

## Trucker beaten

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it in Basupara area of Puthia around 8:30pm, said the OC.

The driver was beaten with sticks there in the presence of other locals. After he fainted, he was taken to Puthia Health Complex, where he died early yesterday, he said.

The helper of the truck's driver managed to flee.

The body was sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for autopsy, said the OC.

He also said the police arrested five suspects and the victim's wife was taking preparations for filing a case.

## 32 more die

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those 24 hours, the total number of recoveries rose to 2,54,386 which is more than 73 percent of all confirmed cases.

Seven of the deceased yesterday were female and 25 were male.

One of them was aged between 11 and 20 years, one between 21 and 30, one between 31 and 40, four were between 41 and 50, eight between 51 and 60 and 17 above 60.

As of yesterday noon, a total of 3,034 Covid-19 patients were undergoing treatment at general beds and 294 in ICU beds in the Covid-19 designated hospitals across the country, according to a press release.

## Road crashes

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Quoting the family members, officer-in-charge (OC) of Nandail Highway Police Mohammad Monjurul Hoque said Fahad and his family members were on their way to Nikli upazila in Kishoreganj boarding a microbus.

The accident took place when the microbus collided head-on with a Mymensingh-bound pick-up van in Dangri area, killing Fahad and Turan on the spot and injuring 10 others.

On information, police and fire service and civil defence personnel rescued the injured persons and rushed them to Nandail Upazila Health Complex from where they were referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Jhama was declared dead at the hospital.

The injured were identified as Sharmin Akter, 18, Shahnaz Begum, 25, Fahad's wife Rebu Akter, 25, Hasina Shaheen Rosy, 52, her son Hossain Ahmed, 30, daughter Bonyya, 20, Jarif, 12, Ferdousi Begum, 52, Jebu, 35, and Shamim Mia, 22.

Police also recovered the dead bodies from the spot.

Police seized the vehicles, but drivers of both the vehicles managed to flee the scene, said the OC. A case was lodged.

In a separate accident, three BCL activists died after a passenger bus run over the bike they were riding in Mukshudpur upazila of Gopalganj on Friday morning.

The accident took place in Mukshudpur College Mor area on Dhaka-Khulna Highway around 11:00am.

The deceased were identified as Al-Amin Tagore, 22, vice-president of Mukshudpur College BCL unit and a resident of Gopinathpur village, Faisal Sardar, 30, and Liakot Sheikh, 32, of Chandibordi village under Mukshudpur upazila.

Quoting locals, Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Bhanga Highway Police Station said, "The accident took place when a Dhaka-bound bus of Golden Line Paribahan collided head-on with a motorbike and the motorbike went under the bus.

Al-Amin died on the spot. Faisal was taken to Mukshudpur Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead.

Liakot died while being taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Our correspondents from Mymensingh and Faridpur contributed to this report.

## Draft

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heavy engagement and ill-health, goes to see his ailing parents today, who are at present staying at the Minto Road official residence of their son-in-law Land Revenue Minister Abdur Rab Serneabat. He stays with them till they permit their loving son to take leave of them for the night.

## BANGLADESH GETS IPU MEMBERSHIP

The annual conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union votes nearly unanimously today to grant membership to Bangladesh, but rejects an application by North Korea. The international body, which fosters contacts between national parliaments, began its meeting in the Italian chamber of Deputies building in Rome. It is reported that the Bangladesh delegation to the IPU conference will raise the question of the repatriation of Bangalis stranded in Pakistan in that forum. Shah Moazzam, leader of the delegation, says that they will try to utilise to the maximum their contact with parliamentarians from the IPU member countries.

SOURCES: September 21, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Dainik Ittefaq*.



People gather outside of the US Supreme Court following the death of US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in Washington, US, yesterday.

## Fierce battle looms over succession

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as a "titan of the law," but wasted no time to make his intentions clear.

"We were put in this position of power and importance to make decisions for the people who so proudly elected us, the most important of which has long been considered to be the selection of United States Supreme Court Justices," Trump said on Twitter. "We have this obligation, without delay!"

Democrats are still seething over the Republican Senate's refusal to act on Democratic president Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland, in 2016 after conservative Justice Antonin Scalia died 10 months before that election. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in 2016 said the Senate should not act on a court nominee during an election year, a stance he has since reversed.

Despite that anger, Democrats have little chance of blocking Trump's pick. His fellow Republicans control 53 of the Senate's 100 seats and McConnell, who has made confirmation of Trump's federal judicial nominees a top priority, said the chamber would vote on any Trump nominee.

