

# Six killed, 46 injured in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent

Six people were killed and 46 others injured in separate road mishaps in and outside the capital yesterday.

Our Narayanganj Correspondent reports: Two people were killed and 20 others injured when a truck collided with a minibus at Simrail on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway Monday morning.

The victims were identified as Shamsul Haque, 30, and Imran, 28 — both passengers of the minibus — died at the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital.

The injured others were admitted to the hospital, sources said.

At 9 am on the same highway near Mograpara a pedestrian was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus.

The victim was identified as Abul Hashem and his body sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our DMCH Correspondent adds: One Majeda Begum, 25, was admitted to the DMCH at 7 am Monday following an accident.

She succumbed to her injuries at 2.30 pm in the hospital, but details of the accident were not available.

UNB adds: Two people were killed and 26 others injured in two separate road accidents on the Dhaka-Aricha highway yesterday.

Police said: truck driver Abdul Malek, 30, died on the spot and six people were injured as two trucks collided at Ballapur in Sadar thana at about 5 am.

The injured, who could not be identified, were rushed to different hospitals in Dhaka.

A minor boy, identified as Shujan, was killed and 20 people were injured when a Dhaka-bound bus from Aricha fell into a roadside ditch near the Military Farm in Sadar thana at about 11.30 am.

Of the injured, Abdul Malek, 30, Raftin, 30, Qader, 35, and Siraj, 40, were rushed to Dhaka in critical condition.



AL presidium member and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament Abudus Samad Azad speaking at a discussion on June 7 at the party's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

# Ershad, Raushan jailed

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counsel Khondakar Mahub Hossain for handing out the punishment concurrently, but granted the verbal petitions of the defence lawyers to get certified copies of the judgement.

Sarfuddin Ahmed, Khan Mukul, defence counsel for Begum Raushan Ershad, prayed for granting division to his client. Similar prayers were made by Khan Saifur Rahman for his clients M A Sattar, Abdul Wadud Khan, a former MP and three others. A Malek, attorney for Rahmatullah, also prayed for better arrangements for his client in the jail.

Special Judge Ansaruddin Sikdar handed down the sentence at 2:45 pm in the Janata Tower case after examining prosecution witnesses since February 5, 1992.

Of the witnesses, Ershad's former private secretaries Brig (Retd) Sharif Aziz and Lt Col (Retd) Saiful Haq had corroborated the prosecution charge of payment of Tk 10 crore, including Tk 6.5 crore in cash from Ershad's possession to Nirman International for construction of the Janata Tower.

Earlier, Ershad was brought to the court under heavy guard from the adjacent Dhaka Central Jail at 12-10 pm. Wearing a full-sleeve cream safari suit, he smartly entered the courtroom and smilingly shook hands with both prosecution and defence lawyers. He looked quite fresh and healthy despite his age and solitary life in jail.

Begum Raushan Ershad was sitting beside Ershad on the dock. Wearing a white saree with borders of embroidered black flowers, she appeared grim and pale, looking blankly — hardly talking to her husband.

Part of the 91-page judgement was read out in the makeshift courtroom packed with prosecution and defence lawyers and security personnel.

The court premises were guarded by plainclothesmen and steel-helmeted riot police.

Ershad's brother Golam Kader Selim and his wife, and Raushan Ershad's sister Gulshan Ara and Ershad's 12-year-old adopted daughter Jabeen had come but were not allowed to enter the court, ostensibly for security reasons.

The judgement came after the court examined 35 prosecution witnesses in 72 days.

General Ershad, who had grabbed power and ruled the country for nearly nine years, is facing 18 more cases, involving corruption and abuse of power.

"It's a triumph of the rule of law over the rule of force, fair play over a rough game," observed Attorney General Aminul Haq who was the prosecution counsel in all the three cases that Ershad was convicted.

He further said: "This suggests that Bangladesh has an impressive judicial system and within a record time we had been able to prosecute former President Ershad and others in three cases wherein nearly 100 witnesses and several hundred documents were examined. It was a very tough task."

It is easy to hold trials in a court established under martial law but not so easy to prove a case in a court of ordinary criminal jurisdiction, the Attorney General added.

He pointed out that Rajiv Gandhi of India was killed two years ago but the trial could not be started even now in the court of law.

On question of fairness of the trial, the Attorney General said the trial was held before a free press and many had ac-

# PM's staff killed in road mishap

Lt Col Mohammad Shahjahan Ali, General Staff Officer-1 of the Prime Minister's office, was killed in a road accident near the Bogra Cantonment on Sunday. He was 39, reports UNB.

