

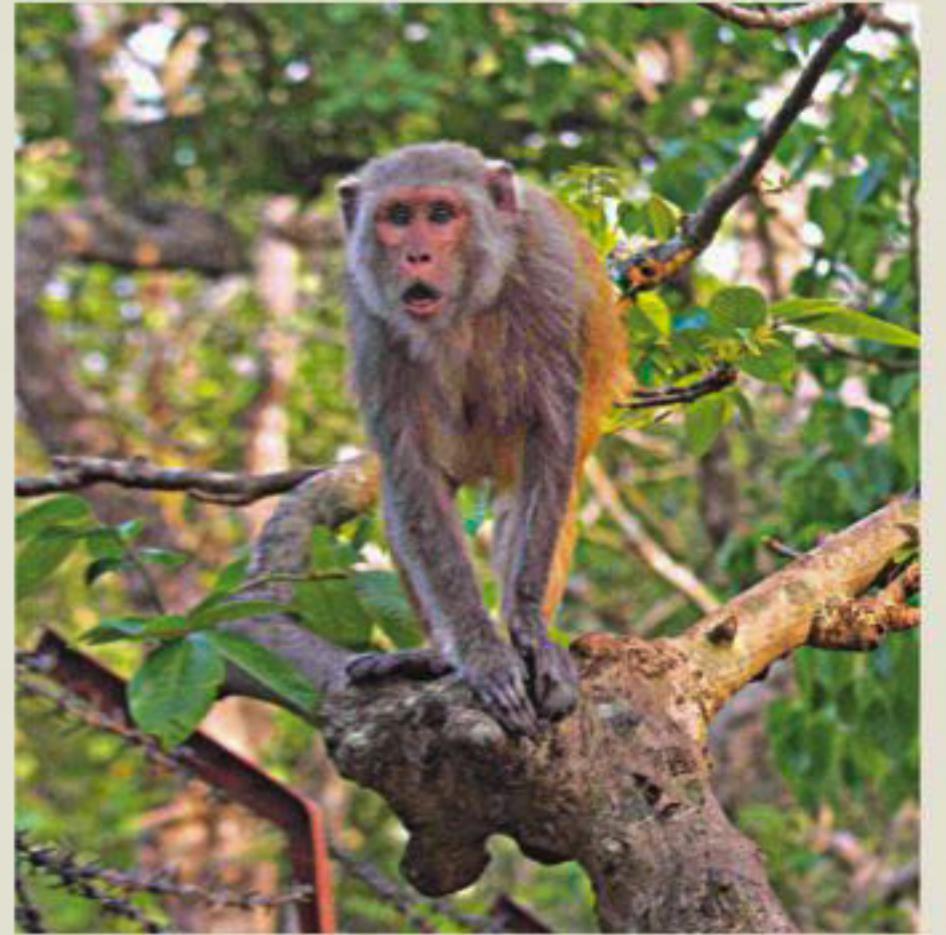
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MADHUPUR NAT'L PARK Wildlife faces food crisis

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

The Madhupur National Park was once a large and dense forest, home to many wild animals, including tigers and bears.

There are no tigers or bears there anymore. But these animals are not the only species that disappeared. Wild fruits and herbal trees are disappearing fast from the forest, causing an acute food crisis for the handful of primates and birds that still live there.

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A herd of deer at the Madhupur National Park in Tangail, and a monkey comes out of the forest looking for food. There is an acute food crisis for animals in the forest due to indiscriminate cutting down of fruit trees and herb plants. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO:
MIRZA SHAKIL

Empty seats in hajj flights worry Biman

Carrier blames it on agencies' failure to confirm hajis' tickets

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman faces fresh trouble operating hajj flights as all of its Jeddah-bound flights are flying with significant number of unoccupied seats due to shortage of hajis.

Hajj agencies not confirming the tickets of hajis is being blamed.

An alleged nexus between some officials of the religious affairs ministry and the hajj agencies are also to blame for the complications in issuance of visas for hajis, said officials of the national flag carrier.

A top Biman official yesterday told The Daily Star that the fate of several hundred hajis would become uncertain if hajj flights continue to operate this way despite Biman having the permission to fly 15 extra hajj flights.

Against the backdrop of repeated cancellation of hajj flights due to shortage of

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HIMAL
SOUTHASIAN

Himal mag to go off print

THE KATHMANDU POST,
Kathmandu

The Southasia Trust has announced suspension of publication of Himal Southasian due to what it says "non-cooperation by regulatory state agencies in Nepal" that has made it impossible to continue operations.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Trust said its

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Police Scotland approves hijab as official uniform



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Police Scotland has announced that the hijab will become part of its official uniform as it aims to create a more diverse force.

