

# Helping the helpless

*Autorickshaw driver in Gazipur gives poor, physically-challenged patients free rides to hospital*



ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE AKAND

Go to the CNG-run autorickshaw stand in Gazipur's Board Bazar area, you can't miss a three-wheeler with stickers on its front, back, sides and roof, reading "free for the poor, helpless and the physically-challenged".

It belongs to Mohammad Forkan Mia, whose return from death's door nine years ago has changed the moto of his life.

Blessed with a second chance to live, the 40-year-old autorickshaw driver has devoted his life to serving poor patients and road-accident victims by taking them to different hospitals from their homes and accident sites, respectively, free of cost.

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A part of the Buriganga river earth-filled by the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority in Ramchandrapur area of Mohammadpur in the capital. The irony is that BIWTA's signboard, inset, in the area says river grabbing is a punishable offence. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# Vow made to ensure women's rights

DU CORRESPONDENT

People from different walks of life yesterday took an oath to ensure women's rights and work to end violence against women.

Non-profit We Can Bangladesh and Dhaka University organised the programme at midnight with the slogan, "vowing to dispel the darkness", marking International Women's Day today.

The programme was held at Central Shaheed Minar.

Hundreds of participants, mostly women, held a candlelight vigil to mark the day.

Meher Afroz Chumki, chair of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, said, "Women are leaving their mark in every field. We should work together with men to put an end to child marriage and violence against women."

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# Woman killed as lorry hits pedestrians

*It was being driven by a nightguard*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was killed and five other pedestrians injured when a lorry hit them at the capital's Biam Goli yesterday evening.

Maksuda, 40, died at the scene. The injured are Ariful Islam, 15, Billal Hossain, 20, Md Rasul, 14, Abdul Hamid, 15, and Tia Begum, 35, said Inspector Bacchu Mia, in-charge of Dhaka Medical College Hospital police outpost.

The incident took place at the alley entrance when the lorry hit them while they were having snacks, injured Ariful told The Daily Star.

He said that a security guard known to the driver had gotten behind the wheel, and that led to the vehicle lurching forward and running into the pedestrians.

The victims were rushed to DMCH, where doctors pronounced Maksuda dead. The others were admitted to the hospital, Bacchu said.

The lorry has been seized and its driver detained, said Golam Azam, inspector (operations) of Hatirjheel Police Station.

## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

### Fresh elections to trade unions



S Tarafdar presents a cheque to Bangabandhu on March 8, 1972. The money was raised by Bengalees in Michigan in collaboration with sympathetic Americans.

MARCH 8, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

#### MUJIB MEETS LABOUR LEADERS

Bangabandhu in a meeting with labour leaders says fresh elections to the trade unions using secret ballots will be held soon. He also assures them that the representatives elected by the workers will only be allowed to represent the trade unions.

#### ALLOTMENT OF PLOTS CANCELLED

By an order of the minister for works, housing and urban

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# Khaleda's condition very bad

*Say relatives after visiting her in jail*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khaleda Zia's younger sister Selima Islam yesterday expressed doubt whether they would be able to take the BNP chief out of hospital alive as the "government was delaying her release from jail".

Stating that Khaleda's health was very bad, Selima called upon the government to consider her ailment, physical condition, and age for either freeing or granting her bail on humanitarian grounds.

"She is suffering from respiratory problems. She is almost unable to speak," Selima told reporters after visiting the BNP chairperson at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

She said Khaleda felt a pain in her chest on Friday

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# Rare orangutan spotted in Borneo



AFP, Katingan

The world's only known albino orangutan has been spotted alive and well in a Borneo rainforest, more than a year after she was released into the wild, conservationists say.

Alba, a blue-eyed primate covered in fuzzy white hair, was taken in 2017 from a cage where she was being kept as a pet by villagers in Indonesia's section of Borneo, known as Kalimantan.

Alba was released back into the wild in late 2018.

This week, the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation said Alba was spotted as it monitored three other orangutans who were recently released.

"After we learned that she can build nests, forage independently and is no longer dependent on human assistance we concluded that she can

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# PADMA BOAT CAPSIZE Death toll rises to 6

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Bodies of five more passengers, including three of a family, who drowned in the Rajshahi boat capsized on Friday were recovered yesterday, raising the death toll to six.

The deceased were identified as Md Shahin, 48, his wife Moni Begum, 35, their seven-year-old daughter Roshni, Md Ratan, 26, and Eklas Uddin, 22, said Abu Aslam, additional district magistrate in Rajshahi.

Three people were still missing till filing of the report last night as rescue

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#### PRAYER TIMING MARCH 8

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-15 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30  
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# 7-year-old raped in capital

STAR REPORT

A speech-impaired seven-year-old girl was raped in the city's Kamrangirchar area on Friday night.

The victim was sent to the one-stop crisis centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday for treatment and forensic tests.

Aunt of the girl told reporters that the child left home without informing her mother on Friday evening and remained missing until around 1:30am yesterday, when the family found the girl beside a road nearby their house.

She was bleeding profusely, the aunt said. Family members and police suspect that the perpetrator(s) abandoned the girl after raping her.

Mostafa Anwar, inspector (investigation) of Kamrangirchar Police Station, said they were trying to arrest the culprit(s).

Filing of a case is underway, he added.

Meanwhile, a Joyprahat

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Rickshaw-vans occupying several lanes of Dhaka-Chattogram highway at Shanir Akhra in the capital, slowing down motor vehicles and creating risks of crashes during rush-hour traffic yesterday morning.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# SAUDI COUP ATTEMPT Saudi detains three princes

*Report US media; detentions signal a further consolidation of power by Prince Salman*

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi authorities have detained three princes including King Salman's brother and nephew on charges of plotting a coup, the US media reported Friday, signalling a further consolidation of power by the kingdom's de facto ruler.

The detentions cast aside the last vestiges of potential opposition to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and come as the kingdom limits access to Islam's holiest sites in a highly sensitive move to contain the fast-spreading coronavirus.

Prince Ahmed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, a brother of King Salman, and the monarch's nephew Prince Mohammed bin Nayef were accused of treason and taken from their homes early Friday by black-clad royal guards, the Wall Street Journal reported citing unnamed sources.

The Saudi royal court has accused the two men, once potential contenders for the throne, of "plotting a coup to unseat the king and crown prince" and could face lifetime imprisonment or execution, the newspaper said.

The New York Times also reported the detentions, adding that Prince Nayef's younger brother, Prince Nawaf bin Nayef, had also been detained.

Saudi authorities did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The detentions mark the latest crackdown by Prince Mohammed, who has consolidated his grip on power with the imprisonment of prominent clerics and activists as well

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