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## Climate bell tolls Copenhagen talks open today

Livelihood changes with weather

INAM AHMED

Inside her small dark, musty hut, Pia Rani looks like a haunted animal. Fear and insecurity etched in her desperate eyes; she is even hesitant to open the bamboo door just a crack to see her visitors.

"My husband is away. He has left the village," she then says quietly. "What else could he do?"

Well. What else could he do? The villagers agree. In fact, what should we all do? Follow Pia Rani's husband Ranjan Jaladash? they ask. At Chokoria's fishermen's colony, everybody is desperate to find a way out, to know what lays ahead for them.

This year, Ranjan tried and failed repeatedly to make a single successful trip to the deep sea. Each time he sailed out,

the sea turned rough after a few days. The danger signals were raised. The waters roiled and darkened. The fishing trawler tossed madly. And Ranjan had to abandon his trip.

"With every trip he abandoned, our loans piled up," Pia says. "He borrowed from the mahajans. A lot of it. And then he just lost the battle."

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Pia Rani sees a bleak future. At Chokoria's Jaladash neighbourhood in Cox's Bazar, many fishermen like her husband Ranjan are deserting the village or changing their profession failing to cope with a changed weather and a changed sea. Inset, two rickshaws kept at a corner of this house in the village indicate that fishermen are now pulling rickshaw instead of fishing.

PHOTO: STAR

PINAKI ROY from Copenhagen

Bangladesh is all set to place its demands, including reduction of carbon emission by developed countries, to fight the impacts of global warming as the United Nations Climate Change Summit kicks off today in Copenhagen, Denmark.

As a representative of the least developed and most vulnerable countries, Bangladesh

demands that the developed nations (Annex I countries) commit to reduce 40 percent carbon emission by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 and keep the rise of world temperature within 2 degrees Celsius.

Bangladesh is also demanding allocation of adaptation funds according to a climate vulnerability index.

The inaugural session of the summit will

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Rising sea to cost Bangladesh dear

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Just a one-meter rise in sea level might cause around 17 percent of Bangladesh's land-mass to go under water, displacing some 20 million people living in coastal areas, forecasts Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

A model developed by Bangladesh Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) also demonstrates a similar scenario.

In its model, CEGIS shows if the sea level rises 32cm, it

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## An SOS from newspapers

Today, over 56 newspapers in 44 countries take the unprecedented step of speaking with one voice through a common editorial. We do so because humanity faces a profound emergency.

Unless we combine to take decisive action, climate change will ravage our planet, and with it our prosperity and security. The dangers have been becoming apparent for a generation. Now the facts have started to speak: 11 of the past 14 years have been the warmest on record, the Arctic ice-cap is melting and last year's inflated oil and food prices provide a foretaste of future havoc. In scientific journals

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



## 20 die as buses collide head-on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A head-on collision between two buses yesterday left 20 people dead and 50 others injured on Dhaka-Barisal highway in Bhanga upazila of Faridpur.

Of the injured, 25 were sent to Faridpur Medical College Hospital in a critical condition while the rest were taken to Bhanga Health Complex and several clinics, said police.

The driver of a Dhaka-bound bus of Chandra Paribahan from Madaripur lost control over steering while trying to save a goat on the highway and collided with a Gopalganj-bound bus of Rajdhani Paribahan at around 4:45 pm, Superintendent of Police Awlad Ali Fakir said quoting locals.

Fifteen people were killed on the spot and five others succumbed to their wounds on the way to hospital.

Of the deceased, seven were identified as Mahfuza Khanam, 30, of Kalkini upazila in Madaripur, her three-year-old daughter Maria and son Jamal, 32, Kamal Hossain, 32, and Aman Ullah, 34, of Rajoir upazila in Madaripur, Idris Ali Dorji, 45, of Kakrail village in Madaripur and Bibekananda Baidya, 65, of Jalirpar village in Gopalganj. The identity of the others remained unknown.

Of the critically injured admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital, 16 were identified as Johnny, 30, Shahidul, 45, Milon, 50, Tariqul, 30, Ruma, 22, Sohel, 32, Emon, 10, Karim, 40, Ziaul, 30, Majibar, 25, Rocky, 20, Akkas, 30, Rabia, 50, Jamal, Rahim, 15, and Mithila, 4.

On information, police and members of fire brigade from

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## BDR to empower its battalions

Includes death penalty for mutiny in its draft law, reform proposal; second trial in Satkhira today

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) is going to propose

in its draft law and reform policy provisions for punishment and promotion of soldiers by their own battalions in a bid to decentralise the force.

