# DOWN TO EARTH

# **Epidemic of Road Accidents and Unhappy Bazar Conditions**

By AS M Nurunnabi

ing on the roads are junk or Road accidents have become near-junk with old and derelict so frequent that they cannot be engines, weak and faulty taken as casual or scattered brakes, in short, vehicles which events. A feature of these road accidents is that they kill and the rate at which they do so is stunningly high. There is hardly a day when our newspapers do not carry news of road disasters and their casualties. Local dailies ran editorials on road accidents urging immediate steps by the authorities concerned to do something to contain them. But it is a pity that there has been no visible outcome of the media comments on ties or on highways. the problem whose human di-Some of the factors making mension clamours for special

attention. For the observers the conclusion seems inescapable that about them. fitness certificates to defective vehicles, overtaking, violation of traffic rules and indifference

come to such a pass that driv-30 per cent of the vehicles ply-

SRINAGAR, Nov 19: Muslim

leaders today called off a 34-day

crippling shutdown in the

Kashmir valley, but warned

they would call for another

strike if Indian troops remained

deployed around the Hazratbal

clerics also warned the state

administration of drastic conse-

quences if security barricades

erected outside the mosque.

Kashmir's holiest shrine, were

thousands gathered for prayers

at the Friday mosque here that

the general strike called by the

all-party Kashmir freedom con-

ference to denounce the month-

long Hazratbal siege would be

sume on November 24 if the

government did not concede to

the demands of the conference.

an umbrella group of political

and militant organisations op-

posed to Indian rule over

announcement with religious

slogans and cries of support for

the four-year-old Muslim mili-

tant campaign for secession of

Kashmir, India's only Muslim-

Umer Farooq, who also ad-

dressed the faithful, lashed out

at New Delhi for attempting to

crush the Muslim separatist

Rangamati

From Page 1 Col 8

supporters of the Pahari

Chhatra Parishad (Hilly Stu-

dents' Council) plan to or-

ganise a rally and stage

demonstrations tomorrow at

Khagrachhari in protest

against the Naniarchar inci-

Wednesday's incidents oc-

curred when police swung into

action to disperse two clashing

groups in front of Naniarchar

Bazar and attempted to remove

a road barricade put up by the

supporters of the Pahari

Chhatra Parishad, the body of

tribal students who were de-

manding the withdrawal of a

security (army) outpost, sour-

The trouble began

Wednesday morning when the

tribal students' procession was

confronted by the Pahari Gana

Parishad - formed by the non-

formed a one-man judicial en-

quiry to probe the incident.

The government has

Box No: 3257. Cable: DAILYSTAR DHAKA.

tribals of the area.

ces said.

"We are giving six days to the

According to sources, the

Conference Chairman Moulvi

The crowds responded to the

He said the strike would re-

lifted from Saturday.

Kashmir.

majority state.

drive.

Moulvi Abbas Ansari told

not removed within six days.

Senior Kashmiri Muslim

Mosque, reports AFP.

have long ceased to be worthy of road service. It is suggested that owners of such vehicles would have been punished anywhere in the world were they found using them for commercial service. But we do not seem to learn from comparison and the patent fact seems to be that at present there is an absence of any control whatever of the country's transport in ci-

for unsafe road conditions are noted below. On the Dhaka-Aricha highway which is notorious for frequent accidents. seven bridges and culverts have been found responsible for a good number of accidents in the past. They are reportedly located at Uthli, Mahadevpur, Sutipara, Kalampur, Kelia, Dolivita and Karnapara. There may be other equally dangerous bridges and culverts spread over other roads and highways of the country. But the Roads and Highways Department do not seem to care very much

Another factor is the way manhole covers are placed on the roads. It has been observed that they are placed six inches or so higher or lower than the road surface. Some manhole covers are broken or missing. None seems to bother about the hazards they are posing.

In our country, many of our poverty or resource constraints. But in the matter of maintenance of tolerable road disci-

Kashmiris call off 34-day shutdown

Six-day deadline to withdraw

troops from around Hazratbal

government to remove the BSF.

(Border Security Force) from

Hazratbal, failing which (a

protest) programme would be

given to the people, the 20-year-

old Farooq told the congrega-

If the government resisted,

drastic consequences might

emerge, he said. Today's an-

nouncement set the stage for

the return of normalcy, at least

for a week, in the Kashmir val-

ley, which has remained paral-

ysed since troops ringed the

Hazratbal shrine on the night of

October 15 to flush out armed

Tuesday when 65 Muslim gun-

men and pilgrims gave them-

selves up to authorities.

