

12 killed as key bridge collapses in Vadodara

Trucks, vans, and other vehicles tumble into the Mahisagar river as a slab of the 40-year-old Gambhira bridge gives way near Padra town; a few more vehicles remain submerged, say police

Abhinay Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

At least 12 people were killed and nine injured after a section of the Gambhira bridge near Padra town in Vadodara district of Gujarat collapsed early on Wednesday, sending multiple vehicles crashing into the Mahisagar river.

Videos showed a portion of the bridge between two piers collapsed, dragging down vehicles that were crossing at the time. Eyewitnesses described a chaotic scene as trucks, vans, and other vehicles tumbled into the water as a 15-metre-long slab of the 40-year-old bridge – a key link between central Gujarat and the Saurashtra region – gave way.

Superintendent of Pol-



Tragic fall: Rescuers at work after a part of the Gambhira bridge in Gujarat collapsed on Wednesday. AP

ice, Vadodara (Rural), Roshan Anand told *The Hindu* that rescue teams pulled out nine survivors, with five receiving treatment at SSG Hospital in Va-

dodara. “Two or three more vehicles remain submerged, and we fear the toll may rise,” he said. Efforts were on to retrieve the trapped vehicles, he

added. “None of the survivors is in a critical condition,” Mr. Anand said.

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The victims include two siblings, officials said.

A multi-agency rescue operation involving fire brigade teams, local volunteers, and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel continued at the collapse site late into Wednesday evening, officials said. Gujarat Health Minister Rushikesh Patel said the bridge was constructed in 1985, and its maintenance was carried out periodically as and when required. "The exact reason for the incident will be probed," he said.

District Collector Anil Dhameliya said at least six vehicles – two trucks, two vans, an autorickshaw, and a two-wheeler – plunged into the river. In a stroke of luck, two vehicles teetering on the edge of the collapsed bridge were pulled back to safety by rescue teams. Additionally, three persons travelling on a two-wheeler survived after managing to swim ashore, the Collector said.

President Droupadi Murmu expressed deep condolences to the bereaved families. She prayed for the quick recovery of those injured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh for the families of the deceased, and ₹50,000 for each injured person. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel announced ₹4 lakh and ₹50,000, respectively.

Probe ordered

Mr. Patel directed technical experts to reach the site and conduct a probe into the reason for the collapse. "I have ordered the Roads and Buildings Department to conduct an immediate investigation into the accident," the Chief Minister said.

The Opposition parties condemned the State government over the incident. Former CM Shantersinh Vaghela launched a scathing attack, claiming "this tragedy is the price of BJP's 30-year misrule". Congress leaders Amit Chavda and Manish Doshi demanded a high-level judicial probe.

Two pilots killed in third Jaguar jet crash this year

IAF orders probe; trainer aircraft faced technical malfunctions, forcing pilots to crash the plane in a field in Rajasthan, say officials; IAF is world's only Air Force still operating twin-engine Jaguars

Saurabh Trivedi

NEW DELHI

Two Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots were killed on Wednesday when their Jaguar trainer aircraft crashed into a field near Churu in Rajasthan.

A court of inquiry has been set up to investigate the cause of the accident, the IAF said. This is the third crash involving an IAF Jaguar fighter jet this year.

"An IAF Jaguar Trainer aircraft met with an accident during a routine training mission and crashed near Churu in Rajasthan, today. Both pilots sustained fatal injuries in the accident. No damage to any civil property has been reported," the IAF said in a post on X.

"The IAF deeply regrets the loss of lives and stands firmly with the bereaved families in this time of grief. A court of inquiry has been constituted to ascertain the cause of the accident," it added.

According to defence officials, the twin-seater aircraft was on a routine



Series of accidents: Smoke billows out from the debris of the IAF's Jaguar fighter jet that crashed near Churu, Rajasthan. PTI

training sortie when the pilots experienced a technical malfunction. In an effort to prevent damage to the airfield and surrounding populated areas, Squadron Leader Lokendra and Flight Lieutenant Rishi crashed the aircraft, and died of their injuries, officials said.

