

11 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least 11 people were killed and 10 others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Mymensingh and Chittagong on Friday night and yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Mymensingh reports: At least five people were killed and seven others injured in two separate road accidents on Mymensingh-Haluaghat highway in Haluaghat and Phulpur upazilas on Friday night and yesterday.

Police said four people were killed and seven others injured when a Haluaghat-bound truck collided head-on with a tempo coming from opposite direction at Nagla in Haluaghat upazila.

All the eleven passengers of the tempo were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) in critical condition where Muslim Uddin, 40, Yusuf Ali, 55, Fazul Haque, 30 and Dudu Mia, 25, succumbed to their injuries.

In another accident at Imadpur in Phulpur upazila, a schoolgirl identified as Morsheda Khatun, 8, was crushed under the wheels of a Haluaghat-bound bus at 11:00am yesterday. She died on the spot.

The bodies were sent to the MMCH morgue for autopsy.

BDNEWS from Savar reports: Three people were killed on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Bathulia bus stand under Dhamrai upazila in Dhaka yesterday.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred when a speedy coach crashed a rickshaw van at about 5:00am leaving three dead on the spot.

All the victims are rickshaw van pullers, police added.

A case was filed with Dhamrai Police Station in this connection.

Another report from Chittagong adds: Two people, including one nurse, were killed and another critically wounded in a road accident at Patiya on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar road yesterday.

The dead were identified as Nirajan Nath, 32, a staff nurse of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), and Jashimuddin, 25.

The injured was identified as Kutubuddin (21).

The accident took place when a Chittagong-bound ambulance and a Cox's Bazar bound passenger bus collided head on at Jalurdighi under Patiya upazila at around 11:30am.

All the victims were coming to Chittagong by the ambulance from Lohagara.

UNB from Laxmipur adds: A tea stall owner was killed and two people were injured when a microbus ploughed through a roadside tea stall at Uttar Raipur village in Raipur upazila on Friday night.

The dead was identified as M Sirajuddoula, 55, while the injured as Abdus Sattar and Abdul Wahab.

Police sent the body to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Hanif's condition improving

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The condition of Awami League (AL) city unit President Mohammad Hanif improving, doctors at the Bamrung Hospital, Thailand said.

Earlier, city unit general secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya visited Hanif at the hospital. He talked to the doctors and relatives of Hanif.

AL Executive Committee member AKM Rahmatullah, Hanif's wife Fatema and city committee organising secretary Saeed Khokon were present.

JUTA polls on Feb 28 amid fresh polarisation

JU CORRESPONDENT

Election to the 15-member executive committee of Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) is going to be held on February 28 amid fresh polarisation.

Although five panels had submitted nominations for the election, the number of contesting panels now stands at three as the panels have formed alliance with the VC group called 'Sammita Panel' and the anti-VC group called 'Shikkhak Oikya Panel'.

'Shikkhak Mancha' is the other panel formed by the left-leaning teachers.

The 'Sammita Panel' is comprised of a faction of pro-BNP teachers, backed by Vice-Chancellor Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman, and pro-AL teachers' group, led by Prof Tajul Islam of economics. The pro-BNP teachers will vie for 10 posts while the pro-AL teachers for five other posts.

The panel has pledged to maintain congenial academic atmosphere on the campus and give priority to professional interest of the teachers.

From this panel, Prof Ajit Kumar Majumder of statistics and Prof Mahub Kabir of chemistry will vie for the posts of president and general secretary.

The 'Shikkhak Oikya Panel' consists of pro-BNP teachers led by Prof Abu Sayed Khan of physics and two factions of pro-AL teachers - one led by Prof Abdul Bayes and the other by Prof Afsar Ahmad. The three partners will vie for seven, five and three posts respectively.

The panel has pledged to make the JUTA free from the influence of the university administration.

Its candidates for the posts of president and general secretary are Prof Dr M Abul Hossain of physics and Associate Professor Dr Md Mushiur Rahman.

The left-leaning teachers are contesting the election from the 'Shikkhak Mancha' panel with a view to build a common platform for outspoken teachers.

They also pledged to resist irregularities in teachers' appointment, anomaly in admission and unwarranted interference by the government.

Prof Anu Muhammad will vie for the post of president while Associate Professor Sayeed Ferdous and Assistant Professor Zahir Raihan will vie for member posts.

Cirdap discussion on rural dev today

BSS, Dhaka

Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) will hold a discussion with main focus on 'From the Peasant Charter to the ICARRD: An Overview of the Current Trends and Emerging Issues in Rural Development in the Asia-Pacific Region' here today.

Cirdap has already prepared a position paper on the subject to be presented at the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) scheduled to be held in Brazil from March 7 to 10 next.

Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is expected to attend the discussion as chief guest.

Secretary to Rural Development and Cooperatives Division and also the current Chairperson of Cirdap Executive Committee Rafiqul Islam will preside over.

Agriculture Secretary Abul Kashem and Member of the Planning Commission Dr Quazi Mesbahuddin Ahmed have been designated as lead discussants, a Cirdap press release said yesterday.