The Hazratbal siege ended

But the strike continued,

with Muslim leaders demanding

the dismantling of security

bunkers set up outside each of

KHULNA, Nov 19: Govern-

ment policy was blamed for

heavy losses in the country's

lone newsprint manufacturing

plant and rendering its opera-

Mills (KNM) was given to the

BCIC in 1975, its accumulated

losses have mounted to Tk 92

crore, including Tk 14.82 crore

incurred in the last financial

7.693 for a ton of furnace oil

when it is sold to private mills

and factories at Tk 4,779 per

ton and exported at Tk 2,500 to

3,500," Abdur Rashid, General

Manager for quality control of

consumes 55,000 tons of fur-

nace oil which constitutes more

than 40 per cent of the produc-

tion cost. "We could easily wipe

out the losses if we get furnace

oil at the price paid by the pri-

wood has been raised manifold

over the years - from six paisa

per cubic feet in June 1991 to

Tk 12 now - by the Forest

Ministry," said the General

Sundarbans where it grows in

abundance without any effort,

gewa wood constitutes 82 per

for making pulp. Gewa is unfit

for any other use, not even for

fuel, as it emits poisonous

basic raw materials available at

"You are raising prices of

cent of the basic raw materials

Procured from the

"Besides, royalty for gewa

He said the KNM annually

"We are made to pay Tk

Since the Khulna Newsprint

tion uneconomic.

year (1992-93).

the KNM, told UNB.

vate mills.

**Editor: Mahfuz Anam** 

Published by Mediaworld Ltd. 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

and printed at City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-

1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11,

Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4.

Advertisement: 500091 (Direct). Fax No: 88-02-863035. GPO

pline, there are certain things which can be achieved without much financial implications. such as ensuring that none who is not properly trained or holder of fake licence drives a vehicle. prompt punishment for violation of traffic rules and preventing issue of fitness certificates to defective vehicles.

Hence it is widely believed that accidents which have become so frequent are the end result of a system that has ostensibly collapsed and it is felt that the collapse is due to unconscionable negligence, indifference and equally questionable relaxation on the part of those in charge of the system. People hope that the authorities concerned would soon realise , this and take prompt corrective

A lot has already been said through the print media about the poor state of maintenance of the city bazars. Yet the sad fact is that very little improvement is noticeable in most of the bazars. Some sections of the bazars, particularly those dealthat clearance of garbage is done regularly and promptly. In this behalf, there is much scope for improvement.

Meanwhile. The Managing Director of the CUFL Dr Shafiqur Rahman, expressed his confidence over the success of the DAP plant. He also said that the CUFL had made a profit of TK. 23.55 crore last

From Page 1 Col 8

Toll collectors allegedly beat with the help of local police. Straj received serious head injury when the Nayek at Tara

Later, the agitated transport workers of the route assembled at Tara Bridge, beat up the toll collectors and set fire to the toll collectors' rooms. They also blocked the highway for about two and a half hours by putting

but riot police was deployed in

## Hasina

dence on others."

Hasina arrived on a Bangladesh Biman flight at

The AL leader landed at the airport accompanied by AL advisor SAMS Kibria, Abul Hasan

the press briefing.

Television.

jointly declared that the relationship between the two parties (CCP and AL) will continue to be strengthened in the days to come", she told he newsmen.

promised to maintain unity and cooperation in the fields of Politics, socio-economy and cuf-

Minister's recent controversial comment regarding Parliament. the opposition leader said she (PM) is absolutely correct because the Leader of the House and her cabinet colleagues were repeatedly telling lies in the House. "Even, replies to our questions were also untrue." The ruling partymen were now and then making false statements, Hasina alleged.

"The PM's comment has tarnished the sanctity of Parher ignorance.

## Tokyo, says Saifur Japanese Vice Minister for

The roads surrounding the National Stadium in the city

getting a face lift before the ensuing SAF Games, due to

**Positive' response from** 

International Economic Affairs Shoichi Tanaka lauded the economic progress of Bangladesh and assured Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman that Tokyo would send a team to Dhaka soon regarding the cofinancing of the Jamuna Bridge project, reports BSS.

begin Dec 20.

The Japanese Vice Minister was discussing with Rahman Thursday in Tokyo, according to a message received here.

Rahman said that the main purpose of his visit was to discuss the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project which is soon expected to go to the implementation stage. The Finance Minister informed Tanaka that Japan was involved in all stages of negotiations of the project.

