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## Corrupt official let off with just a temporary pay cut

BAHARAM KHAN and ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

The government has reduced the salary of an assistant commissioner (land) of Bogura sadar upazila for 12 months after he was found guilty of forgery.

Bir Amir Hamza kept active the user ID of a retired Kanungo and used it in seven land mutation cases in 2021, according to an investigation report submitted on February 18 to the public administration ministry.

The complaint against Hamza was filed by Nur Muhammad Bhuyan, who retired on January 25, 2021, but his work ID was used later.

A gazette notification issued by the ministry on April 9 says Hamza, currently an assistant director of the Jatio Muktijoddha Council, is guilty of misconduct and he will get the lowest salary in his pay grade for a year.

On Hamza's pay grade, an official's salary ranges between Tk 22,000 and Tk 53,060. Hence, his monthly salary will be Tk 22,000.

It is a light punishment, and he

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A bus burst into flames after it collided with a motorcycle in Dhaka's Banani area around 4:00pm yesterday. On information, two fire engines doused the blaze. The accident left the biker dead and the pillion rider injured.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANJIA RAHMAN

## 2014 NARAYANGANJ 7 MURDER Justice eludes victim families

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Even after a decade into the sensational seven-murder in Narayanganj, the families of the victims continue to wait for justice, as the case trial drags on.

The seven people, including the then Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) councillor Nazrul Islam and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker, were abducted from Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road on April 27, 2014.

Three days later, their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya River.

Their family members have been frustrated as appeals filed by death-row convicts, including Awami League leader Nur Hossain and the then commanding officer of Rab-11 Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, remained pending for hearing with the Appellate Division for five years.

"I want to see the punishment of the murderers before my death but this seems uncertain as a decade has passed and the High Court verdict is yet to be executed," said freedom fighter Haider Ali Khan, 80, father of one of the victims, Moniruzzaman Swapan.

Swapan's brother, NCC Councillor Mizanur Rahman Khan, said, "Around this time every year, my parents fall ill, mourning for their lost son. On April 20, my father was admitted to the hospital after he broke down thinking about my brother. He can't talk about him anymore. He only wants to hear that the culprits have been punished before his death."

He also sought Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's

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## Gold watch worn by richest passenger aboard Titanic to be sold at auction

CNN ONLINE

A gold watch worn by John Jacob Astor IV, a member of the wealthy Astor family and the richest man aboard the Titanic, will go up for sale at an auction of memorabilia from the doomed ship.



Astor was one of around 1,500 people who died when the Titanic sank on April 15, 1912 after hitting an iceberg. His pregnant wife, Madeleine, survived.

The watch is among a number of notable items on offer at auction house Henry Aldridge & Son in Wiltshire, England, on Saturday, including the

valise that held the violin famously played by the band leader as the ship sank, and a pocketbook that documents the Titanic's scheduled voyages. The violin itself was sold for \$1.7 million via the same auction house in 2013 and is the highest-selling item from the ship ever.

The watch is expected to sell for between £100,000 and £150,000 (\$125,000-\$188,000) and the valise for between £100,000-£120,000 (\$125,000-\$150,000), according to Andrew Aldridge, the managing director of auction house Henry Aldridge & Son. Bidding begins on April 27 at midday local time (7 a.m. ET), Aldridge told CNN.

The watch was among the personal effects found with Astor's body after the Titanic sank, according to the auction house. He also had gold cufflinks, a diamond ring, money and a pocketbook on him, among other items.

## Three die as truck, three-wheeler collide in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Three people were killed and two others injured when a truck hit a motorised rickshaw van on the Khulna-Mongla highway in Bagerhat last morning.

The deceased are Md Saeed Moral, 45, Md Azad Moral, 35, and Moni Mallik, 45, from Rampal upazila. All of them were the passengers of the rickshaw van.

The accident occurred around 7:30am at Chairman's intersection, said Inspector of Special Branch of Bagerhat District Police Md Babul Akhter.

