

Several hundred people from around the area looked on at a stone extraction site in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila on February 2, as authorities recovered the body of a worker who was crushed in a stone pit, when the earth on top collapsed on him.

'Revive dying rivers' Road accidents kill 5

34 CU students injured as bus plunges into ditch

STAR REPORT

In order to build a sustainable northern region, reviving dead rivers, protecting and improving quality of water bodies, and maintaining "good and well-planned practices" in implementing agricultural, fisheries and industrial projects is essential, speakers stressed at a discussion in Rajshahi yesterday.

discussion on water management

Speakers urge authorities at

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The discussion, held at the city's Hotel Warisan, was titled "Developing the Draft Watershed Management Policy and Implementation Framework". It was organised by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and assisted by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The speakers observed that while rivers are dying, other water bodies are getting contaminated, mainly due to the lowering of groundwater, uncontrolled use of chemicals, and illegal disposal of toxic wastes.

To save rivers and water bodies of Rajshahi region, the speakers demanded that the proposed Ganges Barrage and North Rajshahi Irrigation projects be implemented.

They also suggested accelerating the agricultural extension processes and expansion of different methods of irrigation to ensure the required volume of water for irrigation.

The programme was moderated by Prof Chowdhury Sarwar Jahan, of Rajshahi University's Geology and Mining

The discussion was chaired by IUCN country representative Raquibul Amin, while Prof Mohammad Rejaur Rahman of Institute of Water and Flood Manangement of Buet attended as chief guest.

Five people were killed and at least 34 were injured in separate road accidents across the country over the last two days, report

our correspondents. In Chattogram, at least 34 passengers, all students of Chittagong University (CU), were injured after the bus carrying them fell into a road-side ditch in Fatikchhari

upazila yesterday morning. The university-bound BRTC bus from Fatikchhari fell into the ditch around 9am, CU Proctor SM Monirul Hasan told

ost control while trying to make room for another bus coming from the opposite direction, the proctor added. Among the injured, 12 were sent to

The accident occurred after the vehicle

Chittagong Medical College Hospital while the rest were given primary treatment, Monirul Hasan confirmed. In Lalmonirhat, a four-year-old child

was killed after he was ran over by a loaded

truck at Uttar Haldibari area of Hatibandha upazila yesterday morning, reports our Lalmonirhat correspondent. The accident occurred as victim Ranjit Kumar was crossing the Lalmonirhat-

Burimari Highway in the area. Police have seized the truck but its

driver and helper managed to escape, said Omar Farooque, OC of Hatibandha Police Station.

Meanwhile in Jhenaidah, a bus helper was killed at Nagarbathan bazar under sadar upazila yesterday afternoon, reports our Jhenaidah correspondent.

The deceased was identified as Amir Hamza (35).

Quoting locals, police said the accident occurred as a passenger bus hit a parked truck from behind on the Jhenaidah-Chuadanga road. This injured passengers of the bus and left helper Hamza in a critical state.

Locals rushed the injured to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, where on-duty doctors declared Hamza dead. His body was taken to the hospital's morgue for autopsy, said Moeen Uddin, OC of sadar police station.

In Gaibandha, two people including a three-year-old were killed in separate road accidents in Gobindaganj upazila yesterday. The accidents occurred within the span of 14 hours, reports our Gaibandha correspondent.

In Komarpur bazar area, bakery worker Khorshed Alam (30) died after a speeding bus hit him while he was crossing the road, said AKM Mehdi Hasan, OC of Gobindaganj Police Station. He died on SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

16 held for online gambling in Ctg

Stone extraction in four upazilas of

In a recent report published by

earth above collapsed on them, raising the

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police busted a gambling syndicate at the city's Riazuddin Bazar Pakhir Goli area and arrested 16 gamblers including three "ringleaders" -- on charge of online gambling yesterday morning.

Among the arrestees, Mithu, Rubel, and Shipu are ringleaders of the syndicate, police claimed, adding that they ran betting worth almost Tk 1 crore every month and gave out loans to gamblers. The deals were done in US dollars as they took place on an international gambling website.

Tipped off, a team of Kotwali police raided an eatery at Riazuddin Bazar's Pakhir Goli in the dead of the night and arrested them while they were gambling on their mobile devices, said Shah Md Abdur Rauf, additional deputy commissioner (ADC), Chattogram Metropolitan

"The accused are of different professions. They spend around Tk 5,000 to 10,000 every day on 'bet365.com', an international gambling site. After winning in digital dollars, they cash out in Bangladeshi currency," said the

The drive was led by Sajal Das, SI of Kotwali Police Station. The SI told The Daily Star, "Under the guise of an eatery business, the syndicate ran the betting ring for a long time. The ring pauperised many young people and their families through illegal gambling.

"They maintained contact through imo, WhatsApp and other communication apps," said the SI.

ADC Rauf said a case was lodged with Kotwali Police Sation under the Digital Security Act in this connection, as the gambling was done through digital devises.

The Bela report stated that the authorities were hiding the actual death toll to avoid consequences.

On January 20, stone worker Liton Miah (22) died at Shah Arefin Tila area of Companiganj upazila. Police on January 23 arrested Aiyub Ali, an illegal stone trader who was operating at the pit where Liton

A probe body of the district administration published a report in February 2017, mentioning names of 47 stone traders responsible for illegal extraction and deaths of workers. Aiyub's name was on top of that list.

It took three years and another person dying to put Aiyub in jail. If that was not discouraging enough, almost all the listed people are currently roaming free and recommendations of the probe body remain unfollowed.

Currently, stones are being extracted bordering areas of Companiganj, SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

> **Barrister Suman** resigns as ICT prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supreme Court lawyer Sayedul Hague Suman, popularly known "Barrister Suman", has resigned from his post as prosecutor of the International Tribunal.

submitted resignation letter to the chief prosecutor of the tribunal's office yesterday, Suman confirmed The Daily Star.

"Due to engagement in social or voluntary activities in recent times, I can't discharge my duties at the important institution of International Crimes Tribunal with full sincerity, Suman said in the letter.

"So, I think it's not right for me to receive a salary from the government. Hence, I resign," he added. He joined the tribunal

on November 13, 2012 and dealt with several war crimes cases.

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