

9 killed, 78 hurt in 5 road accidents

From Our Correspondent

Nine people were killed and 78 injured in road accidents in Chuadanga, Sylhet, Kishoreganj, Comilla and Tongi yesterday.

Our Chuadanga Correspondent reports: At least three persons were killed and 32 injured when a bus fell into a roadside ditch near Boalmari Shishu Bagan yesterday morning.

The dead were identified as Abdur Rakib, 17, Kazi Munir Rashid, 40, and bus helper Abdul Berek. The injured were admitted to the Chuadanga Sadar Hospital.

The accident occurred at around 8 am as the driver of the bus lost control of the vehicle while trying to save a cow that was crossing the road.

The bus was going to Chuadanga from Alamdanga. However, the driver fled the scene soon after the accident.

Our Sylhet Correspondent says: One person was killed and 20 others were injured in a road accident on the Derai-Madanpur road in Sunamganj district when a passenger bus and a tempo collided near Derai thana headquarters yesterday.

Alli Newaj, 20, helper of the tempo died on the spot while the bus driver and 19 others received injuries.

Police sent the body to the Sunamganj sadar hospital for autopsy.

UNB from Kishoreganj adds: A young woman was killed and 26 people were injured, six seriously, when a passenger bus fell into a roadside ditch at Bishwa road Khilpara Bazar in sadar thana yesterday afternoon.

Police and witnesses said the speeding Husseinpur-bound local bus from Dhaka fell into a ten feet ditch. Nazma Akhtar (20) died on the spot.

The body was sent to sadar hospital for autopsy.



Hawkers demonstrated in the city yesterday protesting their eviction from Gulistan area. — Star photo

BGMEA seeks financial help on priority basis

Redwan Ahmed, president Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has reiterated the need for extending financial assistance on priority basis to the export oriented garments industry.

In a statement issued in the city last night he said that the government and the other authorities had already been apprised of the losses caused in this sector and specific financial proposals including granting of working capital loan have also been submitted in order to restart operation of the affected garments factories.

Referring to the comments published in different newspapers about extending loans to all garments factories without exception or possible roles of the government and the banking sector in this regard, he clarified that the proposed financial assistance would be determined on the basis of feasibility study and certainly on bank-customer relationship.

But it was desirable that the proposed financial assistance would have to be liberal and on easy terms in consideration of the gravity of the situation, he added.

He emphatically stated that expeditious financial assistance to those factories affected during the recent political unrest, not all the garments factories in general, could satisfy the need of the hour.

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Synthetics serious threat to jute products: IJO

Synthetics will remain a serious threat to jute products at least in the medium term due to vast overcapacity in the manufacturing of polypropylene polymer and prevailing low oil prices, reports UNB.

The warning came in the latest assessment by the International Jute Organisation (IJO) on competitive position of jute vis-a-vis synthetics.

Impost of polymer products have risen sharply in both the developed and the developing countries since the mid eighties as a result of lower rates of synthetics.

Consequently, the price competitiveness of jute waned in the United States and Japan, particularly in the area of carpet backing in the US.

According to the IJO, excess capacity of polymer is likely to persist over the next few years despite attempts for rationalisation.

The British High Commission in Dhaka and the British Council, in collaboration with DCCI, will jointly operate the centre.

The centre has been equipped with funds provided by the Southern Asia Advisory Group of the UK's Department of Trade and Industry and the DCCI, said a press release.

Dr Kamal, stressed the need for recovering illegal arms. Dr Kamal said the political parties should give commitment to the people that they would not provide shelter to any arms holders and would not use muscle power during the polls.

The Gano Forum leader urged the Chief Adviser of the caretaker government to launch a massive and effective arms recovery drive for an impartial election.

He suggested that the political parties refrain from nominating black money holders for the coming election and from using religious sentiment of the people in their polls campaign for the sake of a free and impartial vote.

The election should be totally free from the influence of black money and muscle power," he said and regretted that the arms recovery in last 21 days was not satisfactory.

He alleged that the black money holders and the corrupt are conspiring to vitiate the peaceful election environment and urged the people to build up resistance against them.

The Midnight File

Gunmen kill 20 villagers in southern Burundi

NAIROBI, Apr 21: Armed gunmen killed 20 villagers, many of them women and children, and set several homes on fire in southern Burundi, Burundi's radio said today, reports AP.