CPD Chairperson Prof Rehman Sobhan, BUP Chairman Dr QK Ahmed and PPRC Chairperson Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman are expected to join the discussion.

The paper, to be presented by Cirdap Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal, will dwell upon the emerging issues of rural development in the Asia-Pacific Region.



Garments workers go on the rampage at Bohaddar Hat in Chittagong yesterday protesting deaths of 54 workers in a fire at KTS Composite Textiles Mill on Wednesday.

Big defeat waits for AL in next polls

Says Bhuiyan

BSS, Rajshahi

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday blamed Awami League (AL) for conspiring to foil the next general elections.

"The AL is yet to tell whether they will accept the result of the next elections if the verdict goes against them," he said at a function on the occasion of the foundation-laying ceremony of the Katakhal Poursasbha Bhaban here.

Bhuiyan said, "we may accept their genuine proposals for reforms in the election commission and the caretaker government. Even then, it is not clear whether they (AL) will honour the result of the next election."

"The AL knows it very well that a big defeat is waiting for them. So, they are trying to bluff the people," he said adding, "The more the election will be fair, the more seat BNP will win."

He said the AL as the opposition party has taken no responsibilities. They joined the parliament fearing public wrath, he said.

"Still you have some time to seek apology to the people. And, only then you may get some seats. Otherwise, a massive defeat is waiting for you," he told in an oblique reference to the AL.

Bhuiyan said BNP is not a religion-based political party and it does not believe in militancy. Clarifying the position of BNP in the wake of recent militant activities in the country, he said BNP never harboured any

terrorist or militant, rather it took stern actions against the terrorists.

He urged the AL to shun the path of politics of anarchy and return to the constitutional politics extending all out support to the next caretaker government to hold a free and fair election.

Administrator of Katakhal Poursasbha Majidur Rahman presided.

Advocate Kabir Hossain, MP, Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, MP, Nadim Mostafa, MP, Jahan Panna, MP, and district BNP president advocate Azizur Rahman and district Jamaat Emir Ataur Rahman also spoke.

Zia Shishu Park opens

BSS, Rajshahi

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the government has initiated massive programmes to help groom children as worthy citizens of the country.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the newly built Shaheed Zia Shishu Park under the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC), Bhuiyan said that as part of the programme, one children's park would be set up in each district.

RCC Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu presided.

Trawler with 1800 sacks of cement capsizes in Padma

BDNEWS, Faridpur

A cement-laden trawler 'Shah Amanat' sank in the river Padma at Sadipur area under Faridpur Sadar upazila on Friday night.

The trawler was laden with 1,800 sacks of cement worth Tk 4 lakh.

The trawler was moving towards Faridpur from Munshiganj, said Shahidul Islam Lito, a cement dealer and the owner of Kushtia Enterprise in Faridpur.

The trawler capsized as it hit a hidden shoal in the Padma.

A general diary has been filed with the Kotwali Police Station in this regard.

Nat'l Srijani scout camp begins tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The Third National Srijani Scout Camp will begin at the National Scout Training Centre at Mouchak in Gazipur tomorrow.

The camp which will be formally inaugurated at 10:30am on February 28, will end on March 3, said a press release of the Bangladesh Scout.

Chief of Scout and President Iajuddin Ahmed is expected to attend the Youth Parliament at the camp on March 2.

Concern over Ctg RMG factory fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different socio-political and rights organisations yesterday expressed deep concern and grief over the death of more than 50 garment workers at a devastating fire at KTS Composite Textile Mill in Chittagong and demanded proper probe and immediate trial of those who are responsible.

They demanded compensation to the families of the deceased workers and rehabilitation of the injured others.

Bangladesh Human Rights Commission filed a case against the owners and managers of the textile mill with Changan Police Station in this connection.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Bangladesh Trade Union Sangha, Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Sammita Samajik Andolon, Samajik Unnyan O Chetona Bikash Kendra and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad expressed grief and demanded immediate trial of the people concerned as most of the workers died for negligence of the authorities.

They also demanded that the government, the owners of the factory and the BGMEA take necessary steps to provide proper treatment of the injured workers and give compensation to the deceased. They urged the authorities to take initiative to stop repeated tragic accidents in the garment factories and ensure equal wage and facilities to the women workers.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party, Ganasanghati Andolon, Bangladesh National Garments Workers Employees League and Bikalpadhara Bangladesh also demanded rehabilitation of the workers and immediate punishment of the authorities responsible.

Demanding formulation of proper policy for security of the workers and management of garment industries, Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Jote and Bikalpadhara Bangladesh staged demonstrations in the city.

Bangladesh Children Festival begins in city today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-day-long Bangladesh Children Festival 2006 begins in the city today to let the children know about their country and generate patriotism among the little souls.

President Iajuddin Ahmed will inaugurate the festival at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

The theme of the festival is: We will build Bangladesh as dream of. Adhayan Shishu Foundation has organised the festival in association with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Bangladesh Shishu Academy.

