

School bus hi by train, seven students, driver killed

Jalandhar, May 20 : Seven school children were among eight people killed and eight others were injured when a school bus carrying them collided with a passenger train at an unmanned railway crossing at Gumtala village at Phillaur-Lohian rail section in this district this morning.

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While two students and the bus driver died on the spot, five other students succumbed to their injuries in various hospitals, police sources said. The injured students were admitted to DMC, CMC and Arora Hospitals in critical condition.

The deceased were identified as Simranjit Kaur (14), Kamalpreet Kaur (10), Sanjeev Kaur (13) Manjinderjit Singh (15), Manpreet Kaur(15), Varinder Singh and Jaskaran Singh, all students, and bus driver Gurmail Singh. They belonged to village Dalley in Phillaur Sub Division.

The mini bus, carrying about 25 students children of Akal Academy School, Bilga, when the mishap occurred around 0720 hours.

Police and civil authorities have reached the site.

SP, GRP (Jalandhar) Sher Jangbahadur Sharma told UNI that GRP, Ludhiana has registered a case against the deceased driver under section 304 (A), 337 and 338 IPC.

The passenger train was going to Ludhiana from Lohian. According to eyewitnesses, the mini bus was dragged by the train for about 200 metres and was badly smashed.

The Punjab government has announced Rs one lakh each for the kin of the deceased while the injured would be given Rs 50,000 each.

Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Ferozpur Satish Kumar Sharma asserted that there was no lapse on the part of railways which could have caused the accident.

Meanwhile, hundreds of the villagers belonging to different surrounding villages sat on dharna to demand a "Manned" railway crossing.

--- UNI