

6 killed, 32 hurt in road accidents

Six people were killed and 32 others injured in road accidents in Narayanganj and Sirajganj yesterday, reports UNB.

Four people were killed and 30 injured when a truck collided head-on with a minibus near Bagbari in Aradhazara thana on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway yesterday.

The Narsingdi-bound minibus from Narayanganj and the truck coming from the opposite direction plunged into a roadside ditch after the collision at about 9.30 am.

The dead were identified as Ayub Ali, 40, a primary school teacher and his son Tanzid, 10, of Rajbari district, Nasiruddin, 38, of Kumarpur and Salim, 38, driver of the minibus of Kowdipara in Narsingdi Sadar thana.

The bodies were sent to Narayanganj Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Of the injured, 8 were undergoing treatment at the Narsingdi Sadar Hospital and 10 shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The rest were given first aid.

Police seized both the vehicles but the truck driver fled the scene immediately after the accident.

Another accident near Fafullah on the Dhaka-Narayanganj road left at least 20 people injured early yesterday.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus fell into a wayside ditch after colliding with a potato laden truck.

Two cases were lodged with the Aradhazara and the Fafullah Police Stations.

Meanwhile, Two people were killed and two others injured when a speeding micro bus hit a rickshaw van near Bhadrachhat in Kamarkhand thana on the Sirajganj-New Bogra Road in Sirajganj yesterday.

The van driver aged about 28 died on the spot while one of its passengers aged about 30 succumbed to his injuries on the way to the Rajganj General Hospital.

One of the injured was admitted to the Sirajganj General Hospital, police said.

Police seized the micro bus and arrested its driver.

Huda cautions against unguarded remarks

Information Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday warned that any threat to dislodge the elected government or tarnish its image in the name of agitation was a punishable offence under Section 124 (A) of the Bangladesh Penal Code, reports BSS.

If any citizen files a case in this connection the guilty persons will have to suffer life imprisonment, he said.

The minister was speaking as chief guest at a gathering of students and the public at Shahzadpur Bazar under Gulshan-1 in the city.

The meeting was also addressed by Kamrul Islam MP, Amanullah Aman MP, and Chhatra Dal leaders Nazimuddin Alam, Nasiruddin Ahmed Piro, Saiful Alam Nirob, Aliul Haq Shaheen and ward commissioner Anwar Hossain.

Huda said the country has a Constitution, laws and the rule of law. State affairs were being conducted in accordance with the Constitution. Hence, as per laws of the land, nothing could be said or written against any legal government which could belittle its position before the people and turn it into an object of hatred, he added.

He said a legal and constitutional government was now running affairs of the state. The government now in power, elected for a five-year term, reflected the will of the people, demonstrated in a free and fair election held in 1991.

Nazmul Huda said every worker and leader of the opposition parties from now on should be careful that even if a street beggar files a case against someone for uttering or writing such words which incite hatred or malice towards the legal government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia or create tension, he or she may have to face imprisonment for life.

The information minister requested the leaders and workers of the opposition parties to read Section 124 (A) of the Penal Code of Bangladesh. He also advised the journalists to read the code.

"Because you, too, could also come under this law through your writings on the activities of the Opposition,"

Huda said there is a constitutional provision regarding accountability of the government under the present parliamentary system. The activities of the government could be condemned or criticised only on the floor of the Jatiya Sangsad. The Opposition has been given the right to bring allegations or say anything criticising or condemning the government only within the premises of the Sangsad.

A legal government, he said, could be criticised freely for its activities only in the Jatiya Sangsad where Section 124 (A) of the Penal Code was not applicable.



Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas speaks to the press during her news conference in Stockholm Wednesday, confirming that controversial Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen arrived in Sweden and is resting at an undisclosed place. — AFP photo

Taslima

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The Swedish security police said it knew where Taslima Nasreen was staying but would give no details about her security.

The Swedish government has welcomed Nasreen and Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas said it was up to Nasreen to decide whether to apply for political asylum. Her tourist visa is valid for up to three months.

Taslima Nasreen has also been invited to a writers' conference next month in Norway, which has said it would consider giving her asylum.

"She is welcome to stay here for as long as she wants. But she has said that she does not want to leave her country forever," Gabi Gleichmann, Chairman of Sweden's PEN club, said in a TV interview on Thursday.

Court stops release of film on Rajiv

NEW DELHI, Aug 11: An Indian court has barred the release of a movie on the murder of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi after the government said it could glorify a militant group, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said today, reports Reuter.

PTI said a court in the southern city of Madras stopped the release of the Tamil language film, pending another hearing.

The court's order followed a complaint from the government's Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), which under Indian law has to approve films for public viewing.

PTI quoted the CBFC as saying the movie should not be released as it could 'eulogise' the activities of the Sri Lankan separatist group, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), while trying to depict the assassination details.

