Beat: Local

15 die in western Nepal bus accident

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USPA News - Fifteen people were killed Friday and others were injured when a passenger bus veered off a mountain road and plunged into a river below in western Nepal, local authorities said on Saturday. The exact cause was not immediately known.

The accident happened at around 8 a.m. local time on Friday when the bus was traveling a mountain road near the village of Dasharathpur in Surkhet district, which is located approximately 400 kilometers (250 miles) west of the capital Kathmandu. The bus was en-route from the nearby village of Gumi to the city of Birendranagar. Police said the passenger bus was carrying around 50 people when it went off the road and rolled 50 meters (160 feet) down a hill before coming to a halt in the Gamkhola River. Photos from the scene of the accident showed the vehicle was completely destroyed and its remains mangled. "The bus may have fallen off the road when it tried to avoid a truck which was coming from the opposite direction," a district police official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the press. "We retrieved 13 bodies at the accident site and two people who were injured died later." Most of the fatalities were identified as people from Surkhet district, but three soldiers were also among those killed. In addition to the fatalities, the official said seventeen people were injured and transported to area hospitals, where some remained in a critical condition on early Saturday. Accidents in Nepal are frequently blamed on reckless driving and bad roads due to poor maintenance, killing hundreds of people every year. In September, at least 29 people were killed and 11 others were injured when a bus plunged off a cliff in the remote mountains of western Nepal.

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