

7 killed, 57 hurt in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

At least seven people were killed and 57 others injured in separate road accidents in Feni and Tangail yesterday.

UNB from Feni reports, three people, including a minor girl, were killed in two separate road accidents in Sadar thana early yesterday.

Witnesses said Mohammad Bahar, 28 and Abdul Haque, 30, were doing repairing work of their truck at about 3 am at south Kashempur on Feni-Matjdee road. Suddenly another vehicle hit the truck from behind and both the youngmen working under the truck were run over.

Both the bodies were sent to Sadar hospital for autopsy.

In another incident Sayeda, 9, of the same thana was killed when a vehicle knocked down her near Lalapal on Feni by-pass road. Her body was sent

to morgue at about 7 am for autopsy.

Two cases have been filed with the police. BSS adds: Three passengers including one woman were killed in a road accident on Tuesday on Tangail-Mymensingh highway near Rasulpur Bridge—about two miles from Tangail town.

Fiftyseven passengers were injured of whom eighteen were admitted to Tangail Sadar Hospital. Three persons were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The accident occurred when two passenger buses—one bound for Dhaka from Jamalpur and the other from Tangail for Mymensingh—met a head-on collision.

A case was registered with Tangail thana.



Construction materials dumped on busy Gulshan road

— Star photo

Construction materials block road

By Staff Correspondent

Heaps of construction material have been dumped on one of the busy and important roads in the posh Gulshan area. Rods, sand, shingles even bags of cement have been stored on the busy road running through the commercial centre of the area causing much inconvenience to vehicular traffic and pedestrians. At times trucks loaded with construction materials block the road waiting to be unloaded during busy hours of the day making it impossible to play on.

Business and commercial houses of the area and residents, many of whom are foreigners and diplomats have brought the matter to the notice of the concerned authorities and even ventilated their grievances through the columns of newspapers but to no avail.

178 more Rohingyas return home

COX'S BAZAR, Mar 4: One hundred seventy eight Rohingyas refugees voluntarily went back to their homes in Myanmar through three transit camps at Teknaf here today, official sources said, reports BSS.

With this 32nd batch of repatriation, the total number of repatriated persons now stands at 21,908.

India to build 12 more warships

NEW DELHI, Mar 4: India will manufacture 12 more warships with state of the art technology by the end of the century to modernise its navy, defence officials announced here today, reports AFP.

Minister of State for Defence M Mallikarjun told Parliament the navy's modernisation was a constant and ongoing development based on India's threat perception, maritime interests... and budgetary resources.

The navy was in a state of preparedness to handle any exigency that may arise, he said.

PM : China

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Recalling China's gesture after the 1991 cyclone, she said the two peoples had many things in common.

She appreciated China's open policy of privatization and free market economy and informed the ambassador that similar steps have been taken in Bangladesh for speedy economic progress and prosperity.

The Prime Minister invited Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in joint venture projects in Bangladesh and mentioned the incentives provided by her government in this regard.

Seeking Chinese support for developing the communication sector, Begum Zia said the China-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge over the river Buriganga is a symbol of deep friendship between the two countries.

She welcomed the Ambassador to his new assignment and assured him of all cooperation from her government during the tenure of his office in Bangladesh.

The Ambassador, reciprocating similar sentiments, said the visit of Begum Zia to China has left a place in the hearts of the Chinese people.

Conveying the best wishes of Chinese Premier Li Peng, the envoy recalled the relations between the two countries which marked significant progress during the government of late President Ziaur Rahman.

The Prime Minister conveyed her best wishes for the Chinese Premier and the President. As chairperson of BNP, she also conveyed greetings for the General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Focus on Bajitpur

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grounds for the fish looters and the robbers. The nearest land is a distant line close to the horizon.

Talking to The Daily Star a 25 year-old fisherman Haripada Das said "We can fight the robbers and the looters who try to take away expensive nets and other fishing gear... but we are helpless against the legal robbery by the mahajan's men supported by police."

He said that the systematic repression on the common fishermen begins when the money-lenders and other middlemen involve themselves in direct fishing.

The Bengla-Charabadha crisis started as the waterbody was leased out in April, 1991 for three years in return of Taka 8,05,600 a year as revenue.