The accident took place at about 8 pm when a Dhaka-bound night coach hit his car. He was driving the car from Sherpur to Bogra Combined Military Hospital (CMH) to see his ailing nephew. His wife escaped unhurt.

Shahjahan Ali died at the Bogra CMH, said an ISPR press release.

He left behind his wife, one son, a daughter, parents and a host of friends and relatives to mourn his death.

Driver of the night coach Md Abzal Hossain was arrested and the vehicle seized at Savar.

The Namaz-e-janaza of Shahjahan Ali was held at the Bogra Cantonment yesterday. He was later buried at his family graveyard at Sherpur, Bogra with full military honour.

# One lakh heroin addicts in the country, JS told

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that about one lakh people were now addicted to heroin in the country, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Awami League member Abul Kalam Azad, the Home Minister said the government had seized 52 kg 679 grams of heroin from the smugglers in the country between 1982 and 1992.

# 25935 Rohingyas repatriated so far, JS told

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman yesterday said a total of 25,935 Rohingya refugees have so far been repatriated to Myanmar, reports BSS.

Replying to Sharfuddin Khasru (JP-Sylhet) in the House during question hour, the Foreign Minister said 2,50,877 Rohingya refugees took shelter in Bangladesh.

In reply to a question from Shah Md Rafiqul Bari Chowdhury (JP-Sherpur) the Foreign Minister said the issue of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh was a bilateral one between the two countries.

The repatriation process started in January last after 18 years and since then 325 stranded Pakistanis have been repatriated, he added.

Mostafizur Rahman told Prof Rafiqul Islam (AL-Jessore) that 3017 Bangladesh citizens are now in the prisons of 18 countries of the world. Of them, 2000 are in Malaysia, 361 in Pakistan, 258 in India, 115 in Saudi Arabia and 40 in Thailand.

# Efforts on for realising share of assets from Pakistan: FM

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that the government was making every effort for realising Bangladesh's due share of assets from Pakistan, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Mohammad Shamsul Huq of the Awami League, the Foreign Minister said that the present democratic government was giving importance to the national interests above everything.

He pointed out that the issue of due share of assets had come up for discussion during the visit of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to Pakistan. The two sides agreed to take steps for resolving the issue, the Foreign Minister said, and added that communication with the Pakistan government was continuing.

The Foreign Minister pointed out that the issue of determining the due share of assets from Pakistan was a complicated task. However, such a complex issue could be solved through discussions and negotiation, he felt.

The Foreign Minister said it was decided during the visit of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman to Pakistan in 1977 that the question of sharing assets between Bangladesh and Pakistan would be scrutinised at the Foreign Secretary level.

In 1980, the two Foreign Secretaries met in Dhaka and agreed that a working group comprising inter-ministerial representatives and experts of the two countries would examine the issue and submit a report to the Foreign Secretaries.

He, however, said despite repeated reminders from Bangladesh there was no progress in this connection.

# Duty-free cars

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would discuss the issue with the Prime Minister and had expressed the optimism that a decision would be taken soon. He, however, drew the attention of the Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman.

The Finance Minister said he was being dragged into the discussion unnecessarily as no Customs officer had ever stood in the way of import of duty-free cars.

As the Finance Minister was concluding his remarks, the Prime Minister entered the House amidst clapping.

Prof Chowdhury seized the opportunity and said, "Since the Leader of the House is present let us listen to her".

A beaming Prime Minister then assured the members that they would be given the permission to import duty-free cars under the existing law after the budget.

# Attack on Pak troops UNSC seeks to punish Somali warlords

UNITED NATIONS, June 7: The Security Council has demanded the arrest of those responsible for the bloody ambush of UN peacekeepers in Somalia that killed 22 Pakistani soldiers.

Three Americans were also wounded in the attack, reports AP.

Replying to a resolution passed unanimously in emergency session Sunday condemned the violence and said UN commanders could "take all necessary measures" to arrest the killers.

It also asked countries to contribute armored personnel carriers and helicopters to prevent similar attacks.

Reuters adds: At least two Somalis were shot dead by Pakistani UN troops in a fresh firefight in the Somali capital Mogadishu today, witnesses said.

No Pakistanis were killed after Somali gunmen attacked the headquarters of the Pakistani contingent to a UN multinational force, a cameraman with Reuters television said.

A Rome report says, Mogadishu's main warlord today released five Pakistani soldiers captured in weekend fighting Italian diplomats said.

The apparent peace gesture by General Mohamad Farah Aided, followed reports that US helicopters had attacked three of his main arms dumps in Retaliam for Saturday's bloodshed.

The diplomats said Somali militiamen handed four Pakistani soldiers and one officer to the UN military command in Mogadishu in the presence of the Italian ambassador, Enrico Augelli, who mediated the release.



