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4 killed in Gopalganj road crash

Policeman among them; at least 15 injured

STAR REPORT

Four people, including a policeman, were killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Khulna highway in Gopalganj Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

Of the dead, Abdul Alim, 30, was a member of Barishal Metropolitan Police, and Joynal Abedin, 22, a resident of Bagerhat Sadar upazila. The identities of the other two deceased could not be known immediately, said police.

The accident took place as the driver of a Bagerhat-bound Didar Paribahan bus lost control over the vehicle and hit a roadside tree, said Nasir Uddin, officer-in-charge of Gopalganj Sadar Police Station.

The four died on the spot. At least 15 more were injured in the accident, he said, adding that the injured were rushed to Gopalganj General Hospital for treatment.

Of the injured, 10 were admitted to the hospital and two were referred to Khulna Medical College Hospital, said Faruq Ahamed, residential medical officer of Gopalganj General Hospital.

Monirul Islam, one of the passengers on the bus, claimed the accident occurred due to reckless driving.



Excavators lifting sand piled up on the bank of the Dhaleshwari river in Munshiganj's Sirajdikhan upazila yesterday. The sand will be loaded onto trucks and taken away for construction work. Ships carry the sand from various regions and deposit it on the bank, resulting in this portion of the river becoming narrower over the years.

Two human traffickers arrested

The duo swindled many out of Tk 3cr offering jobs abroad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two men were arrested on Thursday on charges of extorting around Tk 3 crore from unemployed people with false promises of sending them abroad, a Rab official said yesterday.

They had also trafficked victims to Middle Eastern countries.

A team of Rab arrested Mahbubul Hasan, 50, and his accomplice Mahmud Karim, from the capital's Shantinagar, Rab-3 Commanding Officer Lt Col Arif Mohiuddin Ahmed told a press briefing at the Rab media centre yesterday.

Over the last two years, the arrestees and their associates used to cheat unemployed young people with false promises of high-paying jobs in Europe and

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Govt to ask IMF for 4.5b loan assistance

Delegation led by BB governor to hold talks with IMF officials in Washington next week

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A Bangladesh delegation will discuss a \$4.5 billion loan with International Monetary Fund officials in Washington next week.

The delegation led by Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder is scheduled to leave for Washington on Sunday.

The delegation has plans to hold a number of meetings with the IMF officials on the sidelines of the World Bank and IMF's annual meetings from October 10 to October 16, said officials at Bangladesh Bank and finance ministry.

The first meeting will be held with Rahul Anand, chief of IMF Asia and Pacific Division, and his team on October 11. There will be another meeting with IMF Deputy Managing Director Antoinette M Sayeh the same day, the sources said.

There will also be meetings with different IMF teams on October 13 in Washington, sources said.

The conditions for the loan will be discussed when Rahul Anand visits Dhaka at the end of this month. During the visit, the IMF team will meet Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal.

Once the agreement is reached, which usually takes a few months, the loan programme will be sent

to the IMF executive board. Disbursements are made after the board approves the programme.

The IMF's standard practice is to work closely with the authorities to come up with a programme that is most relevant to the borrowing country's economic and social dynamics.

Bangladesh's economy was still recovering from the losses of the pandemic when the Russia-Ukraine war began in February, disrupting global supply chains and eventually causing inflation in many countries including Bangladesh.

Uncertainties over the forex reserve also became a major concern.

On August 4, the country's foreign exchange reserve was around \$36 billion, down from around \$46 billion at the same time last year.

The IMF's standard practice is to work closely with the authorities to come up with a programme that is most relevant to that country's economic and social dynamics.

The \$4.5 billion loan to be discussed next week will be a three-year reform programme, the sources said. Of the amount, \$1.5 billion is likely to be disbursed this year if the talks bring positive outcomes.

The reasons why the fund is being sought include

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Rab official lands in jail over rape of woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A Nilphamari court yesterday sent a Rab official to jail on charges of raping a woman in the district.

Mahabir Banarjee, 32, sub-inspector at Rab-II in Narayanganj, was sued on Thursday.

According to the case statement, Mahabir, a former sub-inspector of Nilphamari's Domar Police Station, raped a housewife in Nilphamari on Wednesday night.

Around a year ago, the woman had filed a general diary against her husband over a family feud with Domar Police Station. Mahabir, then a sub-inspector at that police station, was assigned to investigate the complaint.

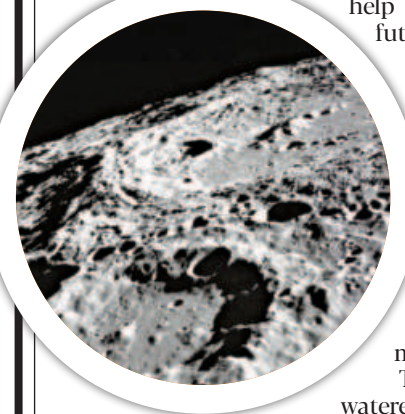
During the investigation, Mahabir developed friendship with the woman. Even after his

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Australia seeks to grow plants on the moon by 2025

AFP, Sydney

Australian scientists are trying to grow plants on the moon by 2025 in a new mission unveiled yesterday that they said could help pave the way for a future colony.



Plant biologist Brett Williams, from the Queensland University of Technology, said seeds would be carried by the Beresheet 2 spacecraft -- a private Israeli moon mission.

They would be watered inside the sealed chamber after landing and monitored for signs of germination and growth.

Plants will be chosen based on how well they cope in extreme conditions, and how quickly they germinate, he said.

One likely choice is an Australian "resurrection grass" that can survive without water in a dormant state.

"The project is an early step towards growing

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Shakib surprise follows defeat to Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER

It came as a surprise when yesterday vice-captain Nurul Hasan Sohan came in for the coin toss at the Hagley Oval against Pakistan skipper Babar Azam for the opening game of the tri-nation series, also involving hosts New Zealand.

Skipper Shakib Al Hasan -- who had initially missed the photo session with the other captains on Wednesday after being delayed by two days due to 'complications with visa procedure' -- was 'rested' by the team management for the tournament opener against Pakistan and the decision created a buzz.

It was learned that Shakib, if he had not been so casual in his attempt to join the Tigers sooner in New Zealand, could have made arrived as scheduled.

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Bangladesh's batting performance once again let them down, with number three Liton Das proving the only capable top-order performer. He scored 35 off 26 with four boundaries and a maximum before Yasir Ali's late blitz helped Bangladesh post a meagre 146 for eight. Pakistan won by 21 runs in the opening match of the tri-nation series at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Amini died of illness: Iran

US sanctions Iranian officials over protest crackdown

AGENCIES

Iran yesterday said an investigation into the death in custody of Mahsa Amini found she lost her life due to illness rather than reported beatings that sparked three weeks of bloody protests.

Amini, 22, died on September 16, three days after falling into a coma following her arrest in Tehran by the morality police for allegedly breaching the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women.

Anger over her death has sparked the biggest wave of protests to rock Iran in almost three years and a crackdown that has killed dozens of protesters and seen scores arrested.

Despite the security forces' use of lethal force, the women-led protests have continued for 21 consecutive nights, according to online videos verified by AFP.

Iran's Forensic Organization said that "Mahsa Amini's death was not caused by blows to the head and vital organs and limbs of the body".

The death of Amini, whose Kurdish first name is Jhina, was related to "surgery for a brain tumour at the age of

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