The smaller fishermen's cooperative societies could not take part in the bidding because the price was suddenly increased four-fold over the previous terms.

The local societies formed a kind of consortium and helped the Reformed Nauhata Matsyajibi Samabay Samity win the bid.

The fishermen decided to gather the necessary funds from a mahajan Kanchan Mia of Kuliarchar thana of the district.

The Samity members alleged that Kanchan Mia in a bid to maximise his profit and monopolise the local fish trading caused a split in the leadership of the society.

The President Krishna Dhan Das and General Secretary Jagadish Das banded with the money-lender, they added.

The members of the society wanted to haul in the catch at the end of the three year lease term so that the fish could grow up to the necessary sizes. But the Mahajan's group wanted to fish twice in the lease period for profits.

The general members and shareholders held a meeting December 1, 1992, ousted the leaders and replaced the executive committee by an ad-hoc body.

The general meeting of the society also decided to fish at the end of the lease period.

Following the meeting, several moves were initiated by the local member of Parliament and community leaders to mediate the rift.

But the ousted leaders of the society and the mahajan's men unilaterally hauled fish violating an earlier consensus that had suggested that fishing would be carried out under the supervision of both the groups.

As eight boatloads of fish were about to set off for Kanchan Mia's cold storage at Kuliarchar December 28, 1992, society members and the people of the nearby villages blocked the boats at the mouth of the Bengla-Charabadha.

The people asked Mia's men to sell the fish to the local traders and deposit the money in the bank.

In reply, a son of Kanchan Mia, Rubel, and his cronies opened fire on the people killing Sanjib Das of Kachua Khola village and injuring another 30.

Militants today abducted two policemen from a bus going from Baramulla to Srinagar. The two were identified as head constable Ghulam Nabi Naqashbandi and constable Mohammed Ramzan.

Eleven top militants including self styled district and area commanders of a militant outfit were captured by security forces. Large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered from them.

Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic said the government received assurances that heavy weapons would be placed under UN control.

Bosnian Serbs and Croats designed the pact in Geneva in January.

PM invited to visit Tunisia

Prime Minister Begum Khaleeda Zia has been invited to visit Tunisia, officials at the Foreign Ministry said yesterday, reports UNB.

She has accepted the invitation extended by Prime Minister of the North African Muslim state Dr Hamed Karoui. Date for the tour will be fixed through mutual discussion, they said.

A senior official who described the present relations between the two countries as "good" said Tunisia is interested in further strengthening its friendship with Bangladesh.

The two OIC countries have identical views on various regional and international issues.

Diarrhoea

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Some 520 people were attacked in different areas of the capital in a day but no death was reported, according to the source.

The health control room said that 14 people including one in newly affected Gopalganj and one in Narayanganj, died on Thursday pushing the toll to 925 in two months in 13 districts.

The other deaths were reported from Jhalokathi, Patuakhali, Khulna, Barisal and Bhola, one source said adding that some 1,500 people were ill on the day.

Health experts said that it was a new kind of bacteria as deadly as cholera which causes acute dehydration and death if not treated timely.

They suggested drinking of boiled or tablet purified water and also recommended sufficient Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) as soon as the first symptoms of the disease were noticed.

Yeltsin

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power who should hold supreme power in Russia; the president of the parliament. The struggle was left unresolved following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The Congress has whittled away Yeltsin's powers in recent months and in December forced him to dump his reformist prime minister, Yegor Gaidar.

Yeltsin has said that if politicians cannot settle the constitutional dispute, the question should be put to the Russian people in a nationwide referendum on April 11.

The hard-liners failed Thursday to win enough votes to have the Constitutional Court decide whether Yeltsin's recent actions violated the constitution.

PM : Islambagh

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tion of the government in mitigating their sufferings and rehabilitation of the affected people.

In this context, she said a list of the affected people will be prepared by city Mayor Mirza Abbas MP and Meer Shawkat Ali, MP in consultation with the local leaders.

Responding to the local demands for widening of roads in the densely populated Islambagh area, Begum Zia said the government will take appropriate steps for the purpose if necessary land is provided by the residents voluntarily.