A colourful procession of rickshaws and tomtoms was brought out and roller-skating took place on different city streets yesterday to mark the occasion.

Dr Anwar, Rakib Biochemists' Forum president, secy

BSS, Dhaka

The annual general meeting of the Forum of Biochemists in Bangladesh on Friday elected a 21-member executive committee with Prof Dr Anwar Hossain as its president and Rakib Ahmed as the general secretary.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr SMA Faiz was present as chief guest at the AGM at the TSC auditorium.

Maulana Bhashani Science and Technology University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalilur Rahman and Dhaka University Pro Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AMA Yusuf Haidar attended the function as special guests.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Abdul Kuddus, father of Dilruba Ferdousi, AGM of Pubali Bank, will be held at his residence at 23 Sayedabad in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Ensure HR for people of all faiths

Urge religious leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious leaders yesterday called for turning the world into a better place for all to live with dignity and fraternity.

Speaking at a reception, they laid emphasis on practising tolerance and stopping violence to ensure human rights for people of all faiths.

The citizens' reception was organised in honour of Archbishop Paulinus Costa who took over the charge of Dhaka Archdiocese on September 9 of last year.

Eminent personalities from different religions attended the reception at Archbishop's House at Ramna in the city.

Speaking as chief guest, State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharref Hossain Shajahan said there should not be any clashes on religious ground as all religions want peace, harmony and development.

He said there are some people who have egoistic problems in terms of religions and efforts should be made to remove those misconceptions from their minds.

Shajahan said as state minister for religious affairs he wants to work for the welfare of the followers of all religions.

Archbishop Paulinus Costa called for building the nation on the basis of unity and communal harmony.

"We want to focus on poverty alleviation and establishment of human dignity for the distressed," he added.

The archbishop expressed his desire to work for reducing the gap among the followers of different religions.

Calling for avoiding individualistic and selfish leadership he said, "Let us share good things and avoid bad ones."

Criticising the speeches or pictures humiliating any religion, the archbishop said, "I am sure we can uphold constitutional and human rights by avoiding religious fanaticism."

Vatican Ambassador in Dhaka Archbishop Paul Chang In-Nam, Italian and French Charge De Affairs Bishop Theotonius Gomes CSC and Bishop Nibarun Das of Methodist Church, Buddhist representative Akkharananda Mohathero, and Laity representative from the Catholic Church Helen Rozario also spoke at reception followed by a cultural show.

Mannan operated upon in Singapore

UNB, Dhaka

Abdul Mannan, organising secretary of Awami League, was operated upon at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore yesterday.

His bypass operation, led by Dr Saw, was successful. He was sent to Singapore for treatment of heart disease.

The family members of the AL leader sought doa from the countrymen for his early recovery.

Death anniversary

Today is the 17th death anniversary of Dr Mohammad Sulaiman, former teacher of Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, a Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his residence at 65 Tejknipara, Tejaon in the city on March 3.

Abdul Quddus Sadi

Today is the sixth death anniversary of Abdul Quddus Sadi, a litterateur and journalist, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held today at his Modhubagh house in the city.

He was a life member of the Bangla Academy and the Nazrul Academy. He was also the editor of the now-defunct fortnightly Padakkhep.



PHOTO: STAR

State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharref Hossain Shajahan presents a bouquet to Archbishop Paulinus Costa at a reception at Archbishop's House at Ramna in the city yesterday.

'Promote Bangla translations of int'l literature'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for more Bangla translations of international literature in order to keep pace with the present trend of globalisation.

"We need Bangla translations more and more to know about the development taking place in the fields of science, information technology, business, economics and education," said Ayesha Khanom, general secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

Path Chakra - Training, Experiment and Library Centre of the Mahila Parishad organised the discussion and a cultural programme at the Sufia Kamal Auditorium in the city to mark the International Mother Language Day. Parishad President Hena Das presided.

Ayesha Khanom criticised the Bangla Academy for not properly promoting Bangla translations in the country. The academy is only promoting the works of pro-ruling party litterateurs, she added.

Referring to the close relationship between language and education, Shima Moslem, secretary of Training, Experiment and Library Centre, expressed concern over the disparity in the country's education system which is divided into three tracks - Bangla medium, English medium and Madrassa education.

"Though we have achieved success in enrolment of primary students,

we do not give attention to the alarming rise in drop-out rate at high school, college and university levels," she said.

Anannya Goshwami, a member of Path Chakra, presented a paper on "The role of women in the language movement in 1952 and challenges for the new generation".

She said women played an active role in the language movement through joining the processions and writing posters.

Unesco book exhibition begins tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day Unesco Book and Publication Exhibition begins in the city tomorrow marking the International Mother Language Day.

National Association of Unesco Clubs in Bangladesh, Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco and Ministry of Education are jointly organising the exhibition in cooperation with Unesco for the fifth time in the country.

Books, magazines, photographs and posters, published by Unesco, will be displayed in the fair.

The exhibition will remain open from 10:30am to 6:00pm.

WEATHER TODAY. No change in temperature likely. Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division and the regions of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Tangail and Mymensingh in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.