Raphel proposes Indo-Pak talks after Lok Sabha polls

ISLAMABAD, Apr 21: A senior US official advised arch-enemies India and Pakistan to hold talks of resolve their differences after a new government takes office in New Delhi following the coming elections, reports Reuter.

"I think that provides a good opportunity for India and Pakistan to wipe the slate clean and turn over a new page," Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robin Raphel told reporters in Islamabad after a four-day trip to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

She said she thought it would be good opportunity for Pakistan to make a gesture to a new Indian government, which will take office after the April-May election.

The two sides should "finally get down to what they should have been doing a lot more regularly in recent years" and talk over issues dividing them, including the long-standing dispute over the Himalayan region of Kashmir, she said.

"It really troubles us, and I know it troubles the Indians and Pakistanis as well, that there has not been an official dialogue at any significant level in recent years," Raphel said.

She said it was the responsibility of both India and Pakistan, rather than a third country, to sort out their problems.

But she said, "we have already said and, we mean it, that we are willing to make an extra effort to be helpful if we can."

Washington has said in the past it can mediate in the Kashmir dispute if both sides agreed. Pakistan has accepted and India has rejected such mediation.

1396 cases filed for violation of traffic rules

On the first day of the Traffic Awareness Drive 1996 in Dhaka city, the police yesterday filed 1,396 cases for violation of traffic rules, reports BSS.

Cases were filed against 60 trucks, 169 buses, 130 mini buses, 78 microbuses, 198 cars, 120 motor bike, 407 auto-rickshaws, 96 rickshaws and other types of transports, according to a police press release.

BCIC to be set up at DCCI bldg tomorrow

A British Commercial Information Centre (BCIC) will be set up in the capital to provide Bangladeshi firms and businessmen with information on conducting business with Britain, reports UNB.

British High Commissioner Peter J. Fowler will formally open the centre at the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) building tomorrow at 9:30 am.

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Himachal governor quits over housing scam

NEW DELHI, Apr 21: A state governor resigned today following her indictment by the Supreme Court for alleged involvement in a housing scam, reports AP.

President Shankar Dayal Sharma also suggested that Sheila Kaul, the governor of northern Himachal Pradesh state, resign and face investigation.

Mrs Kaul sent her resignation to President Sharma, United News of India said. She was the Housing Minister in the federal government before she became the state governor last year.

The housing scam could further discredit Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's government which already is reeling from a major 27 million dollars bribery scandal, ahead of a national election that begins next week.

Ten federal government officials, including two of her former aides, have been jailed without bond on suspicion of taking up to 50,000 rupees (1,400 dollars) from each of the 8,000 government employees who got apartments ahead of many other workers, news reports said.

India's constitution says state governors are immune from prosecution while in office. But they can be removed by the country's president.

The federal police is preparing to question Kaul, about allegations that she accepted bribes to rent them government-subsidised houses.

Delhi hotel blast toll rises to 17

NEW DELHI, Apr 21: Indian police launched an investigation today into an overnight bomb blast which destroyed a hotel in the heart of New Delhi and killed 17 people, including two French nationals and four Nigerian tourists, reports AFP.

A Kashmiri Muslim guerrilla group and a Sikh separatist organisation from the state of Punjab jointly claimed responsibility for the Saturday night bombing in the Indian capital's popular tourist district of Paharganj.

Hospital sources said 40 others, including an unspecified number of overseas tourists from countries such as Britain, Iran and the United States were injured when the four-storey Arjun guest house collapsed following the blast.

The previously unknown Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Harkat-ul-Mujahideen separatist group and the Sikh Khalistan Liberation Force jointly claimed responsibility in a statement issued in the Kashmir summer capital of Srinagar.

"We destroyed the hotel with a remote-control bomb as many anti-Kashmiri movement people were residing (there)," the Urdu-language statement said.

Gano Forum delegation led by Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Major Gen (rtd) Khalilur Rahman suggested holding of the elections in the third week of June and a strict code of conduct. Specifically, they suggested that the fine of Tk 5000 for irregularities by a candidate should be replaced with cancellation of candidature if one is found guilty of irregularities, newsmen were told.

Corruption at Ctg Art College alleged

Some students of Chittagong Government Art College at a press conference in the city yesterday demanded immediate removal of its Principal for her alleged involvement in corruption, reports UNB.

Addressing the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, Iqbal Hossain, a student of the college also demanded increased number of teachers and immediate solution of its hostel and academic problems.