Begum Zia also visited Haji Ibrahim Government High School Relief Centre where several hundred families have taken shelter. She went by boat from Sadarghat terminal and spent more than two hours among the affected people of Islambagh area.

The Prime Minister announced Taka five lakh as emergency grant for the affected slum dwellers. She also asked the relevant agencies to provide 200 cartons of prepared food, 750 maunds of rice, 100 tin biscuits, 2250 pieces lungi, 1250 pieces saree, 500 pieces shirt and 500 pieces frock for distribution among the people of Islambagh slum.

City Mayor Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman Khan, State Minister for Social Welfare Sarwarat Rahman, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Chairman Shahidul Huq Jamal MP, Meer Shawkat Ali MP and Amanullah Aman MP accompanied the Prime Minister.

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Islambagh

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organizations from the nearby areas began relief operation among the affected people. They distributed cooked food among the affected people.

A number of affected people alleged that some people were snatching and looting their belongings.

A land-lord Mohammad Nasir who had lost his 20 thatched houses in the devastating fire alleged that when he was retrieving some of his belongings from the ruins, a group of youths reaching there by a boat Wednesday night snatched everything.

Police said that a heavy contingent of police were deployed in the area to keep the situation under control.

The Midnight File

UN experts inspect 4 Iraqi military sites

BAGHDAD, Mar 4: UN nuclear weapons experts inspected four Iraqi military sites Thursday but found nothing to support allegations that Iraq still has an underground plutonium reactor, their leader said. "Everything went on fine, everything is fine", Dimitris Pericos, leading the 24-member team told reporters after completing the first day of inspection, reports AP.

World Trade Centre blast : One arrested

NEW YORK, Mar 4: A man has been arrested in the bombing of the World Trade Centre, the White House announced today, and a television report said he was linked to Muslim fundamentalists.

Hasina demands financial help for fire victims

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday demanded financial help for the people affected by the devastating fire at Islambagh slum in the city Wednesday, reports UNB.

In a statement, she expressed her deep shock for the victims and extensive damage caused to life and property.

Describing the sudden fire as tragic and painful, the Awami League President urged all to stand by the fire affected people.

Diarrhoea claims 11 more lives in southern dists

BARISAL, Mar 4: Diarrhoea claimed eleven more lives in the southern districts today raising the death toll to 744 in the region since January 1, official source said.

In 24 hours until this evening, seven deaths were reported from Jhalokathi while two died in Patuakhali and one each in Barisal and Barguna.

During the same period 711 persons were attacked by diarrhoea in the six districts of Barisal division which raised the number of affected persons to 33921.

Saifur : SKOP

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Karmachari Oikya Parishad) earlier, supposed to be announced by December 31, last year, the Minister informed the newsmen that he had no idea of any such MOU or agreement.

Incidentally, the SKOP postponed a 48-hour strike November 29-30 last year in view of government assurance to implement the government-SKOP accord signed earlier.

The government, according to the MOU signed with the SKOP in the third quarter of last year, formed a Wage Commission comprising representatives of the workers, employer's and the government to make recommendations on different issues including national minimum wage of the workers of both the private and public sectors.

The Wage Commission finalised its report on December 31 last year and submitted it to the Prime Minister.

The Finance Minister, however, said that the Finance Ministry had not been informed about the provisions of such understanding and that no discussion had taken place with him and any of his cabinet colleagues about either the financial implication of such 'understanding' or from which 'heads' the additional resources necessary to implement such 'accord' would come.

The MPs who participated in the discussion included, among others, Tofael Ahmed, Moudud Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Rahamat Ali, Maolana Abdus Sobhan, Mattia Chowdhury and Shajahan Straj.

When the Speaker was about to put the amendment, moved by the Opposition members, to vote the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad took the floor informing that they had withdrawn the amendment on the bill.

The House approved the withdrawal of the amendment by voice votes and then passed the bill unanimously with the thumping of the table both by the Treasury and Opposition bench members.

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Editor : S. M. Ali
Executive Editor : Mahfuz Anam
Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36 Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices : House No. 11, Road No. 3, Dhanmondi R/A., Dhaka-1205 PABX : 500092-4. Advertisement : 500091 (Direct) Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3267. GRAM. DAILY STAR DHAKA