The jet crashed in an agricultural field in Bhano-

da village at 1.25 p.m., officials said.

Shortly afterwards, local people rushed to the site and found the burning debris. The bodies of both pilots were then recovered from the accident site. Police teams, fire brigades, and ambulances were rushed in to the spot, and the area has been cordoned off.

This is not the first accident involving a Jaguar aircraft this year. In March, a Jaguar fighter jet on a routine sortie crashed at Ambala in Haryana after encountering a system malfunction. The pilot manoeuvred the aircraft away from any habitation on ground before ejecting safely. In April, one pilot was killed when another Jaguar fighter jet on a routine sortie crashed near Jamnagar.

1970s aircraft

The Jaguars, developed by an Anglo-French company, were inducted into the IAF in the late 1970s.

The IAF currently operates six squadrons of Jaguars, and is the world's only Air Force that continues to operate the twin-engine Jaguar IS/IB/IM variants.

Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagade and Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma expressed grief over the incident. "The administration is in alert mode and instructions have been given to the officials for relief and rescue work," Mr. Sharma said.

Building resilience

The Rio declaration underlined the cohesion within BRICS

The 17th Summit of BRICS emerging economies, which ended on Monday, came at a time when the organisation was in the global spotlight. This was the first such meeting that included all the newly inducted members (Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE, Iran and Indonesia; Saudi Arabia has not joined so far). It also followed the U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran's nuclear programme, and the escalation in Israel's bombardment of Gaza. This was the first summit since the four-day India-Pakistan conflict in May, and also after the G-7 summit in Canada. The BRICS grouping, seen as the next challenger to the global financial order, is in U.S. President Donald Trump's cross-hairs, as he sees it mounting an alternative to the dollar in international trade. In addition, the group has several internal rivalries that have brought its sustainability into question. In April, the BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting ended without a joint statement, as the African members held up the wording on the expansion of the UN Security Council. Meanwhile, despite India's clarification in March that it is not considering de-dollarisation of trade in any form, and that there is no "unified BRICS position" on the issue, Brazil's President Lula da Silva doubled down on rhetoric against the U.S., saying that BRICS proves the world "doesn't need an emperor". Mr. Trump has since repeated threats that BRICS countries would face an extra 10% tariffs due to the grouping's "anti-American stance" – an awkward moment for New Delhi as it attempts to conclude a trade agreement with Washington.

Despite all the challenges, the Rio declaration underlined the basic cohesion and consensus within BRICS members on a range of issues. In the joint statement, there was strong language against the attacks on Gaza and condemnation of the strikes on Iran, given the risks to nuclear safety. India was able to ensure a paragraph with tough language condemning the Pahalgam terror attack and references to terror financing and "cross-border movement of terrorists". India and Brazil won endorsements of the whole grouping on playing a larger role at the UN, "including the Security Council". The absence of the Chinese and Russian Presidents allowed more space for the non-P5 countries to promote a common vision for the Global South, adding several important resolutions on energy security, climate change and re-ordering the WTO. The Rio declaration also took a stern view of the U.S.'s moves on tariffs. As India prepares for its leadership of the BRICS grouping next year, that now represents about half the global population, around 40% of the global GDP and a quarter of global trade, it can move forward with this consensus, fulfilling the vision for the grouping's acronym that Mr. Modi recast as "Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability".

6 members of radical Manipur outfit held for attack on police

The Hindu Bureau

IMPHAL

Six members of the radical outfit Arambai Tenggol who were allegedly involved in assaulting an officer and other personnel of the Manipur Police, were arrested from four localities of two districts on Tuesday.

They attacked the police personnel during a shutdown in Bishnupur district on June 9, the police said.

