

11 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least 11 people were killed and 50 others injured in separate road accidents in Jhenidah, Manikganj, Sylhet and Sirajganj yesterday.

Our correspondent from Jhenidah reports: Four people were killed and 10 injured when a brick-laden truck turned upside down and fell into a roadside pond on Kaliganj-Arpara Road in Jhenidah as its driver lost control over the steering.

The injured were rushed to Jessore Hospital.

The dead are identified as Shahidul Islam, Sumon Mia, Babu and Ruhul Amin. Police said the accident occurred while the Kaliganj-bound brick-laden truck from Bagharpara was crossing Tattipur Bazar.

Of the injured, Piar Ali of Arpara village, Kushtia, Sohel Rana and Shaheed of Patia village, Rawshan Ali of Mirzapur village and Fakir Mia

of Lautala village were admitted to Jessore Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

The rest were admitted to different clinics.

Sub-Inspector Abdul Matin of Kaliganj Police Station said the number of dead may increase as the truck fell into a pond.

Our Correspondent from Manikganj adds: Three people including, a child, were killed and 40 others injured in a road accident at Dautia under Dhamrai Police Station in Dhaka district yesterday.

The accident took place at 5:00pm when a Dhaka-bound minibus collided head-on with a taxicab coming from opposite direction, killing the three on the spot, police and witnesses said. The dead were passengers of the taxicab.

The injured were taken to different hospitals and clinics in Dhanrai, Savar and Dhaka.

Our Staff Correspondent from Sylhet reports: Three people were killed as a Sylhet-bound truck hit another truck standing on the roadside on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway yesterday.

Of the dead, two were identified as Abul Hashim, 60, and his son Shahabuddin, 11, and identity of another aged about 30 could not be known immediately, police sources said.

A young man, 30, identified as Alam was rushed to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

The dead hailed from village Dashpara under Madhabpur of Habiganj district.

The accident took place at Shahapur under Lalabazar union of Sylhet Sadar upazila at about 3:45am.

The accident occurred when a speedy truck carrying rice bound for Sylhet from Kishoreganj hit another

truck loaded with timber standing on the roadside at Shahapur area.

Both the vehicles fell to the roadside ditch leaving Hashim and his son Shahabuddin dead on the spot while the unidentified man succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

Our Correspondent from Sirajganj reports: A pedestrian was crushed under the wheels of a Belkuchi-bound speeding truck from Sirajganj town at Chala bus station area at Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district yesterday.

The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately.

Police said the accident occurred when the pedestrian was crossing the road.

The body was sent to the Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to flee.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at a view exchange meeting with the party leaders from Dinajpur at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday.



Former chief justice and Chairman of the Law Commission Justice Mustafa Kamal speaks as the chief guest at the 19th installation ceremony of the Board of Directors of Rotary Club of Dhaka Buriganga at a city hotel on Wednesday. Club President Raquibuddin Ahmed and Immediate Past President MA Malik are also seen.



Prof Yusuf Haider re-appointed DU pro-VC

Prof Dr AFM Yusuf Haider, pro-vice-chancellor of Dhaka University (DU), has been re-appointed to the post for another four years, says a press release.

The President, who is also the Chancellor of the university, gave the re-appointment with effect from July 25 when the current term expires.

Prof Yusuf took his master's degree in nuclear physics from DU in 1970 and did his Ph.D. from Australian National University in 1984.

Obituary

AKM Samsul Huda, executive director of Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd passed away due to a cardiac arrest at a hospital in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Samsul was 64. He left behind his wife and three sons to mourn his death.

The deceased was buried at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard.

A milad mahfil will be held at the central office of Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd at House#13, Road#12 (new) at Dhanmondi in the city tomorrow to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Today is the 13th death anniversary of A Z Syed Ahmed Chowdhury, a former politician and social worker of Feni, says a press release.

Syed Ahmed Chowdhury, also a life member of Feni Sports Association, had significant contribution to the field of sports, education and culture.

He died on this day in 1993 at Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital in the city at the age of 79. He left behind his wife, four daughters and three sons.

Various programmes have been arranged at Feni and Sonagazi to mark the day.

Three killed as train rams autorickshaw in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Three people were killed and another person was seriously injured when a speeding train rams an autorickshaw at Shamsenagar level crossing in Kamalganj yesterday morning.

The dead were identified as autorickshaw driver Amzad Ali, 55, his daughter Happy Begum, 18, and Nabijan Begum, 45. Amzad and Nabijan died on the spot while Happy succumbed to her injuries at the hospital.

The injured, Runi Begum, 40, wife of Amzad, was admitted to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in Sylhet in a critical condition.

Sources said the Jalalabad Express Train hit the three-wheeler as it was crossing the level crossing at about 9:40am.

Local people said a bus carrying about 100 passengers had crossed the level crossing only 30 seconds before the accident. It narrowly escaped being hit by the train, they added.

