

Beat: News

Passenger trains collide in northern India, killing 12 people

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USPA News - At least 12 people were killed and more than 40 others were injured when two passenger trains collided in northern India after one of the trains failed to stop at a red signal, authorities said on Wednesday, adding that negligence likely caused the crash. The accident happened just after 10:45 p.m. local time on Tuesday when the Krishak Express passed through Kusmhi station near Gorakhpur, located in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, and failed to stop at a red signal close to the Gorakhpur Cantt railway station.

The train then collided with a General Coach train which was leaving Gorakhpur Cantt. The railways ministry said the trains crashed in a side collision, overturning two coaches and causing one coach to derail by two wheels. The ministry said at least 12 people had been killed while 45 others were injured, including 12 people who were seriously injured. All of the injured were taken to various hospitals in Gorakhpur. The Krishak Express was traveling from Manduadih in Varanasi district to the city of Lucknow, while the General Coach was going from Lucknow to the town of Barauni in the neighboring state of Bihar. After the accident, Railway Minister D. V. Sadananda Gowda instructed officials to provide free medical treatment to those injured while compensation was announced for both the relatives of those killed and the injured. "He also directed Railways to make arrangements to allow free train journey to relatives of victims who wants to visit the accident site," the ministry said. Both the driver and the assistant driver of the Krishak Express have been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation. Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, in a letter, said he was deeply saddened to learn about the casualties in Tuesday's accident. "Kindly convey my heartfelt condolences to the family members of the deceased. I pray to the Almighty to give them the strength and courage to bear this irreparable loss. I wish speedy recovery to the injured persons," he said. India's railroad network is the fourth largest in the world and carries more than 14 million passengers and over a million tonnes of freight daily, but accidents are common, mainly as a result of poor maintenance and human error. In July 2011, a total of 70 people were killed and more than 300 others were injured when a passenger train bound for the Indian capital of New Delhi derailed in Uttar Pradesh state. Just hours later, another passenger train derailed in western Assam state, injuring about 50 people.

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