"These two issues solely depend on the headquarters of the force. But we think as the soldiers work under direct command of the battalions, the officers of the battalions know better about them," comments a BDR official.

"We are proposing in the draft law to empower the battalions to ensure punishment for offences and promotion for good performances," the official explains.

The border guards have finalised the draft in the wake of the Pikhana carnage and mutiny across the country on February 25-26. The draft of new law and policy includes provision for adapting a new name and highest capital punishment for mutiny.

Insiders say the draft is likely to be submitted to the home ministry by next week, adding, the power of awarding punishment would be decentralised and battalions of the force would be empowered more in this regard.

The border force has 46 battalions under 12 sectors and approximately 38,000 soldiers work under the 46 battalions.

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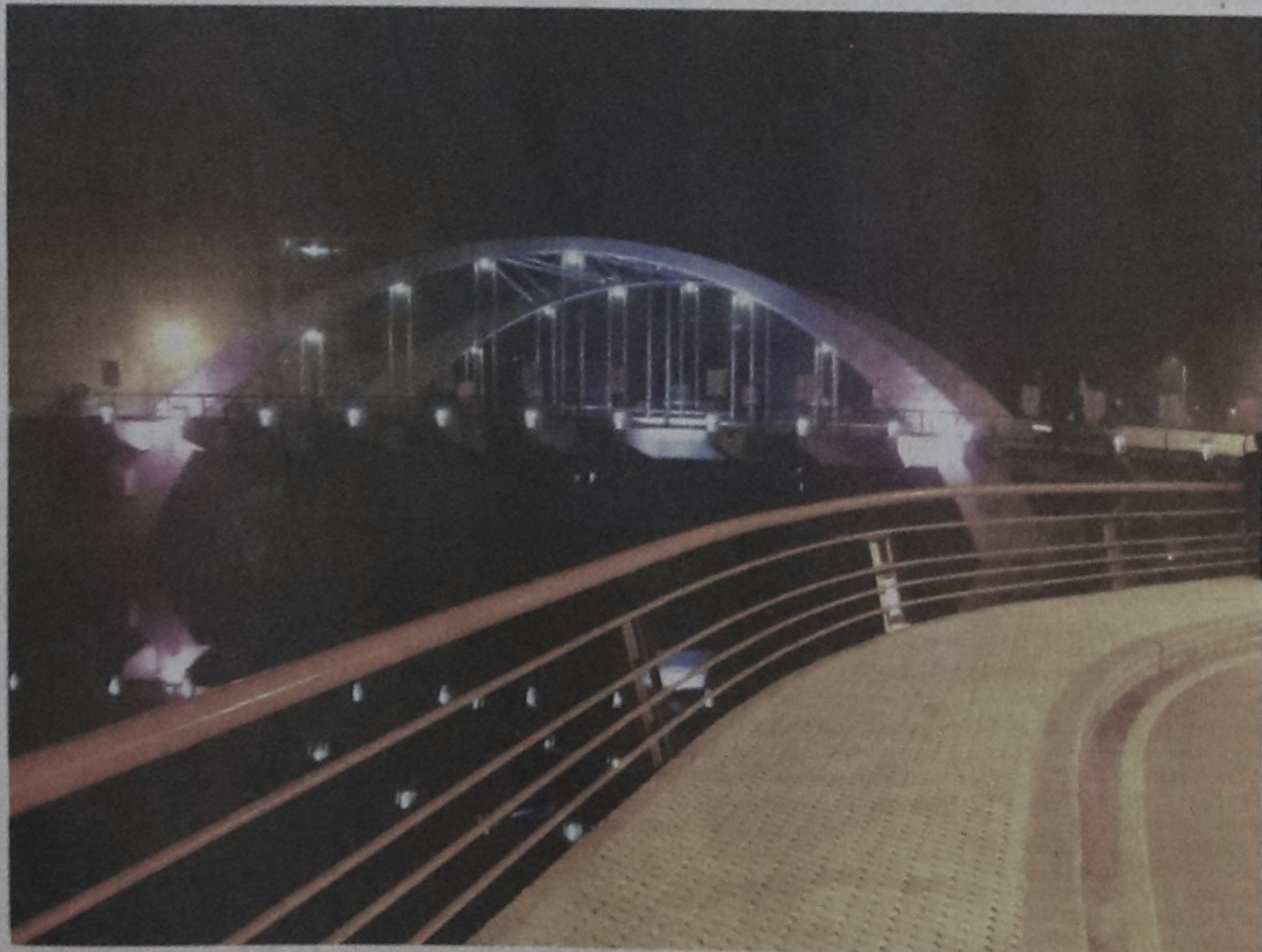
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