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SAUDI MOSQUE ATTACK 4 Bangladeshis among the 15 killed

Diplomatic sources in Dhaka confirm

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Four Bangladesh nationals were among those killed in Thursday's suicide bomb attack on a Saudi mosque, diplomatic sources in Dhaka confirmed yesterday. Four more Bangladeshis were injured in the attack, the sources said, adding that the Bangladesh foreign ministry was likely to provide details about the victims' identities today.

An Islamic State group suicide bomber detonated an explosives-packed vest in a mosque inside a Saudi Special Forces headquarters, killing 15 people on Thursday. In the latest string of ISIS attacks in the kingdom, the bomber struck during noon prayers in the city of Abha, in the southern province of Asir near the border with war-torn Yemen, the interior ministry said.

A ministry spokesman, quoted by al-Ekhbariya state television, said 11 of those killed were policemen and four were Bangladeshis who worked at the police compound, reports Al Jazeera.

One Bangladeshi victim was identified as Jibon, son of late Belal, of Asadnagar village in Brahmanpara upazila of Comilla, reports UNB.

Earlier yesterday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina condemned the attack and expressed her solidarity with the Kingdom to fight against terrorism in any form.



RIVER OR DUMP YARD? Waste materials dumped by locals of Kamrangirchar on the outskirts of the capital filled this channel of the Buriganga river under the Iron Bridge to such an extent that not even an inch is left for water to pass through. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Farida Yasmin passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Farida Yasmin, an eminent Bangla playback singer of the 1960s, breathed her last yesterday in a city hospital.

She was 74. Her health was deteriorating over the last couple of years. She had been suffering from diabetes and hypertension as well as kidney and heart complications, said her long-time colleague and noted singer Ferdousi Rahman.

She died around 6:00pm at the Intensive Care Unit of Birdem Hospital where she had been undergoing treatment for the last 20 days, said Khurshid Alam, himself a playback singer, who frequently visited ailing Farida in the hospital.

"She was a very talented

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Priyabhashini gets death threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent sculptor and war heroine Ferdousi Priyabhashini and her son received death threats over the phone from an unknown caller yesterday, family members said.

It came a day after the brutal murder of blogger Niladri Chattopadhyay

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It's a political trick of govt

Claims BNP; Jamaat condemns killing of Niloy 'Hossain'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday claimed that blogger Niladri Chattopadhyay Niloy was murdered "as part of a government's plot to gain political mileage".

BNP chairperson's adviser Khandker Mahbub Hossain said, "There was a plot behind the Niloy murder. They [the government] are trying to send a message to the world community that there are fundamentalists and militant groups in Bangladesh, and that the present government needs to stay in power to eliminate those forces."

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NILOY KILLING US, UK condemn

STAR REPORT

The United States and the United Kingdom have condemned the killing of blogger Niladri Chattopadhyay Niloy.

"This heinous act once again underscores the need to work together to counter violent extremism," a press statement of the US state department said on Friday.

"We stand with Bangladeshis who reject this vicious act and who work to protect space for

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Over 12,000 foreigners residing illegally?

With bail, they are prolonging their stay

RAFIUL ISLAM

A brief stint in prison, and unscrupulous foreigners can prolong their stay and run illegal businesses in Bangladesh.

Once caught by law enforcers, they opt to serve time in jail to avoid deportation. But soon they come out on bail, now moving more freely than before until the cases are settled, said an official of the Special Branch (SB) of Police.

Illegal immigrants work mostly at

private organisations. Many rent flats in groups and get involved in drug trade, illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) business, gold and dollar smuggling, mugging and even killing.

Algerian national Abuubaida Kadir, the prime accused in last year's killing of O-level student Zubair Ahmed in Uttara, is one of those overstaying in Bangladesh for over a decade.

In December 2013, the Rapid Action Battalion detained 37 foreigners who

had been running VoIP business at an Uttara flat. Of them, 27 have been released on bail (and staying in the country) and the rest are still in jail, police and court sources told The Daily Star early this year.

In November last year, State Minister for Home Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told parliament some 549 foreigners of 12 countries were in different jails. Of them, 76 are serving

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With bandage on his head and disbelief in the eyes, eight-year-old Shipon lying in a DMCH bed yesterday. He was brutally beaten up by a neighbour for defecating beside the latter's house at Jagatbandhu village in Laxmipur.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Five women killed in India for 'witchcraft'

AFP, New Delhi

Villagers in a rural part of eastern India have killed five women whom they accused of practising witchcraft, police said Saturday.

Police in eastern Jharkhand state said a group of assailants dragged the women out of their huts and beat them to death at around midnight Friday in

Kanjia village, some 40 kilometres from state capital Ranchi.

"A group (of villagers) dragged the women out and beat them to death with sticks, accusing them of practising witchcraft," Ranchi deputy police chief Arun Kumar Singh told AFP by phone.

Singh added that 24 villagers have been arrested over the killings of the women, who were mostly aged

between 45 and 50.

Jharkhand police spokesman SN Pradhan said the villagers also used stones and knives after blaming the five women for bringing illness, poor crops and bad luck on the village through witchcraft.

"It looks like the village held a grudge against these women for a very

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Jhimai Khasis still in fear of eviction

Indigenous Peoples' Day today

STAR REPORT

As the indigenous community across the globe observes International Indigenous Peoples' Day today, Khasi families in a corner of Bangladesh are in fear of losing their land.

They have been living in Jhimai Punji, Moulvibazar, for generations. But for the last few months, officials of Jhimai Tea Garden adjoining the punji (hillock) have been making attempts to grab their land, said inhabitants of the hillock.

The tea garden has been cultivating tea since 1929 on a piece of leased-out land. The government last time renewed their lease of 661.55 acres in 2012.

"Tea garden authorities are trying to evict us. They are putting obstacles to our movement by erecting gates on our roads and installing demarcation pillars and

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PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 9
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Pompeii set to rise again

AFP, Pompeii, Italy

Pompeii is rising from the ashes again, despite the worst that Italy's mafia, and bureaucracy, could throw at it.

The ancient city, buried during a volcanic eruption in the first century, is undergoing a multi-million euro restoration which will see the preserved bodies of victims go on display at the site.

But the transformation of one of the world's most treasured archaeological sites has been a challenge both for archaeologists and for Italy itself.

Archaeologist Massimo Osanna was sent in to turn around the project two years ago amid reports of degradation

of the ruins, of theft and even of looting by the Neapolitan mafia, the Camorra.

He now has a 130 million euro (\$143 million) budget, most of it from the European Union.

In March, UNESCO inspectors, who had threatened to take Pompeii off the list of World Heritage sites, acknowledged that there had been considerable improvements to the site's conservation.

"This is a really an exciting time for Pompeii," Osanna told AFP. "Thousands of people are working together. We currently have 35 construction areas on the site."

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A tourist walks in the ruins of ancient Pompeii. The ancient city, buried during a volcanic eruption in the first century, is undergoing a multi-million euro restoration which will see the preserved bodies of victims go on display.

PHOTO: AFP