Spanish Prime Minister and Socialist Party leader Felipe Gonzalez (R) addressing a press conference in Madrid yesterday. The socialists won the general elections for the fourth time. Story on page 5.

# New fisheries policy underway

By Staff Correspondent

Environment Minister Abdullah Al-Noman yesterday said that a new fisheries policy was underway which would include extension of lease period of the water bodies of the country.

The minister was addressing as chief guest, the inaugural function of the day-long World Environment Day programme organised by the Environmental Coalition of NGOs under the auspices of the ADAB at the Institution of Engineers yesterday morning.

The minister said that the lease period of the water bodies, now fixed at two years, would be extended to seven years.

The minister also said that the current forestry scheme of the government would be further strengthened and in future the masses would be involved in the forestry scheme.

The programme, presided over by the chairperson of the environmental coalition of NGOs Kazi Faruk Ahmed, was also addressed among others by Director of ADAB Rasheda K. Chowdhury, Deputy Director of ADAB Prof Abdullah Al-Amin and Rokeya Kabir of the Nari Pragati Sangstha.

The minister said that the government would ensure people's participation in development programmes such as the Flood Action Plan (FAP).

He pointed out that poverty remained a strong barrier to the preservation of the environment.

Kazi Faruk Ahmed presented a declaration of the NGOs in which they pledged to continue their activities for developing the living standards of the poor and for a better environment.

The day-long programme in-

# Ishaq Khan

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Although Bhutto too was sacked by Ishaq Khan in 1990, she joined hands with the president in ousting the Sharif government.

As the political chess game continued, Sharif hinted at the possibility of withdrawing cases of abuse of power against Bhutto which Ishaq Khan had filed in special courts after her dismissal in August 1990.

Bhutto, 38, has accepted to sit around a negotiating table with Sharif, but she still insisted that elections would be the only solution to end the current crisis.

Analysts said Sharif, who lacks the two-thirds majority in both houses of parliament required to unseat the president, needs the help of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party to get rid of Ishaq Khan.

As all eyes are focussed on a court verdict on the fate of the assembly in the politically important Punjab Province, the future of the president could become bleak should Bhutto decide to desert him, they said.

# 465 foreigners detained in jails

Some 465 foreign nationals, including Americans and Russians, have been detained in different jails of the country on various criminal charges, reports UNB.

This was disclosed by Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury during question hour in parliament yesterday.

Some 264 Indian nationals top the list of foreign jail inmates followed by Myanmar Nationals (139).

Other foreign inmates are: Pakistani (34), Thai (15), Sri Lankan (2), Nepalese (1), American (2), Russian (2), Nigerian (3), Briton (1) and German (1).

Replying to another question from Shahjahan Khan (AL), the Home Minister said some 26 people were killed by members of the outlawed Sarbahara Party during the last 17 months from January 1, 1992 to May 31, 1993.

# Three teenagers arrested, pistol recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested three teenage boys with a locally made pistol from Uttar Begun Bari of the city yesterday evening.

Police said, the boys, Rashidul Islam Lito, 13, Amanullah Aman, 15 and Md Jast-muddin, 15, were arrested while they were moving around suspiciously on the streets in the area.

The boys, talking to The Daily Star Correspondent at the Tejgaon police station last evening, said that the weapon was found by Aman and they were 'playing with the pistol'.

The police said another boy, brother of Aman, fled when the police chased and caught the three at around 4 pm in front of 35/A Uttar Begun Bari. The other boy was carrying a pipe gun in his hand, the police added.

The youngest of the boys, Lito studies in Class Seven, Aman in Class Eight and Jastmuddin in Class Nine.

According to the boys they belong to lower middle class families.

A Sub-Inspector of the Tejgaon police station said the Begun Bari area was a crime prone zone and many teenagers were getting involved in mugging and terrorism.

"Months ago the police arrested a kid of no more than 12 years of age", a police officer of the thana said, "while he was about to mug someone".

# Hasina's letter

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requesting her to attend a seminar there but the letter was opened and its delivery delayed.

The AL MP alleged that the privilege of the opposition leader had been infringed.

The Speaker said that he would personally look into the matter.

"If the privilege of the opposition leader is infringed, I will take necessary action," Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali said.

# Chakmas

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Chakma refugees left their homes en masse in 1986 and 1989 and took shelter in six camps in Tripura state of India.

As part of the repatriation programmes, two large reception camps and six other temporary reception camps have also been opened.

Six magistrates from the district have been posted at Matiranga camp to supervise the repatriation.