"This is going to set off a titanic battle. This could seriously effect the election," said David Gergen, a political adviser who has served four US presidents, both Republican and Democrat.

Political strategists say Ginsburg death could bolster Trump's effort to

shift the subject away from his weak point: handling of the coronavirus pandemic that has killed nearly 200,000 Americans. Trump is trailing Biden in national polls ahead of the November 3 election.

Despite the political wrangling, accolades flowed in for the pioneering Jewish justice.

Trump, campaigning in Minnesota, was on stage at a rally when the news broke, and was informed of her passing by reporters after his speech.

"She just died? Wow. I didn't know that," he said. "Whether you agreed or not, she was an amazing woman who led an amazing life."

"Our Nation has lost a jurist of historic stature," said Chief Justice John Roberts.

Obama said in a tweet that Ginsburg "fought to the end, through her cancer, with unwavering faith in our democracy and its ideals."

Biden, said she was "an American hero, a giant of legal doctrine, and a relentless voice in the pursuit of that highest American ideal: Equal Justice Under Law."

Former president Jimmy Carter called her a "beacon of justice", while Hillary Clinton thanked her for paving the way for "so many women."

In Washington, hundreds of tearful mourners headed to lay flowers and light candles in front of the Supreme Court, where the diminutive Ginsburg sat for 27 years, even taking arguments and issuing opinions from

her hospital bed after repeated bouts of illness over the past two years.

Ginsburg anchored the court's liberal faction, whittled to four by two Trump appointments since 2017. The two justices appointed by Trump were Neil Gorsuch in 2017 and Brett Kavanaugh in 2018.

The appointment of a sixth conservative justice could lead to a court that would potentially remove abortion rights, strengthen the powers of business, and water down rights provided to minorities and the LGBTQ community over the past three decades.

Trump last week unveiled 20 names of possible choices, all deeply conservative.

Many court-watchers expect Trump to attempt to replace Ginsburg with a woman. One possible contender on Trump's list is Amy Coney Barrett, a conservative judge on the Chicago-based 7th US Circuit Court of Appeals who was under consideration in 2018 before Trump picked Kavanaugh.

Democrats are expected to fight tough to force a delay -- an uphill battle given the control Republicans have on the Senate, which must approve any nominee.

Drawing a line in the sand on Friday, Biden warned: "The voters should pick the president, and the president should pick the justice for the Senate to consider."

"This was the position the

Republican Senate took in 2016 when they were almost 10 months to go before the election. That's the position the United States Senate must take today."

Biden was referring to Mitch McConnell's decision in 2016, in Obama's last year in office, to block the president's court nominee so that Trump could name his own the following year.

The stakes are extremely high, according to Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond.

"The political fight will be huge because appointing a very conservative person will make this the most conservative court in a century," he said.

Ginsburg herself was acutely aware of the stakes of her health on the court balance, and her fans fretted at her increasingly frequent trips to the hospital over the past two years.

According to NPR radio, Ginsburg raised the issue this week with her granddaughter Clara Spera.

"My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed," she said.

Ginsburg died on the evening that marked the beginning of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. According to tradition, those who die during the holiday are revered as a "tzaddik," or a person of great righteousness.

## Biggest Thai protest in yrs targets govt, monarchy

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removal of the government, a new constitution and elections. They have also broken a long-standing taboo by criticising the monarchy of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

Yesterday's protests moved from the campus of Thammasat University, a traditional hotbed of opposition to the military and royalist establishment, on to Sanam Luang - translated as Royal Field - outside the Grand Palace.

"I hope the people in power will see the importance of the people," student leader Panupong "Mike" Jadnok, told the crowd. "We are fighting to put the monarchy in the right place, not to abolish it."

Organisers said there were 50,000 people present in the latest demonstration. Police said there were

at least 18,000, still enough to make it bigger than a protest last month. Protesters have said they plan to stay overnight and march to Government House on Sunday morning.

The king was not in Thailand and has spent much of his time in Europe since taking the throne from his late father in 2016. The Royal Palace was not available for comment on the protests.

"People can protest but they should do that peacefully and within the law," said government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri.

Sept 19 is the anniversary of the coup against the populist then-prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra in 2006. Among the protesters were many of his red shirt followers, veterans of clashes a decade ago with pro-establishment yellow shirts.

"I'm here to fight for the future of my children and grandchildren. I hope that by the time I die, they will become free," said 68-year-old Tasawan Suebthai, a redshirt with amulets round her neck which she hoped would ward off bullets.