The force said they hope the move will "encourage women from Muslim communities, who may previously not have seen policing as a career option, to reconsider".

In the past, Muslim police officers in Scotland were allowed to wear the hijab, but only once it was approved by senior staff members.

The Metropolitan Police introduced the hijab as an optional part of the force's official uniform in 2001 as part of a similar drive to recruit a more diverse mix of officers.

In a statement, chief constable Phil Gormley

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 26

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-30 12-30 4-45 6-33 8-00

JAMAAT 5-05 1-15 5-00 6-36 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Mohitul Islam passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AFM Mohitul Islam, the man who played a pivotal role in bringing the killers of Bangabandhu to justice, breathed his last yesterday.

In October 1976, a little over a year after the massacre in which Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were killed, he with all his courage walked to Lalbagh Police Station to file a case.

At a time when the perpetrators were holding important positions in the new regime installed after the assassination, the on-duty sub-inspector slapped him on his face and pushed him out of the police station.

It was frustrating and painful to Mohitul who had worked as personal assistant to the president and a receptionist at Bangabandhu's residence in 1975.

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Italy quake toll hits 250

Questions mount as country weeps for victims; many remain missing as hope fades for survivors

AFP, Amatrice

The death toll from a powerful earthquake in central Italy rose to 250 yesterday as rescuers continued a grim search for corpses and powerful aftershocks rocked the devastated area.

Weeping in a campsite erected to house the homeless from a string of mountain villages, Rita Rosine, 63, said her 75-year-old sister was trapped under the ruins of a collapsed house, presumed dead.

"The situation is worse than in war. It's awful, awful ... they say it will take two days to dig her out because they have to shore up the surrounding buildings.

"She didn't deserve to die like that, she was so good."

As rescuers sifted through the rubble, questions mounted as to why there had been so many deaths in a thinly-populated area so soon after a 2009 earthquake in the nearby city of L'Aquila left 300 people dead.

That disaster, just 50 kilometres south, underscored the region's vulnerability to seismic events -- but preparations for a fresh quake have been exposed as limited at best.

Giuseppe Saieva, the chief public prosecutor for most of the area affected, said he would be opening an investigation into whether anyone could be held responsible for the disaster.

In Amatrice a 4.3 magnitude aftershock shook the already badly damaged village yesterday, fueling fears of fresh collapses which could hamper the rescue operation.

Mayor Sergio Pirozzi said over 200 people had died in the village alone, suggesting the total number of victims could increase significantly.

Amatrice normally has a population of around 2,500 but it was packed with visitors when the quake struck as people slept in the early hours of Wednesday.

The fate of 28 of 32 guests staying in the village's Hotel Roma was still unclear.

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Missing kid rescued from imam's room in Sirajganj Imam arrested, sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A three-year-old kid was rescued from the room of a mosque's imam in Raiganj upazila of Sirajganj on Wednesday, three days after he went missing.

Pallab Chakraborty, son of Hindu priest Polan Chakraborty of Brommogasa village in the upazila, had been missing since August 21, according to family sources.

Hearing the sound of a child crying out, locals and police rushed to the room of Robiul Islam, imam of Brommogasa Bazaar Mosque, and rescued the child on Wednesday evening. The room is next to the mosque.

Police could not ascertain why the boy was confined in the room.

The three-year-old returned home yesterday after receiving treatment at

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Attack on Kabul US University ends

16 people, including eight students, killed; 53 others wounded; two gunmen shot dead by Afghan special forces

AGENCIES

Sixteen people were killed after militants stormed the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul, officials said yesterday, in a nearly 10-hour raid that prompted anguished pleas for help from trapped students.

Explosions and gunfire rocked the campus after the attack began Wednesday evening, just weeks after two university professors -- an American and an Australian -- were kidnapped at gunpoint near the school.

The attack ended early yesterday when two gunmen were shot dead by Afghan special forces who surrounded the walled compound and worked their way inside, interior ministry officials said.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the assault, but it occurred as the Taliban ramp up their nationwide summer offensive against the Western-backed government.

The presidential office said the attack was "orchestrated" from Pakistan, Afghanistan's longtime regional nemesis often accused of harbouring the Taliban.

"Sixteen people, including eight students, were killed and 53 others were wounded," health ministry spokesman Waheed Majroh told AFP. "Some of the wounded are in critical condition."

The interior ministry said the fatalities included policemen, a university guard and a guard from the neighbouring vocational school for the visually impaired.

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Emergency services personnel stand on the rubble and debris in front of earthquake-damaged buildings in the central Italian village of Pescara del Tronto yesterday, a day after a 6.6 magnitude earthquake struck the region, killing at least 250 people.

PHOTO:
AFP