

Dutch authorities assess bridge hit by overstacked container barge

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A cargo barge has collided with the Willemsbrug road bridge in Rotterdam resulting in five containers falling into the Maas river.

The collision at the bridge happened at around 8:45 am local time on Wednesday. Investigations are ongoing to assess the extent of the damage. Fortunately, no one was injured. The bridge did sustain damage but the severity is still unknown with engineers on the scene assessing the bridge.

Videos on social media show MSC and Maersk containers floating down the river, however, according to harbour operator Havenbedrijf Rotterdam three containers had been retrieved with the other two sinking. Other reports have claimed that another container was retrieved later on.

Dutch media reported that the vessel was moored on the Noordereiland and that the captain was being questioned. The spokesperson of the Havenbedrijf Rotterdam did speculate that the captain might have misjudged the bridge's height.

The most unusual part of this incident is that the vessel didn't even stop after it hit the bridge even though it made a thunderous noise upon impact. This is corroborated by the video of the incident and eyewitness testimonies to local press.

This is the second time a vessel hit one of Rotterdam's bridges this year. An inland vessel became wedged under the Willemsbrug bridge back in March. It lost at least two containers into the waterway and the vessel was freed several hours later after the water level subsided.