

1 September — Maritime Safety Agency published statistics for leisure-related maritime accidents occurring from July to August 1997. Total of 232 maritime accidents resulted in 12 deaths and missing persons, worst record since Agency started collecting statistics 5 years ago

3 September — 40 people missing and feared dead after bus carrying 60 plunged into flooded Kail River in western India

3 September — TU134 aircraft of Vietnam Air crashed and burned at Pochentong International Airport in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, killing 65 and leaving seriously-injured infant as sole survivor

3 September — Toronto-bound passenger train derailed 90 km west of Saskatchewan, Canada, killing one passenger and injuring 65

6 September — Dornier 228 propeller plane crashed into jungle in Sarawak, Malaysia, killing all 10 crew members and passengers

6 September — Turkish President, Suleyman Demirel criticized 'traffic terror' in Turkey after latest bus crash in series of accidents killed 33

9 September — Train and fuel truck collided at level crossing near St-Antoine-du-Breuilh, France, killing 13 and injuring 49

10 September — New 20-m ferry capsized off Haiti's central coast, drowning some 400 passengers

14 September — Train accident at Bilaspur, India killed 82 and injured 234 people, after railway crew removed tracks for repair without informing superiors or railway station

19 September — Express train of Great Western Trains Co., Ltd. collided with freight train at Southall Station, west London, killing six passengers and injuring 160. GW president on board and hospitalized

19 September — Bus ran into sea in Phu Yen Province, Vietnam, drowning 33 and injuring 15

21 September — Light plane crashed on take off from municipal airport at Torrance, California, killing all four persons on board

21 September — Overloaded river ferry capsized after being caught in strong current in eastern India, drowning at least 20 people

22 September — Two passenger trains bound for Manila collided at Muntinglupa, killing 7 passengers and injuring around 200

23 September — Ms Tomoko Otake co-piloted flight from Haneda to Hakodate, Hokkaido to become first female 747 pilot at Japan Air Lines

26 September — Airbus A300 of Garuda Indonesian Airways crashed in northern Sumatra, killing all 234 on board

29 September — East Japan Railway Company (JR East) completed move to new HQ near south entrance of Shinjuku Station, Tokyo. Site of former building in Marunouchi to be sold to pay off part of JNR long-term debt

30 September — Teito Rapid Transit Authority inaugurated new 2.2-km section connecting Yotsuya and Tameike Sanno. Concurrent with inauguration, TRTA also celebrated opening of Tameike Toranomom Station on Ginza Line, between Akasaka Mitsuke and Toranomom

1 October — Overcrowded bus careened off bridge into swift-flowing stream in southern India, leaving 65 of 70 passengers missing

1 October — Nagano-bound shinkansen opened, linking Takasaki with Nagano (117.4 km) and cutting journey time by *Asama* from Tokyo to Nagano (222.4 km) from 3 hours and 7 minutes (average) to 1 hour and 19 minutes

1 October — Ministry of Transport merged Railway Development Fund and Maritime Credit Corporation to form public Corporation for Advanced Transport & Technology (CATT) responsible for granting subsidies to shinkansen construction projects, interest-free loans to construct and improve arterial and urban railways, and loans and credits for maritime shipping companies

1 October — Three explosions under train standing at Ghaziabad Station near New Delhi killed at least two passengers and injured 38



New JR East Head Office Building

(JR East)

2 October — Bus packed with Moroccan farm workers plunged from overpass onto major highway in Aix-en-Provence, France, leaving 12 dead and 20 injured

3 October — Next-generation cars for Tokaido and Sanyo Shinkansen unveiled at JR Central Hamamatsu Works in Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. 700 Series (16 cars) designed jointly by JR Central and JR West, feature reduced noise and vibration

8 October — JR Central made stock offering at four stock exchanges including Tokyo at opening price of ¥359,000

10 October — Express passenger train smashed into freight train standing at Shingia Station near Jessore, Bangladesh, leaving 12 dead and injuring 30

10 October — Argentine DC-9 airliner crashed in fierce storm in Uruguay, killing all 75 people on board

12 October — *Super Azusa 13* express collided with empty out-of-service train at Otsuki Station on JR East Chuo Line, Yamanashi Prefecture, injuring 31 passengers and driver of empty train

12 October — Kyoto Municipal Subway commenced commercial operation of 12.7-km East-West Line. Kyoshin Line (operated by Keihan Electric Railway Company) which ran parallel to new line discontinued service between Sanjo and Goryo



Ms Maki Ishimura, first JR Freight female train driver
(Transportation News)

13 October — Bus carrying senior citizens on sightseeing trip plunged into ravine in central Quebec, Canada, killing 43 out of 48 people onboard

14 October — Crowded bus carrying 110 children plunged 10 meters into river near New Delhi, killing 27 children and injuring 60

15 October — UK team sets world land speed record of 1200 km/h at Black Rock Desert, Nevada, in car powered by two jet engines from F4 Phantom fighter

21 October — Railway station waiting room collapsed in Bombay, India, killing at least 8 and injuring 60

25 October — Passenger bus collided with empty fuel truck near Konya, Turkey, killing 48 people and injuring 8

27 October — Ms Maki Ishimura of JR Freight debuted as first female train driver in JR group by hauling freight train from Tokyo Freight Terminal to Kawasaki Station

28 October — Speeding 16-car passenger train slammed into truck at crossing near Guangzhou, China, killing 6 people and injuring many others

11 November — Chinese freighter *Chu Hai* (2300 tons) collided with Panamanian freighter *Asian Hibiscus* (7000 tons) and sunk in Kanmon Strait, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan, leaving two crew missing

17 November — Terrorist group opened fire on foreign tourists at Luxor, southern Egypt killing 62

21 November — Japanese Ministry of Transport published FY1997 report on transportation and economy (White Paper on Transport) noting that airline and trucking deregulation created new demand and lower prices, while admitting negative social effects, such as discontinuation of unprofitable services

25 November — Japanese Association of Tourist Agencies held JATA '97 international conference in Tokyo attended by about 1500 people from 81 countries

28 November — Panamanian-registered freighter *Kuroshima* owned by Kyokuyo Kaiun ran aground off Dutch Harbor, Unalaska Island in Aleutians killing two crew and discharging 7.6 million kiloliters of fuel oil into sea

28 November — Japan's MLX01 experimental linear motor car recorded manned world speed record of 503 km/h in running test jointly conducted by JR Central and JR Railway Technology Research Institute at 18.4-km experimental track in Yamanashi Prefecture. Research team plans final goal of 550 km/h to pave way for commercial operation at 500 km/h

29 November — *Nozomi* shinkansen connecting Tokyo and Hakata, Kyushu, increased maximum speed to 300 km/h and reduced journey time by 15 minutes to 4 hours and 49 minutes, thanks to new Series 500 car developed by JR West

29 November — JR Oito Line linking Otari and Kotaki (21.7 km) in Nagano and Niigata prefectures, Japan, restored to full service over entire route after 26 months of repairs due to flood damage

Milestones

Yasutoshi Tsuchisaka

Appointed Vice President of Teito Rapid Transit Authority on 9 September succeeding former Vice President, Yutaka Hatano (former Director General of Maritime Safety Agency) who died on 17 August. Joined Ministry of Transport in 1963 after graduating from Faculty of Law at University of Tokyo. Served as Director General of Cargo Transport and Distribution Bureau, Director General of Road Transport Bureau, Director General of Transport Policy Bureau, and Director General of Maritime Safety Agency, before retiring in June 1997