So far the latest protests have been peaceful.

The military, which proclaims itself the defender of the monarchy and national stability, has carried out several bloody crackdowns on protesters since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932 as well as 13 successful coups.

Prayuth has said the government would allow protests but that demands for reform of the monarchy were not acceptable.

A 20-year-old student, who gave her name only as Waan for fear of

reprisals, said it was time to reform the monarchy. "It's a problem that's been swept under the rug for so long. This must end right here."

Protesters demand the scrapping of a lese majeste law against criticism of the monarchy. They also seek to reduce the king's constitutional powers and his control over the palace fortune and units of the army.

The last time such a large crowd assembled at Sanam Luang was in mourning for the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who was widely revered in the country of 70 million.

There were also sympathy protests in Taipei and Tokyo while others were planned in Europe and North America.

## Unacceptable

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numbers, hospitalisations and intensive care admissions, "and we haven't even begun the influenza season yet!"

"The circulation of other respiratory pathogens will complicate the clinical picture," she added.

And while the world waits for a vaccine -- 36 are currently being trialled on humans -- the American said some countries had learned throughout the pandemic that they could get on top of the virus with the measures already available.

"As we approach 30 million cases and one million deaths, we have a long way to go," she said.

"But we are in a different place that we were in January."

"We know so much more now, and countries are showing us that they can use the tools they have now to break chains of transmission and save lives."

WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus meanwhile lamented the recurring pattern of money being thrown at virus outbreaks -- only after the event.

"Covid-19 has shown that collectively, the world was woefully under-prepared," he said.

## 2 witnesses

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Dinajpur SP Mohammad Anwar Hossain.

Wahida came under a hammer attack at her official residence in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur early on September 3. Her father was also injured in the attack. The two are now undergoing treatment at two hospitals in the capital.

Wahida's brother Sheikh Farid Uddin had filed the case with Ghoraghat Police Station on the same day. The case was transferred to the DB on September 5.

Meanwhile, the government has transferred Wahida to the public administration ministry as special officer-in-charge. Besides, her husband Mohammad Mezbaul Hossain, Pirganj UNO in Rangpur, has been transferred to the health services department in Dhaka as a senior assistant secretary.

The public administration ministry issued a notification in this regard on Wednesday.

**'NO CASH RECOVERED'**  
Speaking to The Daily Star over the phone yesterday, Dinajpur Deputy Commissioner Mahmudul Alam said no currencies were recovered from the cupboard at Wahida's official residence in Ghoraghat.

He made the comments referring to some recent media reports that Tk 40 lakh and \$5,000 was recovered from the cupboard on September 13.

The DC said Executive Magistrate Shahanur Rahman of his office was present at the residence on September 13 when a police team went there to hand some clothes of Wahida to her brother. Azim Uddin and Mominul Islam, OC and inspector (Investigation) of Ghoraghat Police Station respectively, were also present.

Mahmudul said a quarter was spreading propaganda in a bid to save the perpetrators of the brutal attack.

Law enforcers have so far arrested five people in connection with the case. Four of them are now behind bars and the other is in DB custody on remand.

## Real-life

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organising the auction with his brother Krzysztof.

The renowned musician, who died in 2000, came to the world's attention in Roman Polanski's film based on Szpilman's autobiography -- available in some 40 languages.

The black Montblanc Meisterstück pen, the pocket watch and a tie that is now part of the collection at the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews are the only Szpilman possessions to have survived the war.

Like every Jewish resident of the Polish capital, the pianist and his family were forced into the Warsaw Ghetto established by the Nazis in 1940. He made ends meet by playing the piano at whatever cafes remained open.

In 1942, his relatives were sent to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp, but Szpilman was spared after a Jewish police officer recognised him from a concert and pulled him from the transport line at the last minute.

Szpilman managed to escape the ghetto the following year, just before the Germans liquidated and abolished the Jewish district.

He survived the rest of the war, thanks to the help of friends, by going from hideout to hideout, until he ended up at an empty apartment, totally cut off from the outside world.

"The watch, an Omega, held special significance for my father," Andrzej Szpilman told AFP.

"My father wrote that he would wind it up to know what time it was, because he lived in total solitude and had lost all sense of time."

"The watch helped him put up with the passing time," the son said, before winding the watch and holding it up to his ear to hear it tick.

The item shows up in a touching passage of the autobiography.

A German officer, Wilm Hosenfeld, comes across Szpilman at his hideout but instead of killing him, he asks him to play the piano -- and gets Chopin. Later he helps Szpilman survive by bringing him food.