A case was filed with Srimangal GRP Station in this connection.

Vehicles have been using the level crossing, putting the lives of passengers at risk, as there is no gate at the level crossing.

The railway authorities had

appointed a temporary guard at the rail gate, but the guard was absent during the accident.

Local people have long been demanding that a gate be set up at this level crossing, but the railway authorities remain indifferent.

Lightning kills 4 in Sylhet

UNB, Sylhet

Four people, including two children, were killed in lightning at three villages in Goainghat upazila on Thursday morning.

The deceased were identified as Anwar Hossain, 5, and his sister Asia Khatun, 3, of Muraia village, Anis, 13, son of Nurul Islam of Alamnagar village, and Subhans Rani, 35, wife of Tarani Roy, of Protoppur village.

JP leader electrocuted

Meanwhile, a local Jatiya Party leader was electrocuted at village Purnanagar village in Goainghat upazila on Thursday.

Locals said Karim, Shergul, 42, publicity secretary of upazila unit of JP, came contact with live electric wire at his house at noon and died on the spot.

Low-fat dairy foods may lower diabetes risk

REUTERS, New York

A diet that includes lots of low-fat dairy products may lower the risk of type 2 diabetes in women, new research suggests.

Although a series of recent studies suggests that a high level of dairy foods in the diet may lower the risk of being overweight or developing insulin resistance syndrome, studies that have examined the link between these factors and diabetes risk are sparse, Dr Simin Liu, from the University of California Los Angeles School of Public Health, and colleagues note.

They therefore looked for the relationship between type 2 diabetes and dietary levels of dairy foods and calcium in 37,183 women in the Women's Health Study. A total of 1,603 women developed diabetes during an average follow-up of 10 years.

"The most important finding is that women who consumed more low-fat dairy foods tended to experience a lower risk of type 2 diabetes in a period of 10 years," Liu told Reuters Health.

After adjusting for potentially confounding factors such as weight, physical activity, and family history of diabetes, women with the highest intake of dairy foods were 21 percent less likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those with the lowest intake, Liu's team reports in the journal Diabetes Care.

"Each serving-per-day increase in dairy intake was associated with a 4-percent lower risk."

The benefit of a high intake of low-fat dairy foods on type 2 diabetes risk was independent of dietary calcium and vitamin D. This is the first study, the authors add, to tease out the effects of dairy food intake from those of dietary calcium and vitamin D.

"The message," said Liu, "is that low-fat dairy foods can be incorporated into a healthy diet that may lower a woman's risk of diabetes."

The apparent anti-diabetes effect of a low-fat dairy-packed diet seen in the current study of women mirrors that shown previously in men.

However, Liu and colleagues caution that further studies are needed to confirm their observations "before public health measures to increase dairy consumption can be recommended for prevention of type 2 diabetes."

Bangalees in CHT demand cancellation of peace agreement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Parbattya Bangalee Parishad demanded cancellation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Treaty for the sake of Bangalees living in the region at a rally at Muktangan in the city yesterday.

Terminating the treaty as a 'Black' one, the leaders said the Bangalees living in the hill tracts have become second-class citizens because of the treaty, as they are being deprived of their educational, constitutional, economic and political rights and facing discrimination.

They also said the education rate of Bangalees living in the hill tracts is only 23 percent while the rate of the indigenous is 88 percent, since they have quota system while pursuing their studies.

The leaders demanded of the government to withdraw the indigenous quota system in education and employment and initiate a hill tracts quota immediately to ensure development of the Bangalees in the hill tracts.

Yeakub Ali, president of the Parbattya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad said despite passing four and half years, the government is yet to keep its promise. The ruling BNP's election manifesto committed to withdraw the treaty, if voted to power.

Parishad leaders Abu Taher, Sheikh Ahmmad, Abdul Hamid Rana, Fazlul Haque, Shimul and Alam Khan also spoke at the rally.

Later, they brought out a procession that paraded different streets in the city.

A dying industry in India's graveyard of ships

REUTERS, Alang Shipyard, India

Kamal Mandal packs his greasy clothes, pausing to glance at a ship being ripped apart bit-by-bit by an army of workers on the Indian coast.

Seven years ago, Kamal and eight village friends left home in Bihar in the east in search of work when their crops failed.

They found work in Alang, India's biggest shipbreaking yard, on the coast of the western state of Gujarat.

For years, they toiled inside the great ships, sending money back to their families.

But life has changed for Kamal and the migrant labourers who came to Alang with dreams of a better future.

With few ships now, there is little work and even less money.

A fortnight ago, India's Supreme Court allowed the cruise liner Blue Lady into Indian waters so it could be scrapped, but only after a thorough inspection of its contents.

Environmentalists want the ship, which contains tonnes of asbestos, banned to protect the workers.

Blue Lady is anchored 73 nautical miles off Alang, awaiting clearance by health and environmental experts before it comes in.