A big boat has been hired to ferry the refugees to Bangladesh.

A wooden-bridge has been built on the Tabalchari border river and a number of buses have also been arranged to transport the refugees to their respective homes.

# 3 murdered

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In another incident, a 12-year-old boy was found dead inside a fire-wood shop, locked from outside, at Namapara, Badda in the city early Monday.

There was a cut-mark on the ear of the victim, Shah Alam, police sources said. Police suspected it was a case of homicide and sent the body to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The body of an unidentified youngman, 25, was recovered by the Sutrapur police from a pond at Ahoy Das Lane in the city, Monday.

Witnesses said, limbs of the victim were severed with sharp weapons. The body was sent to the Mitford Hospital morgue.

Meanwhile, a housewife committed suicide at Adabar, Shyamoli, Monday morning.

Parul, 28, took poison around 7:30 am Monday. She was taken to the DMCH where she died at 11 am.

The cause for her suicide was not immediately known.

# The Midnight File

## Arabs agree to attend peace talks on June 15

AMMAN, June 7: Arabs agreed today to attend the 10th round of peace talks with Israel beginning on June 15, Jordan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs said. Talal al-Hassan said the Foreign Ministers of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and their PLO counterpart discussed the invitation to participate in the next round of talks and took a positive decision regarding the participation, reports Reuter.

## Ochirbat leading in Mongolian election

ULAN BATOR, June 7: Mongolia's reformist President, Punsalmaagyn Ochirbat, took a commanding lead today and was expected to win elections against a Conservative challenger, the Election Commission announced. Ochirbat, 50, had bagged 58.3 per cent of the vote with about 65 per cent of counted, the commission said. His rival, London Tudev, the 58-year-old editor of the conservative ruling party newspaper, took 38.1 per cent of the ballots in Sunday's polling, reports AFP.

## Ukraine to ratify START-I Treaty

KIEV, June 7: Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told today that Ukraine would ratify the START-I Nuclear Treaty during a current parliamentary session, which usually ends in the first half of July, reports Reuter.

## Opposition walks out

From Page 1 Col 7

contrary to democratic behaviour.

She also observed that there was a gulf of difference between the actions of the BNP while out of power and while in power.

In this regard she recalled the gherao of the TV Station by the three political alliances in 1990 which was aimed at ensuring the electronic media's neutrality towards all political parties.

She said that the BNP was now using BTV to tarnish the image of the opposition.

Referring to Sunday night's BTV round up, she demanded that the Speaker should give an immediate ruling on the issue.

She also demanded immediate removal of the reporter.

The Leader of the Opposition, at this point, accused Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali of bias for the BNP and likened him to a thana-level leader of the party.

The Speaker, visibly infuriated by Hasina's remark, said, "This is too much. All these comments are expunged from the proceedings."

The Speaker then delivered his ruling: "The issue will be discussed and examined by the privilege committee which would submit its findings within three days."

As soon as Sheikh Hasina completed her speech Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury stood up and said her observations about the speaker amounted to an aspersion on the chair as well as the House. Prof Chowdhury asked the chair to expunge the unparliamentary remarks.

Barrister Nazmul Huda took the floor again to give a personal explanation and made a brief statement on the issue.

Standing again, Sheikh Hasina urged the Speaker to allow others to speak on the issue under Rule 274 of the rules of procedure. She called upon the Speaker to conduct the business of the House by maintaining complete neutrality, as defined in Kaul's book.

We shall accept your decision with good grace if you maintain neutrality, she said.

She also called for suspending the TV round-up on the proceedings till the issue under discussion was resolved.

The Speaker said the matter was closed.

"I have given my decision. I have sent it to the privilege committee. That is final and no more discussion on this," he asserted.

Soon after wards the opposition members belonging to the Awami League, the Ganotantrik Party, the Workers Party and the Communist Party of Bangladesh walked out from the House.

JSD member Shahjahan Siraj said the observation of Sheikh Hasina about the conduct of the Speaker was 'very regrettable' and should be expunged.

He, however, pleaded for keeping the TV round-up suspended until the privilege committee's report. He then staged a walk-out.

Mizan Chowdhury said they were very respectful of the Speaker and the chair. He said the TV round-up on the proceedings of the House was not based on fact and made a strong plea not to continue the round-up in this manner.

Maulana Sobhan of the Jamaat said the observations of Sheikh Hasina about the Speaker were regrettable. He said his party members also wanted to walk-out from the House on the issue of TV coverage. But since the Speaker has referred the matter to the privilege committee they refrained from doing so.

Thereafter, the House took up legislative business while the opposition outside met and issued their threat of abstaining from the House unless the issue was resolved.