Four of these six members were arrested in Imphal West district, and two in Bishnupur district. They were identified as Laishram Sanahal Singh, Laishram Rishikanta Singh, Laishram Premchand, Kangabam Nongdamba Singh, Sarangthem Rabi-chandra, and Yumnam Jaswant Singh.

Among the six arrested, the youngest member is 18 years old, while the oldest is 28.

4 extremists arrested

On Tuesday, the security forces also arrested four active members of the Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group), an outlawed extremist group.

The police said one of them, identified as 55-year-old Potshangbam Jeet Mee-



The six persons belonging to the outfit arrested by the Manipur Police on Wednesday.

tai alias Norjit, was involved in extortion and threatening people, brick field owners, and government employees. He was arrested from Imphal's Kekrupat area.

Thoudam Santosh Singh, 23, was arrested in Bishnupur district's Moirang Okshongbung. "He had collected a large amount of extortion money from schools and colleges in Thoubal district," a police spokesperson said.

The remaining two KCP (PWG) members - 34-year-old Laitonjam Ramakanta Meitei and 38-year-old Thongam Herojit Singh - were arrested from Bishnupur district's Utlou area.

They were raising funds for their banned outfit by extorting money from the general public and businessmen in Nambol area," the spokesperson said.

'FATF comments on state financing of terror reinforce India's position on Pakistan'

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

The Financial Action Task Force, the international apex anti-terror financing watchdog, has included a separate section on state-sponsored terrorism in its report for the first time.

According to sources, the FATF's decision reinforces the position India has held since at least 2022, when it identified Pakistan as a source of terror financing.

"A variety of publicly available sources of information and delegations' inputs to this report indicate that certain terrorist organisations have been and continue to receive financial and other forms of sup-

port from several national governments," the FATF said in July 2025 Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks.

The report stated that the possibility that governments may provide financial or other forms of support to terrorist organisations is a long-standing threat to "international peace and security, as well as to the stability of regional financial and political systems".

Several forms

"Delegations reported on this trend by referring to the use of state sponsorship for terrorist financing (TF) either as fundraising technique or as part of the financial management stra-

tegy of the certain organisations engaging in terrorist acts," the report said.

It added that this government support for terrorist activities has come in several forms, including direct financial support, logistical and material support, and the provision of training.

"Back in 2022, India had identified state-sponsored terrorism from Pakistan as a source of terrorist financing risk in its money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment," a source explained.

"The finding of the report reinforces India's position. The FATF report also highlights the funding patterns of Pakistan-based LeT (Lashkar-e-Taiba) and JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammed)."

India played key role in bringing out FATF report on terrorist financing

Devesh K. Pandey

NEW DELHI

India was one of the key contributors to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) project for putting together the “Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks” report that was released on Tuesday.

It is learnt that the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and France were the co-leads for the project. India also played a significant role in bringing out the report, which has for the first time recognised state sponsorship as a means to fund and support terrorism.

“We have long identified Pakistan as a state that sponsors terrorism. India’s



The FATF has for the first time recognised state sponsorship as a means to fund terrorism.

2022 National Risk Assessment (NRA) on Money Laundering and Terror Financing flagged state-sponsored terrorism – particularly from Pakistan – as a major concern. Accordingly, all financial institutions, including banks, are required to do enhanced due

diligence with respect to any transaction related to Pakistan,” said a government official.

The findings highlighted in the FATF report are expected to reflect in the framing of subsequent NRAs of all the other countries. The United States, in its 2024 National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment, has already noted that it faced terrorism threats from terror groups in Pakistan, apart from Afghanistan, Southeast Asia, and East Africa.

“Being an NRA, it is followed by all U.S. banks while adhering to their KYC guidelines. They are cautious about transactions with Pakistan, and this increases the cost of doing business for Pakistani establishment and busi-

nesses. After this FATF Risk report – which carries higher precedence over NRAs – the U.S. and other countries will have to acknowledge the sources of state-sponsored terrorism in their risk assessments,” the official said.