He alleged that the Principal, Shamsunnahar AL, misappropriated the college fund and transferred two of its teachers for protesting her illegal activities.

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SKOP demonstrates in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 21: The Pramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) has demonstrated in front of the Deputy Commissioner's residence demanding immediate reopening of Sirajganj Spinning Mills and payment of outstanding salaries of the mill workers, reports UNB.

The demonstrators on Saturday night also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner to press the demands.

Earlier, the workers brought out a procession and paraded different streets in the town.

A gang of ten to twelve dacoits attacked the house of Abdur Rajaque at Hatimbag of Sylhet town. They entered the house by breaking the grills and snatched ten tolas of gold ornament, Taka 50 thousand in cash and other valuables.

The dacoits also beat up the members of the family. At one stage, they stabbed the house owner as he tried to resist.

However, they managed to make good their escape alongwith the booty. A case has been started. No arrest has yet been reported, police said.

Contractor rescued him and sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries yesterday morning.

Ground water level in N-dists falls to 70 ft, experts say

Ground water level in most parts of the country is depleting rapidly causing severe threat to crop production and climatic systems, water experts have said.

"Our statistics show that over the years the ground water level is constantly depleting with the gradual increase in its daily use both in Bangladesh and the upper riparian areas in neighbouring India, said the experts.

Director of Ground Water Circle of Water Development Board (WDB) Mizanur Rahman told BSS that even in monsoon, when the ground water level was supposed to be recharged in natural process, no change was reflected in the ground water chart, particularly in the Dhaka city and other major urban areas.

Hasina

Bangalees and translate into reality the dream for a 'Sonar Bangla' cherished by the father of the nation.

She said Bangabandhu had championed the cause of Bangalees' political freedom and had also taken up some programmes for economic uplift. "But it's our biggest misfortune that he was killed and afterwards all successive governments over the last 20 years played with the fate of our downtrodden people."

Hasina alleged that the BNP, with an alleged that ulterior motive to politicise the whole administration, had ruled the country in an autocratic manner over the last five years.

She also reiterated her party's demands for updating the voters' list, expediting the illegal arms recovery drive and cancelling the arms licences issued during BNP rule.

"Even today, we got some information from northern region that voters' registration forms were yet to reach some of the remote areas there and I don't know how far the Election Commission will be able to update the voters' list within its time limit," Hasina said.

With city AL president and Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mohammad Hanif in the chair, the function was also addressed by AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, Joint Secretary Abdul Jalil, president member Abdur Razzak, AL Gulshan thana unit president Tipu Munshi. Asafuddoula and Rahmatullah spoke on behalf of the newcomers.

Hanif said, "we have realised the peoples' franchise after many sacrifices and long movement. Now we all have to work hard for final victory through the ballots in the coming elections."

ঢাকা ওয়াসা জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পানির অপচয় বন্ধ করুন

পানি ব্যবহারে মিতব্যয়ী হউন

অভিযোগ পাওয়া যাচ্ছে যে, নগরীর বিভিন্ন এলাকায় হোজিসমূহে ওয়াসার পানির লাইনে সরাসরি পাম্প বা মটর লাগিয়ে পানি টেনে নিয়ে পার্শ্ববর্তী আবাসসমূহে পানির কৃত্রিম সংকট সৃষ্টি করে প্রতিবেশীদের পরয়োজনীয় পানি হতে বঞ্চিত করা হচ্ছে।

ওয়াসার পানির লাইনে সরাসরি হস্তচালিত পাম্প বা বিদ্যুৎচালিত মটর স্থাপন করা সম্পূর্ণ অবৈধ এবং শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ।

এমতাবস্থায় নগরীর বিভিন্ন হোজিসমূহে অবৈধভাবে সরাসরি ওয়াসার পানির লাইনে স্থাপিত পাম্প বা মটরসমূহ চিহ্নিতকরণের জন্য ঢাকা ওয়াসা এক জরুরী কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করেছে। এ ব্যাপারে শাস্তিমূলক ব্যবস্থা এড়ানোর জন্য সরাসরি পানির লাইনে স্থাপিত পাম্প বা মটরসমূহ অবিলম্বে অপসারণ করার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট গ্রাহক সাধারণকে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

ওয়াসা-জরুরী ৮৮/৯৬

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ওয়াসা ঢাকা ওয়াসা

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