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8 killed as bus veers off road

30 others injured in Joypurhat; cop run over, killed by lorry in N'ganj

STAR REPORT

At least eight people -- five women and three children -- were killed and 30 others injured as a bus fell into a roadside ditch in Joypurhat Sadar upazila yesterday.

Besides, a police official was killed after a lorry ran him over in Narayanganj Bandar upazila.

In Joypurhat, a Dinajpur-bound bus from Bogura plunged into a roadside ditch after the driver lost control over the steering on Bogura-Joypurhat regional road in Sadar upazila around 1:30pm yesterday, said Mominul Haq, inspector (investigation) of Joypurhat Sadar Police Station.

The accident left eight people dead on the spot and 30 others injured, he said.

Six of the deceased were identified as Rebeka Sultana, 42, of Joypurhat's Kalai upazila, Homaira, 5, Zakia, 3, and Jahura Begum, 55, of the district's Panchbibi upazila, Tasnim 30, of Gaibandha's Palashbari upazila, and Ripa Murmu, 3, of Rangpur's Pirganj upazila.

Talking to The Daily Star at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogura, survivor Md Aslam Hossain, of Duttabari village in Sirajganj Sadar upazila, narrated how the accident happened.

The bus, carrying around 42 passengers, left Charmatha

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



A bus lies overturned in a roadside ditch in Baniapara village of Joypurhat after the driver lost control, leaving at least five women and three children dead on the spot yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DIGITAL SECURITY ACT JnU student remanded over FB comments

JNU CORRESPONDENT

A student of Jagannath University has been placed on a two-day remand in police custody in a case filed under Digital Security Act over a Facebook post.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Debabrata Biswas yesterday passed the order after police placed Forhad Hossain Fahad, a student of Bangla department at JnU, before the court demanding three-day remand.

On Monday, Md Nur-e-Alam, a law department student of the university, filed the case against Forhad with Kotwali Police Station over derogatory remarks on religion.

Police arrested Forhad in Shakhari Bazar area of Old Dhaka yesterday.

Earlier on Monday, Forhad told The Daily Star, "I always write against extremism and fundamentalism on Facebook. Some groups cannot tolerate this."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

TEACHERS' RECRUITMENT Political link preferred over quality

Teachers say

JU CORRESPONDENT

Political and regional identities are getting preference for being appointed as teachers in public universities instead of academic qualities, compromising the quality of education, said Prof Sayeed Ferdous, of anthropology department at Jahangirnagar University.

The universities authorities are busy increasing their "vote bank" by recruiting teachers of poor quality, which gives a wrong message to meritorious students, he said.

He made the comments while addressing the concluding day of a two-day teachers' convention on "What kind of university do we want: higher education policy and structure"

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Assange lands in London jail

Unlikely to be extradited soon due to nature of UK-US treaty; UN calls for fair trial

AGENCIES

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange woke up in a British jail yesterday at the start of a likely lengthy extradition battle after a dramatic end to his seven-year stay in Ecuador's London embassy.

Within hours of police hauling him out of the embassy, the 47-year-old Australian appeared in court for breaching his British bail conditions back in 2012 and to face a subsequent US extradition request.

After Assange was arrested and dragged into a police van in the British capital, American officials unsealed an indictment against him for computer hacking as part of his WikiLeaks whistle-blowing activities.

The Sun tabloid reported he was being held in Wandsworth prison in south London, where he spent nine days in 2010 following an investigation over alleged



sexual assault in Sweden that has since been dropped.

Deemed "the most overcrowded prison" in England at its last inspection in 2018, the 19th-century facility holds around 1,600 inmates.

Inspectors found "most prisoners share a cell designed for one person" while more than a third "were receiving psychosocial help for substance misuse problems".

Assange was remanded into prison custody Thursday at a short hearing in front of a London judge, who pronounced him guilty of disobeying his bail terms by fleeing to the embassy in June 2012.

He could receive up to a year in prison when sentenced at an as yet undetermined later date.