Rahman said that he got 'positive response' from the' different ministers he met during the last five days. He also added that he had strongly pleaded to resolve the resettlement issue for which a revised programme has been submitted. The Finance Minister explained the revised plan for resettling those to be affected by the construction of the bridge through acquisition

of their lands. Tanaka said he fully understood the importance of the project. Referring to the excellent relationships existing between Japan and Bangladesh, he said Japan is very familiar with and experienced in many sectors of Bangladesh. Tanáka assured Rahman of sending a team to Dhaka as early as possible.

The Finance Minister also explained the overall economic situation and said the investment climate in Bangladesh would suit Japanese investors. He urged Japanese investors to take advantage of this.

Rahman also met Akira Nishigaki, Chairman OECF, and briefed him on the overall economic situation and the progress made during the last two and a half years of the pre-

The Finance Minister pointed out that the ADB, WB and OECF have equal share and financial responsibility in im-

- Star photo

early as possible. Rahman appreciated the OECF's role and the cooperation received by Bangladesh during the negotiations.

plementing the Jamuna

Multipurpose Bridge Project as

Nishigaki thanked the Finance Minister for visiting Japan and assured the OECF's continued support. He recalled his visit to Bangladesh and said that he is familiar with many institutions of the country because of the OECF's involvement. He lauded the performance of the Bangladesh government and added that he was impressed with the positive economic progress in the

Rahman, who led a sixmember delegation to Japan. left Tokyo yesterday morning for Bangkok enroute to Dhaka after completion of his five-day official visit.

From Page 1 Col 5

least six other officials had been given a month's severance pay with their dismissal, the sources said.

Meanwhile, the extensive reshuffle has affected 18 top bureaucrats, including the heads of several ministries. Gohar Zaman, Director of

the Intelligence Bureau (IB), has been replaced by a senior police official, Noor Leghari. Zaman was appointed by Qureshi, and Leghari served in the IB during Bhutto's first

tenure in 1988-90. The government has re-employed, on a two-year contract, former ambassador Tanvir Ahmed Khan as Ministry Secretary

of Information. Khan, a retired Foreign Secretary, is a career diplomat who held several assignments abroad in addition to serving as

official spokesman in the previ-

ous government.

# The Midnight File

## Nigerians defy ban

LAGOS. Nov 19: Police in Nigeria clashed today with prodemocracy demonstrators defying a tough ban by the General who took power this week and restored full army rule. Police confirmed clashes in one southern city. Democracy campalgners reported unrest and several arrests in two others. "The police fired teargas and many demonstrators were arrested in Aueokuta," a police officer there told Reuters by Telephone.

## Order to halt reprisals on Palestinians

JERUSALEM, Nov 19: Army Chief of Staff General Ehud Barak ordered troops Friday to halt reprisals by settlers on Palestinians a day after reinforcements were sent into the occupied territories, military sources said. Palestinian troublemakers would also be targeted in the crackdown after nearly three weeks of sporadic violence and counter-violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the sources said. Soldiers have been told to hand over to the police any settlers caught breaking the law, reports AFP.

# Effective JS: Khaleda

From Page 1 Cel 3

She said parliamentary democracy had been achieved after a long nine years' struggle. involving immense sacrifices of the people. The responsibility, therefore, devolved on the Jatiya Sangsad for solution national problems. This, she said, was her main emphasis in the November 7 speech, because all problems can be solved through mutual discussions and exchange of views only in the Sangsad.

"We should make full use of our time during the Parliament sessions for solution of problems being faced by those who elected us," she said.

Referring to successful functioning of the Sangsad, the Prime Minister said different parliamentary committees comprising members from the parties represented in Parliament discuss relevant issues for

their people. In reply to a question as to what extent the present politics is centred around the Sangsad. Begum Khaleda Zia said the sovereign Sangsad is an outcome of the people's struggle and elected through a free and fair polls unprecedented in the history of Bangladesh. "We are pledge-bound to solve all national problems in this Sangsad, including issues relating to economic development, poverty alleviation, terrorism and Farakka, which were discussed in this Sangsad in the

"I believe that all significant national problems can be solved under the present democratic system in this Sangsad. In this regard all of us need to come forward to play more constructive roles," she stressed.

"It is not important which party is in power. What is important is the national interest. to which all of us are commit-

Answering a question on a recent commentary of the British Broadcasting Corporation that development of the economy and the infrastructure are being hampered because of frequent hartals and diversion of people's attention to illegally bring down an elected government, the Prime Minister said, it is the evaluation of the present situation by the BBC. She said strong public opinion has been built up against hartals with the change of the political context.

