Baltimore bridge collapse: Fourth victim recovered, FBI boards cargo ship

2 victims remain missing as Baltimore officials prepare for legal action

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The MV Dali was less than 30 minutes into a 27-day voyage to Colombo, Sri Lanka, when it struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge around 1:30 a.m. on Tuesday. (Photo: David Adams/USACE Baltimore)

A fourth victim's body has been recovered from the site of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse in the Patapsco River, officials said.

Salvage teams recovered a vehicle with a body trapped inside while they were working Monday to clear the channel of debris, <u>said Baltimore Mayor</u>

<u>Brandon Scott.</u> Six construction workers <u>were repairing potholes</u> on the

bridge on March 26 when it collapsed. The workers plummeted to their deaths, and two remain missing.

FBI agents boarded the Dali, the Singapore-flagged ship responsible for the collapse, on Monday. The Washington Post reported that the FBI opened a criminal investigation focusing on the container ship, which was carrying about 4,700 containers, when it rammed into the bridge just minutes into its journey from Baltimore to Sri Lanka.

The bridge collapse shuttered the Port of Baltimore, <u>landing a blow to the</u> state's economy.

Who are the victims?

The bodies of the three victims previously recovered were identified by officials as Alejandro Hernandez Fuentes, 35, Dorlian Ronial Castillo Cabrera, 26, and Maynor Yasir Suazo-Sandoval, 38.

Officials didn't release the name of the victim recovered Monday, citing his family's wishes, but Alicia Bárcena, Mexico's secretary of exterior relations, identified the victim on X as Carlos Daniel Hernández.

"On the night of the collapse, these men were engaged in challenging, dangerous work – tending to our state's infrastructure for our collective benefit," Maryland Gov. Wes Moore said in a statement. "They hailed from communities that have gone long overlooked and underappreciated. But their work had dignity – and their contributions will never be forgotten."

The two victims whose bodies haven't been recovered are believed to be trapped in the tangled mass of steel from the bridge.

Moore appointed a liaison to work with the families of the victims. He also introduced an amendment to the PORT Act, which proposes a permanent scholarship program for the families of transportation workers who die on the job. Baltimore officials established a fund to support the victims' families.

What is being done for workers affected by bridge collapse?

Moore signed an executive order on April 5 providing \$60 million to support businesses and workers affected by the bridge collapse.

The Port of Baltimore, a hub for vehicles, light trucks and various bulk goods, generates some 15,300 jobs; nearly 140,000 jobs are linked to port activities.

Local, state and federal officials have touted the port's success as <u>"critically important to the economy."</u> Its closure poses a risk of tangling supply chains and impacting the state's economy. The port handled <u>a record amount of foreign cargo</u> last year totaling \$80 billion.

Maryland also launched a \$12.5 million Port of Baltimore Worker Retention Program to help port businesses keep employees.

When will the port reopen?

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is racing to clear the bridge wreckage from the water and plans to open a limited access channel by the end of April. The channel would allow one-way traffic in and out of the port and revive barge container and roll-on/roll-off vessel service.

Engineers plan to reopen the permanent channel by the end of May, restoring port access to normal capacity.

Lt. Gen. Scott A. Spellmon, Army Corps of Engineers commanding general, acknowledged that the timeline is ambitious and said it could be impacted by weather or changes in the complexity of the wreckage.

President Joe Biden vowed a rapid rebuilding of the bridge and announced \$60 million for emergency work. He also promised that the federal government would fund the reconstruction.

The port has five public and 12 private terminals, but operations are indefinitely suspended.

Will the Dali's owner be held responsible for collapse?

The owner and operator of the Dali filed a petition in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland seeking to cap their liability for the disaster at about \$43.7 million.

No legal action has been taken against Grace Ocean or Synergy Marine, but Biden and Moore have previously shared their intent to hold the appropriate parties accountable.

Baltimore officials are taking legal steps "to proactively and aggressively address the catastrophic impact the Key Bridge collapse has had on the City of Baltimore and its residents," announced law firm DiCello Levitt. The city is partnering with DiCello Levitt and Saltz Mongeluzzi Bendesky Trial Lawyers.

"We will bring significant economic and environmental loss claims on behalf of the City of Baltimore and its residents against the M/V Dali's owner, charterer, manager/operator, manufacturer and others, to hold them accountable for causing one of the largest inner-city maritime disasters in U.S. history," DiCello Levitt co-founder Adam Levitt said in a statement.