Hospital

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said, "Administrative approval for this is already at hand."

It is expected that equipment worth about Tk two crore will arrive by the end of this month to facilitate by-pass surgery. Infrastructure for setting up the machines will be completed by September, Prof Akhtaruzzaman told The Daily Star.

Local surgeons will be trained to perform by-pass operations and for this experts will be brought from abroad.

When his attention was drawn to the water crisis at the hospital, the Director said the authorities will install new water pumps and a power generator that has already been purchased.

The NICVD Director, however, expressed the hope that the overall service at the hospital will improve soon because the Health Ministry is showing keen interest in their regard.

"The Health Minister has personally shown interest in upgrading the hospital into a modern one," he said.

US links delivery of F-16s to Pak N-programme

WASHINGTON, Aug 11: Washington is still willing to deliver 38 F-16 fighter planes that Pakistan has already paid for if Islamabad agrees to abandon its nuclear programme, a State Department spokesman said on Wednesday, reports AFP.

He said the two sides were still discussing the issue, and that one possible resolution would be "a Pakistani decision to meet some of our non-proliferation concerns in a way that would make it possible to deliver the aircraft."

Tungipara

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Addressing the people, emotion-choked but resolute Hasina called for upholding the spirit of liberation war and consolidation of the country's independence and sovereignty.

Our Correspondent adds: Terming the ruling party 'betrayers' Hasina said the BNP had failed to fulfil its pre-election pledges including repeal of the Indemnity Act.

The Act prevents the trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujib.

"Bangabandhu was murdered to jeopardise the hard-won independence, she said.

Demanding immediate repeal of the Act she said the BNP was patronising communal and fundamentalist elements against pro-liberation and democratic forces to divert the movement for care taker government.

South African diplomat

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have been removed through legislation. But since it has prevailed for such a long time and is an old legacy, it is naturally going to take time for discrimination to disappear totally."

Explaining the residual effects of apartheid, he said, it is a fact that the black population had been deprived of their basic rights like education, housing, health care, etc. all along. The blacks, therefore, need time to be educated and develop their skills for becoming gainfully employed.

"Expectations among the black population are very high and they are looking for tangible results in all sectors," he said.

Zaayman stated that the entire thrust of the Government of National Unity is towards improving the educational standard, eradication of poverty and uplift of the disadvantaged sections of society.

The focus of the government is now on a national programme termed 'Reconstitution and Development Programme' popularly called RDP.

The government of Nelson Mandela is now seriously engaged in providing housing, education, water supply, health service and job creation through the RDP.

He said that the National Unity government has done remarkably well and is about to complete its first 100 days in office shortly.

The government, which is presently functioning under an interim constitution, is a coalition of three major parties. It is a combination of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) and FW de Klerk's National Front and another party called the Inkatha Freedom Party of the

highest votes in the last elections. However, three other parties that secured five per cent of the votes cast are represented in the parliament.

The entire national obsession was towards motivation in job creation and Zaayman observed that the present percentage of unemployed is in the range of 40 to 45 per cent.

The government was taking initiatives for formative action to increase employment by emphasising on the public sector.

John H Zaayman, who has an American wife, said, "Our entire diplomacy is now geared towards improving our domestic conditions. We have lost a lot of time (because of isolation) and we want to move fast, burying all the racial prejudices of the past."

He observed that the minority white population which comprises around 25 per cent, has accepted the reality and the need for consensus and unity.

We want to be a showpiece to the world by reconciling divergent groups despite their past bitterness and differences and want to move forward together."

Dhaka not serious about Bihar's return: Nasim Khan

Mohammad Nasim Khan, the leader of the stranded Pakistanis, yesterday said he believed 'Bangladesh is sincere but not serious' about the repatriation of nearly 2.20 lakh Biharis stuck up in Bangladesh for the last 22 years, reports UNB.

He also expressed his dismay over the daily of successive governments in Pakistan in taking back their citizens who have been languishing for years in uncertainty and poverty.

Nasim Khan questioned why the repatriation of his compatriots was not taking place as promised and expected when funds are there, and we have been told that even some flats have been built in Pakistan to lodge these people when they go back."

"Our expectation is not much... all that we want is to go back. We can find out our means of living once we return. But it has proved too long a wait," Nasim Khan told a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

DU situation

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tivists following the publication of a poster by the BCL (M-I) Wednesday last.

Meanwhile, the employees of Dhaka University observed a day-long strike yesterday to protest the alleged assault on Bazlur Rahman, an employee of the Arts Faculty Dean office, during the August 4 violence.

All the administrative offices remained closed. However, classes in some departments were held.

The police and Detective Branch personnel were seen active on the campus yesterday.

Rao to greet

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sponded to the JPC's findings with an "action taken report" which rejected some of the committee's key recommendations.