In reply to another question about the 12th session of the Jatiya Sangsad due to begin tomorrow, the Prime Minister

### Water confce From Page 1 Col 4 consensus in the conference, we

may create an institutional framework for the future," he "We may either set up a new

institution to deal with the water related problems or set up a network between the existing institutions in the three countries." Kholiquzzaman added that

in the next international conference on eastern Himalayan waters, which would be held in June or July next year, the convenor of the forum would try to arrange Bhutan's participation.

The last conference on water was held in New Delhi on March 22-23 this year, which stressed the need for inter-country collaboration for proper water management, necessity of empirical studies at the grassroots level in the region and other relevant issues.

## Nayan's death

From Page 1 Col 5

Tania's bedroom at her Tallabagh residence in the city on Tuesday. Their suspicions aroused, police arrested the actress when she went to the police station to inform them about Nayan's death.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, the investigating officer said that they were optimistic about unearthing the mystery very soon. "We are on the right track," the officer said but did not elaborate.

Police are looking for Rassel Rahman, the second husband of Tania, estranged from her for the past two years.

Police also expect the autopsy report by tomorrow.

The CMM placed Tania on three-days' police remand for interrogation.

expressed the hope that like the previous ones, the coming session would be quite lively. She appealed to the members of the Sangsad to play a constructive role in the coming session and make effective contribution in running the affairs of the state.

Answering a question on her coming visit to Nepal from November 22 and her agenda for discussions with the Nepalese Prime Minister, Begum Zia said bilateral and regional issues will be discussed during her visit as Chairperson of the SAARC. She said the issues relating to increased trade between the two countries will find much importance.

Relevant issues of interest to the SAARC, like poverty allevia tion and greater regional cooperation, will be discussed with the Prime Minister of Nepal. She said she will also address the concluding session of the SAARC ministerial conference on health and family planning. Besides, she will visit the SAARC Secretariat to evaluate various issues concerning regional development in the SAARC countries.

## 'Agantuk' wins Shantaram award

BOMBAY, Nov 19: Satyajit Ray's 'Agantuk' and ace director Mani Ratnam have bagged the first 'Shantaram' Award for best film and best director respectively, reports PTI.

The awards, instituted by the V Shantaram Motion Picture Scientific Research and Cultural Foundation in memory of late V Shantaram, were given away by the Maharashtra Governor, Dr P C Alexandar at a star-studded function here last

The Shantaram gold award for best film carries a cash prize of Rs 40,000 and a trophy, while the gold award for the best director includes Rs 60,000 and a trophy.

The silver award for the best film went to Tamil film 'Roja' (Rs 20,000 and a trophy), while the Bengali film 'Swet Patharer Thala' got the bronze award (a trophy and Rs 10,000) for the third best film.

### Carrying of arms From Page 1 Col 4

the Green Road crossing, from the Shyamoli Cinema Hall of the Mirpur Road to Road Number 1 (Old-27) of Dhanmondi crossing, Agargaon Link Road, from Agargaon Link Road to Parjatan crossing via the Rokeya Sarani and the Bijoy Sarani, from the eastern side of the Indira Road to western side of the Manik Mia Avenue, protected area of the Jativa Sangsad Bhaban and all roads and by-lanes within this area.

The prohibition order shall be in force till the 12th session of the Jatiya Sangsad contin-

## CHT issue From Page 1 Col 4

But surprisingly enough, the government had played both the cards at the same time, confounding the issue, analysts

Besides, as the present democratic government, from its very inception, made an open announcement of finding out a peaceful solution across the discussion table with the Shantibahini eyeing their issue from a political angle, the declaration of a fresh general amnesty seems redundant, according to observers.

So far, according to official sources, a total of 2849 tribal insurgents surrendered to the government taking advantage of the five general amnesties declared between 1983 and 1991.

Among them, 281 armed rebels belonging to the Priti group - a rival faction among Shantibahini - surrendered en masse on June 29, 1985, sources said.

Meanwhile, the government has set November 24 as the date for holding the sixth round of peacetalks with Shantibahini leaders, who sit at the negotiating table under the banner of the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Parishad, the political umbrella of the outlawed Shantibahini insurgents.