His separate extradition case is set to be next heard by video-link at Westminster Magistrates Court on May 2.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Man sent to jail for 'raping' 7-year-old girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Joypurhat court yesterday sent a man to jail on charges of raping a seven-year-old physically challenged girl in the district's Kalai upazila.

The accused Mehedi Hasan, 27, a neighbour of the victim, was caught red handed on Thursday afternoon while raping the girl, said police.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Iqbal Bahar passed the order to send Mehedi to prison.

Abdul Latif, officer-in-charge of Kalai Police Station, said Mehedi took the girl to his home luring her with food and raped her.

Hearing the girl scream, locals rushed to the spot and caught the accused red handed. Later, he was handed over to police, the OC added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Peak break China to add 'eco' toilet on Mount Everest



AFP, Beijing

Climbers with pressing needs on Mount Everest will soon find an "eco-friendly" toilet at a Chinese campsite 7,028 metres (23,058 feet) above sea level in an ongoing campaign to deal with the peak's waste problem.

Decades of commercial mountaineering have turned Mount Everest into the world's highest rubbish dump as an increasing number of big-spending mountaineers pay little attention to the ugly footprint they leave behind.

Fluorescent tents, discarded climbing equipment, empty gas canisters and even human excrement pollute the well-trodden route to the summit of the 8,848-metre peak.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

3 held with drugs, fake currency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested three men with fake notes of Tk 20 lakh and 300-gram heroin in the capital's Paltan area on Thursday.

Sahabuddin Shikdar, 38, Mehedi Hasan alias Babu alias Lawrence, 42, and Sohel Mia, 29, put the fake notes with real ones and use them during transactions ahead of festivals, said Mashur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Detective

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING APRIL 13

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-35 12-45 4-45 6-24 7-45

JAMAAT 5-10 1-15 5-00 6-28 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Biju brings festivity to the hills

ANVIL CHAKMA, Rangamati

A three-day-long colourful Biju festival of the Chattogram Hill Tracts began in the district yesterday.

Prokriti Ranjan Chakma, president of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum's CHT unit, inaugurated the programme at Rajbari Ghat early in the morning.

The indigenous people in the CHT are now in a festive mood to welcome the Biju, Baisu, Bishu, Bihu and Sangrai festivals and the Bangla New Year.

People belonging to different ethnic groups arrange farewell to the past year and celebrate the Bangla New Year through various colourful programmes with new hopes in their mind.

Different ethnic groups call the festival by different names. The Chakma call it Biju, the Tanchangya Bishu, the Tripura Baisu and the Marma call the festival Sangrai.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Indigenous girls offer flowers in the Kaptai Lake of Rangamati yesterday to celebrate "Phool Biju" beginning the three-day-long traditional Biju festival to welcome the Bangla New Year.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

Blast kills 20 in Pakistan

Taliban faction claims attack targeting minority Hazaras in Quetta market; 48 injured

AFP, Quetta

At least 20 people were killed and 48 wounded yesterday by a powerful suicide blast apparently targeting the Shia Hazara ethnic minority at a crowded fruit market in Pakistan's Quetta city, officials said. Body parts littered the scene and injured people screamed for help as black smoke cloaked the market after the explosion.

A faction of the Pakistani Taliban claimed the attack, which occurred in the capital of southwestern Balochistan province.

The group said it collaborated with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Lej), which has been behind numerous bloody attacks on Shia Muslims in Pakistan. There was no immediate confirmation from Lej.

Balochistan -- which borders Afghanistan and Iran -- is Pakistan's largest and poorest province, rife with ethnic, sectarian and separatist insurgencies.

Balochistan Home Minister Zia Ullah Langu gave the toll and confirmed it was a suicide blast, adding that two of the dead were children.

Provincial police chief Mohsin Butt said eight Hazara were among the victims.

The Hazara, whose Central Asian features make them easily recognisable, are a soft target for Sunni militants, who consider them heretics.

They are so frequently targeted that they are forced to live

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1