Blue Lady could reverse Alang's bleak future.

A green light will provide a lot of much-needed work for the shipbreakers and ancillary businesses but, more importantly, deal a blow to environmentalists battling to have toxic and hazardous materials banned from the shipbreaking yards.

GOING HOME

"Some years ago, I could take home money, gifts and even utensils that were found inside the passenger ships. This year, I only have a table fan given by my employer as a parting gift," says Kamal, as he packs to leave.

"I am going back to my house. I feel frustrated with no work and not being able to feed my family."

With world metal prices sliding, and the campaign by environmentalists accusing the shipbreaking industry of polluting and not protecting its workers, Alang has been struggling to survive under pressure.

Last year, more than 6,000 workers left. Officials fear it will be worse this year. At its peak in the late 90s, about 45,000 men worked at Alang. Now there are just 12,000.

In addition to the 45,000, the 12 km (8 mile) stretch known as the graveyard for ships of the world also supported more than 5 million people connected to the industry.

Supertankers, car ferries, container ships and giant cruise liners were dismantled here.

"There was action all the time," says Alang port officer AK Rathod. "People could be heard bargaining, negotiating everywhere."

The Blue Lady is the latest con-

troversy to dog Alang.

A recent Greenpeace report said thousands of shipbreakers in countries such as India, China and Pakistan had probably died in the past two decades from accidents or exposure to toxic waste.

And in February, France recalled its decommissioned aircraft carrier Clemenceau after an outcry over the asbestos it contained.

But the Gujarat Maritime Board, which leases out the yards in Alang, says they can handle toxic and hazardous waste.

Alang dismantled 700 ships between 1997-1999, more than 200 a year. Last year, it was just 100 and only 34 so far this year.

'WE LOOK AFTER OUR WORKERS'

Many workers who have turned to other trades and businesses are considering shutting their shipbreaking operations.

"Environmentalists project us as greedy, inconsiderate business-

men. We care for our workers and their health," says SK Jain, a member of the Alang ship recycling association.

Jain says employers ensure workers are well protected and wear gloves, masks, helmets and proper shoes.

Labourers say they attend safety workshops and participate in mock drills on handling hazardous chemicals. Colourful posters with safety instructions for workers are seen across the town.

"Do we stop living as there is always a fear of dying? We are in a risky job where accidents are bound to happen," says Gautam Mohanto, a worker who lost his right hand in an accident.

Now 38, he works under the scorching midday sun, hammering machinery retrieved from the ships with his left hand.

"It is sad to see labourers leave Alang. But being unemployed for a while is better than being exposed to

deadly gases here every minute," says Gopal Krishna, a spokesman for Greenpeace.

"The workers have no health insurance and no proper medical facilities. Most of them suffer from chronic respiratory ailments."

Doctor PK Munshi, who has been working on projects to revive Alang as an eco-friendly shipbreaking zone, says:

"Alang has to match international standards to survive."

Setting up a well-equipped hospital, modernising fire stations and disaster management techniques and providing health insurance to labourers are just few reforms to begin with, he says in Ahmedabad, Gujarat's main city and commercial centre.

Bored workers say the only exciting days in Alang now are those rare ones when a passenger ship comes in.

Traders gather to bid excitedly for furniture, electrical goods, wine and even dogs and birds found inside the cabins.

"The rest of the days pass by waiting for ships," complains Jaideep Prasad as he deals cards to colleagues near the oil-stained shore.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.6 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:18am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	25.6	85	77
Chittagong	30.6	27.8	82	90
Rajshahi	31.8	25.7	81	94
Khulna	34.6	27.5	87	82
Barisal	32.0	28.0	90	87
Sylhet	27.8	25.7	96	97
Cox's Bazar	32.5	27.0	82	89



Parbattya Bangalee Parishad and Parbattya Chhatra Parishad stage a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding cancellation of CHT peace agreement.



Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Altaf Hossain, a senior advocate of the Supreme Court and Dhaka Tax Bar, will be held at his residence at House # 139, Road # 4, Block # A, Banani after Asr prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

He passed away on July 6 at the age of 76.

Altaf Hossain was one of the founder members of National Heart Foundation Hospital and member of the Governing Board, Human Development Foundation.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Robbers kill mother, son in Kishoreganj

BSS, Kishoreganj

A gang of robbers killed a woman and her son at their house at Kafayakandi village under Kuliarchar upazila in the district on Thursday night.

The robbers also looted Taka 25,000 and two-and-half 'bhori' (60 carats) gold ornaments.

They entered the house by breaking window grills and killed housewife Rahima Begum, 22, and her one-and-half-year-old son Sami, with heavy weapons.

Rahima's husband Zillur Rahman, who recently returned from Kuwait, was staying at his poultry farm, about a kilometre away from his house.

The bodies were sent to Kishoreganj Modern Sadar Hospital for postmortem.