Quoting locals, the inspector said a Mongla-bound truck hit the rickshaw van from behind, leaving Saeed dead on the spot and four others injured.

The injured were taken to Rampal Upazila Health Complex where two succumbed to their injuries. The bodies will be handed over to their family members following a legal process.

Katakhal highway police seized the truck and detained its driver.

## ISRAEL'S WAR ON GAZA

# US campus protests spread overseas

### Crackdown on students continues in US

AGENCIES

The protest in the US universities against Israel's war on Gaza has spread to European and Australian universities as clashes between students and police officers have been reported all over the United States.

What started as the Gaza solidarity encampment at Columbia University, where students are camping inside campus to push their institute to divest from companies linked to Israel, has since spread to campuses in California, Texas and other states.

Now, more than 20 universities in the US are protesting against Israel's war on Gaza, where Israel's military offensive has killed more than 34,000 people and its blockade has caused starvation.

But the protests are not limited to the US, as students worldwide have been demonstrating in support of Gaza since the outbreak of the war on October 7. Following the Columbia encampments, the protests have further spread to universities from France to Australia.

In the US, police in riot gear yesterday detained about 100 people as they cleared a pro-Palestinian encampment at a Boston university, the latest in a series of clashes on US campuses.

The action was taken after some protesters resorted to "virulent anti-Semitic slurs, including

"Kill the Jews," Northeastern University said in a statement on social media platform X.

The campus protests have posed a major challenge to university administrators across the country who are trying to balance commitments to free expression with complaints that the rallies have veered into anti-Semitism and hate speech.

Police have carried out large-scale arrests at universities in recent days, at times using chemical irritants and tasers to disperse demonstrators.

In its statement, Northeastern said campus police backed by local law enforcement moved in yesterday to clear "an unauthorized encampment" on the campus.

"What began as a student demonstration two days ago was infiltrated by professional organizers with no affiliation to Northeastern," the school said.

It added that detained individuals who produced a valid school ID have been released and will face disciplinary proceedings, not legal action.

"Those who refused to disclose their affiliation were arrested," the school said.

Tensions were also escalating yesterday at the University of Pennsylvania, where the college president ordered a campus encampment to be disbanded immediately after what he said were "credible reports of harassing and intimidating conduct."



## Murder suspect uncuffs himself, flees from court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Shariatpur

A suspect in a murder case fled from the premises of a Shariatpur court, where he was supposed to make his confession before a judge.

The incident took place around 5:00pm yesterday at the Shariatpur District Judicial Magistrate's Court-1 premises, confirmed Superintendent of Police Mahbul Alam.

Babu Fakir, 25, son of Chan Mia of Sadar upazila, was arrested on suspicion of the murder of Md Ali Matbar of Naria upazila.

The police were still looking for Babu till this report was filed at 9:00pm last night.

The SP said a case would be filed against him for fleeing police custody.

The official added that if any of the policemen on duty were found guilty of negligence, they would also face departmental action.

Wishing anonymity, a senior official of Shariatpur district police told this newspaper that Babu and the victim's wife, Munni Begum, who was also detained as a suspect in the murder case, were produced before a judge to give their confession under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Around 5:00pm when Munni was giving her confession, Babu, with his hands cuffed, was waiting outside the courtroom.

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Workers in Dhaka's Kamalapur dismantle a train carriage, which was written off after an accident. The dismantled parts of the carriage would be sold for scrap. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## 2 RMG workers raped, male colleague beaten up

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Two readymade garment workers were allegedly raped while their male colleague was beaten up and held captive by a group of locals in Gazipur's Kaliakoir upazila on Thursday night.

The mother of one of the victims lodged a complaint with Kaliakoir Police Station Friday night, accusing two people - Sajjad and Sakib - and several unnamed others.

Later, police recorded it as a case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

Kaliakoir Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abul Fazal Mohammad Nasim said the incident took place in Mouchak (Sadarchala) area on Thursday night.

"The case is being investigated," he said.

According to the complaint, two female garment workers went to Baishakhi Mela at Mouchak village with one of their male colleagues around 8:30pm.

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