In the FATF report, the global money laundering and terror financing watchdog has considered the inputs received from delegations and publicly available sources of information.

“Among the various suspect modus operandi adopted for state sponsoring of terror outfits is the ongoing smuggling of oil from Iran to Pakistan. There is a high risk of funds so generated being used to finance terrorist activities,” said another official.

SC to hear petitions against revision of electoral rolls today

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

A Supreme Court Bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joymalya Bagchi will on Thursday hear arguments for and against the special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls under way in poll-bound Bihar and decide if the drive, initiated by the Election Commission (EC), needs to be stayed for the time being.

Over 10 petitions filed by Opposition leaders, activists, NGOs and lawyers have been listed before the Bench, which had agreed on Monday to urgently list the case on July 10.

The petitions listed for hearing, and challenging the SIR, include ones by Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, Rashtriya Janata Dal MP Manoj Jha, activists Yogenendra Yadav and Arshad Ajmal, and the NGOs Association for Democratic Reforms and People's Union for Civil Liberties. The court has listed a petition filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay supporting the SIR.

The petitions have ar-



Over 10 petitions by Opposition leaders, activists, NGOs and lawyers have been listed.

gued that an interim order from the apex court staying the June 24 notification announcing the SIR was necessary as crores of voters were put on a tight leash to produce documents to prove their domicile or face the prospect of disenfranchisement.

The petitioners contended that the SIR process violated the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and Rule 21A of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. The petitioners variously argued that the SIR shifted the onus of being on the voters' list from the State to the citizens. Mr. Upadhyay, on the other hand, voted for the periodic conduct of SIRs of electoral rolls across the country.

India, Africa must work side by side, says PM in Namibia

India seeks to cooperate, not compete, with Africa, says Mr. Modi; he also congratulated Namibia for adopting UPI digital payment system; Modi given the country's highest civilian honour

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Continuing his diplomacy focused on the Global South, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday highlighted India's support to Namibia's decolonisation, "not just in words, but in action".

Addressing a special session of the Namibian Parliament, Mr. Modi congratulated the African nation for adopting India's UPI digital payment system. The Prime Minister also highlighted the country's wider Africa policy, emphasising that India does not aspire to "compete" with anyone in the African continent, but rather seeks to "build together".

"India is proud to have stood with Namibia - not just in words, but in action. Like the tough and elegant plants of Namibia, our friendship has stood the test of time. And, just like your national plant *Welwitschia mirabilis*, it only grows stronger with age and time," Mr. Modi told the joint session of the Parliament of Namibia, highlighting the historic support that India extended to Namibia's freedom from



Close links: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Namibia President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah in Windhoek. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the 1940s. According to the records of the Ministry of External Affairs, India was among the first countries to raise the cause of Namibia's independence at the United Nations in 1946.

Africa must lead

Africa should not just be a source of raw materials and minerals, but should "lead in value creation and sustainable growth", the Prime Minister said.

"With Africa, we seek not to compete, but to

cooperate. Our goal is to build together. Not to take, but to grow together," he added.

Mr. Modi met with Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah and signed several agreements, including MoUs to set up an Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Namibia and to cooperate in the field of health and medicine.

Namibia also completed the formalities to join the India-led Coalition of Dis-

aster Resilient Infrastructure and the Global Biofuel Alliance.

The launch of a digital payments system in Namibia later this year was also announced as an outcome of the UPI technology licensing agreement signed between the National Payments Corporation of India and the Bank of Namibia in April 2024.

Mr. Nandi-Ndaitwah also conferred Mr. Modi with the Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis, Namibia's highest civilian award.

Earlier, Mr. Modi paid homage to the hero of Namibia's freedom movement Sam Nujoma, describing him as "a great friend of India". He recollected Dr. Nujoma's role during the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Namibia in 1986.

The first diplomatic mission of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) was established in India, which provided the organisation with material support as it led the efforts for the liberation of Namibia. India's support to SWAPO is remembered fondly, the Prime Minister said.