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Official death toll from Tempi rail tragedy reaches 46



A three-day period of mourning in Greece continued for a second day on Thursday, declared in the wake of an unprecedented train collision in north-central Greece. The official death toll has now reached 46. Dozens of people were hospitalized, while several survivors are being treated in ICUs.

Search and rescue efforts continued overnight at the accident site, at the mouth of the southern entrance of the Tempi Valley gorge, just north of the central Greece city of Larissa.



Meanwhile, the station master at the Larissa rail center will face a prosecutor in the same city on Saturday.

The 59-year-old man is an employee of the state-run railway system, OSE, and in preliminary statements to authorities a day earlier reportedly admitted that he mistakenly switched the north-bound passenger train into the path of an ongoing south-bound freight train.

Nevertheless, intense media scrutiny in the country over the past two days has focused on why consecutive Greek governments and state railways administrations have failed to install an electronic monitoring, signaling, communication and automated braking system along all rail tracks and aboard all rolling stock.

In the face of the tragedy that has gripped the country, the Metropolis of Larissa & Tyrnavos has stood by the side of relatives of the victims and those injured, from the very first moment.



Metropolitan of Larissa & Tyrnavos Ieronymos to Orthodoxy news agency

The resident Metropolitan, His Eminence Ieronymos, spoke to the Orthodoxy news agency this week regarding relief efforts underway by the Church and the local community, while also emphasizing that respect for human dignity must be exhibited at all times amid this difficult period.

A Trisagion memorial service was held on Wednesday at the seats of Metropolises and numerous parishes around Greece, for the repose of victims' souls.

Several Metropolises also cancelled scheduled pastoral and other events, as the country remains in mourning.

Archbishop of Albania Anastasios expends deepest condolences

In a related development, the Archbishop of Durres, Tirana and All Albania, His Beatitude Anastasios, was the latest Primate of an Orthodox Church to convey his deepest condolences to the families of the victims, and best wishes for the recovery of the injured of the train collision, in his telephone conversation with the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos.

