by Akriti Sharma, Subrata Nag Choudhury, Mayank Bhardwaj, Sakshi Dayal, Anirudh Saligrama, Baranjot Kaur, Nandini S, Adnan Abidi and Sunil Kataria; Editing by Edwina Gibbs, William Mallard, Mark Potter and Giles Elgood

Our Standards: [The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.](#)

Read Next



Markets

Domino effect: India rice export ban puts market on edge for copycat curbs

3:53 AM UTC

India

Deloitte to quit as Adani Ports' auditor over concerns flagged by Hindenburg -source

10:57 AM UTC

India

Indian govt proposes overhauling colonial-era criminal laws

8:10 AM UTC

Business

Air India unveils new logo in rebranding push under Tata Group

August 10, 2023



More from Reuters

West Africa Niger summit prioritizes diplomatic routes (0:50) - August 10, 2023
[Watch more videos](#)

West Africa Niger summit prioritizes...

00:50



Tourists reach edge of space on Virgin...

01:25



Coach, Michael Kors owners merge in...

01:44



Doomsday cult leader back to jail for...



Feedback