"Some party MPs proposed that we resign over the issue, others have opposed the idea," Vajpayee told Reuters. "We are keeping the issue in abeyance."

Vajpayee said he had discussed ways to end the stalemate with Rao last week but had found him unresponsive.

"He said there was no way of a compromise. He would not withdraw the action taken report. We would not accept anything short of withdrawal," Vajpayee said.

Japan studying feasibility of industrial city in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Aug 11: Itaru Nae, leader of the visiting 13-member Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA) said here today that the delegation was studying the feasibility of establishing an industrial city on the other side of the river Karnaphuli here, reports BSS.

Construction of a tunnel for linking the proposed industrial city with the Chittagong city and technical cooperation for the same are also included in the study, he added.

Itaru said this at a meeting with the Chittagong City Corporation Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury at the latter's office here. Director of the Board of Investment A N S Mahmud, honorary consul of Japan in Chittagong Nurul Islam and chief engineer of the city corporation were also present at the meeting.

The Midnight File

PLO official meets foreign diplomats

JERUSALEM, Aug 11: Challenging Israeli attempts to limit Palestinian political activity in Jerusalem, a leading PLO official summoned 15 foreign diplomats for meetings here on Thursday. "We believe the issue of Jerusalem has not been solved, and we will continue to receive visitors here," said Faisal Hussein, the PLO official responsible for Jerusalem affairs. The incident came as rhetoric over Jerusalem is increasing. Israel's police minister on Wednesday accused the PLO of running an illegal police force at Orient House, the PLO headquarters in east Jerusalem, reports AP.

Emergency in Chechnya

BROZNY, Russia, Aug 11: The defiant President of Chechnya declared a state of emergency Thursday and vowed to wage a 'holy war' if Russia tries to invade the breakaway region in southern Russia's Caucasus Mountains. President Dzhokhar Dudayev also gave a mobilisation order that applies to all men able to carry weapons. The ITAR-Tass news agency said, quoting an aide to the president in the Chechen capital, Grozny, reports AP.

Privatisation of sugar mills

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The workers and their families have also restricted entry of vehicles into the area. Any unidentified persons faces interrogation by the workers.

Some leaders of the mills workers who, along with the leaders of the Panchagarh Sugar Mills came to Dhaka to demonstrate against the submission of tenders on July 30, told The Daily Star that they are not against privatisation, per se. But the manner of disinvestment is not quite acceptable to them, they said and added that there should be adequate incentives and compensation packages for the staff of the privatised sugar mills for enabling them to employ themselves otherwise.

But unfortunately, the amount previously offered to individual staff for accepting voluntary retirement has been reduced substantially at a later stage, they said, adding that the 'golden handshake' no longer seemed attractive.

Officials at the Privatisation Board do not, however, consider the labour problem as great as the problem with such poor response from the private sector entrepreneurs.

According to an official of the Board, resistance from the employees would not so militant once some of the mills are handed over to the private owners.

BSFC officials feel that besides the rifle rumours about the alleged obsolescence of the machinery of some of the mills, exaggerated reports of problems with regard to managing a large number of sugarcane growers as well as the apprehension of resistance from the employees and the local people have also discouraged the private entrepreneurs.

Most of the sugar mills are located in the rural areas and no individual owner can dare to operate the mills with a large section of hostile people around, an official of the BSFC said.

Another official said that the Prime Minister's recent assurance to the sugar mills workers not to disinvest any profitable mills may also affect the process of privatisations.

However, neither the Privatisation Board nor the BSFC has received any instructions regarding the PM's conditional commitment to the workers' representatives.

Sarajevo

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the area have extended into a 20-kilometer weapons exclusion zone around Sarajevo.

On Wednesday, the UN commander in Bosnia, Lt Gen Sir Michael Rose, warned both sides that NATO air strikes were a possibility if flagrant violations of the UN mandated zone continued.

Government forces have been mounting an offensive along part of the front north of Sarajevo, apparently seeking control of a strategic road that eventually could serve as an access route into the capital.

Annikk said, however, that it was not clear whether the Bosnian army troops or Serb reinforcements were intended for attack or defense. The Bosnian army confirmed its troop movements but gave no details.

Reuter from Washington adds: President Clinton has told congress he intends to ask the United Nations by the end of October to lift the Bosnia arms embargo if Bosnian Serbs do not accept a new peace proposal.

"If by October 15 the Bosnian Serbs have not accepted the contact group's proposal of July 6, 1994, it would be my intention within two weeks to introduce formally and support a resolution at the UN Security Council to terminate the arms embargo," Clinton said in a letter.

Clinton sent the letter to Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn, a Georgia democrat, to support a congressional compromise that would urge but not require him to seek UN lifting of the embargo by the end of October if Bosnian Serbs do not accept the proposal.

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