Somali Warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed (L) seen at his first public appearance since June during a rally Thursday on the 21 October Road in Mogadishu. His speech was interspersed with brief songs by papular female vocalist, Halima Khalif Magol (2nd R). - AFP photo

### the roads and highways have turned into death traps for passengers making journeys along them and the engines of death include buses, trucks and more particularly the drivers of these killer vehicles. If the organs of administrative hierarchy in charge of public transport had been serious, they would have taken prompt remedial action in respect of the readily identifiable causes of road accidents. such as, ill-trained drivers, carriage of excessive load of luggage and passengers, grant of

and negligence in the enforcement of such rules. As a result, the situation has ing and killing has become freefor-all. Some sources on the basis of pragmatic indications hold the view that at least 20 to

problems are sought to be sidetracked on account of our

ing in fish, poultry and meat stand out for their squalid conditions. Perhaps part of the blame rests on the vendors who do business at these sites. Their slovenly way of doing business cause the accumulation of sludge and garbage all around, making passage along their stalls an uneasy experience. Such careless vendors med be disciplined by the municipal staff who should also ensure

the eight entry points to the

the outskirts of Srinagar.

Hazratbal mosque, located on

Muslims flocked to Friday

prayers at Kashmir's biggest

mosque for the first time since

the start of a month-long army

siege at the nearby Hazratbal

poured into Srinagar's central

Jamia Masjid for the first Friday

prayers since October 15, when

troops trapped about 80 civil-

ians and armed Kashmiri mili-

tants inside the Hazratbal

mha Rao denied any deal had

been done to end the standoff.

But militant and official sources

said some compromise had

been reached which would

probably ensure freedom for

home but not allowing us to

proportionately raise the price

of newsprint fearing it will

evoke sharp reaction from the

press which is the main con-

sumer," said the General

Manager who was in-charge of

mills if he were given its owner-

ship, the General Manager

smiled. "I'll certainly not sell my

product below the cost price.

Secondly, I'll endeavour to bring

down the per unit cost by en-

forcing discipline among the

workers and employees," said

Abdur Rashid, a chemist who

started his career in the

Security Printing Press in

the Canadians at Khalishpur at

a cost of Tk 74.47 crore, still

maintains the initial production

capacity of about 50 lakh tons

of newsprint, mechanical print,

book print, blue match paper

and coloured paper. It is

manned by 2,227 people - 182

officers, 588 employees and

The KNM, built in 1958 by

Karachi in the early 50s.

Asked how he would run the

the mills last week.

most of the militants.

KNM has incurred loss

of Tk 92cr since '75

Prime Minister PV Narasi-

At least 15,000 people

Earlier, thousands of

cies pursued by all the post-1975 governments, the opposition leader said: "They all tried to take credit by begging from the donors. But we want a selfreliant Bangladesh and will work to lessen country's depen-

Replying to reporter, Hasina believed her visit to China would bear a tremendous impact on national politics. In this context, she said "Our foreign policy is friendship to all and enmity to none, which was introduced by the government of

same foreign policy and the renewed friendship between the CCP and the AL would contribute a lot in this regard," she

8:54 pm. Most of the AL central leaders and hundreds of workers of the party's front organisa-

Choudhury, MP and International Affairs Secretary of the party, and her daughter, Saima Wazed.

Narrating her dialogue with a leading CCP leader, Hu Jintao, the opposition leader said: "Our discussions were very fruitful and the occasion was covered by Beijing

She further said: "We also

Reacting to the Prime

From Page 1 Col 7 The experts said that the would bring a positive impact

on economic factors of the

## 10 hurt

as toll instead of Tk. 15 up the bus driver and helper police camp struck him with the butt of a rifle.

up barricades.

The situation was normal the area.

From Page 1 Col 7 scope to learn from China", she Hasina assured that if voted

to power, her party would bring about more reforms to push the country towards rapid economic growth.

Regarding the economic poli-

Bangabandhu. "We will also be following the

tions received her with bou-

The Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka was also present, during

"We (Hasina and Jintao)

tural affairs".

liament", the opposition leader said, adding that when the Leader of the House herself tells lies then it proves nothing but

1,457 workers - to operate round the clock. "I organise meetings and look after the welfare of the workers," replied a CBA leader of the mills without any hesitation. He never attends his duties as a mechanic. More than 50 labour leaders of the past and the present CBA go in his style, said an officer.

Labour leaders, usually backed by political parties, are almost immune to any disciplinary action and wield powers almost like those of a director of the mills. "Labour laws must be

changed to restore discipline among the workers, not only for the sake of the existing mills but for promoting rapid growth of industry in the country," the official emphasised.

## Ctg Fertiliser proposed DAP project at the CUFL is technically suitable and financially and economically viable. Moreover, the investment for the DAP plant