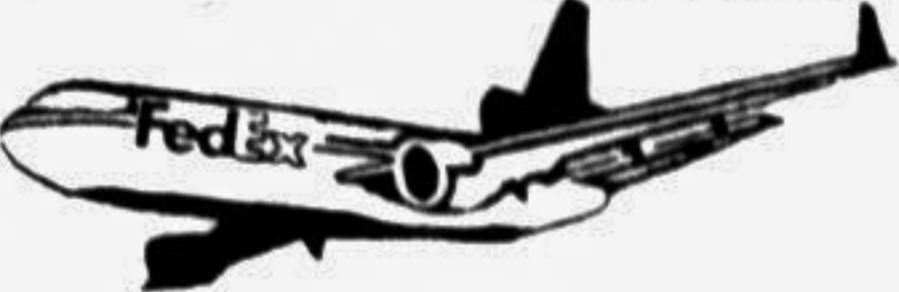


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The World on Time

# 8 killed, 51 injured in road accidents

Eight people were killed and 51 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla and Feni yesterday, reports UNB.

Four passengers were killed and 46 others wounded in a road accident at Sreedharpur in Sadar thana of Comilla district.

The killed are bus driver Badal, 55, Sahajahan, 40, of village Monpur under Kochua thana and Nurul Amin, 30, of village Sowanda of Kochua thana in Chandpur. Abdus Sattar, 45, of village Chaita under Mirzaganj thana in Patuakhali. Survivors said a Chaktili bound passenger coach hit a Dhaka bound bus when it tried to overtake a Kochua bound bus from Dhaka on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at 11 am, leaving 50 passengers injured.

Of the injured, driver Badal died on way to Comilla Medical College Hospital and three others - Sahjahan, Nurul Amin

and Abdus Sattar succumbed to injuries at the hospital.

Police seized the three vehicles but two other bus drivers managed to flee.

Seriously wounded 15 people were sent to Comilla Medical College Hospital, Comilla Sadar Hospital and Comilla Combined Military Hospital.

In Feni, four people were killed and five others injured in a road accident near new Muhuriganj, police said.

The accident occurred when two trucks collided head on at about 10 am on Davaga-Chittagong highway, leaving three people dead and six others wounded.

Of the injured, one person died on way to Feni Sadar Hospital.

One of the dead was identified as Manik Lal, 28. The injured were admitted to Sadar hospital. A case was filed with Feni police.

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# Down to Earth

# Turmoil in Bus and Launch Terminals

By A S M Nurunnabi

A most disconcerting issue is: In whose hands lies the control of the city's bus terminals and transport sector? The issue is undoubtedly a ticklish one on account of the absence of a clear picture of the operating control mechanism. Certain aspects of it, however, appear to be somewhat clear.

It is apparent that the armed elements which keep the terminals under their control are mercenaries who just carry out the command of the upper echelon of the control structure. It is said that the political godfathers aren't the actual wielders of power, for their term of influence ends with the change of political scene. It is widely believed that the real power is held by sections of toll-collecting transport owners and labour leaders. Governments may come and go, but these powerful elements continue to play their roles irrespective of the political changes. As a result, it is alleged that from humble origins, these elements rose to become millionaires.

Some examples are cited of such rapid rise to heights of riches. One leader of a terminal's transport owners' association was said to have been a bus driver; another reportedly started his career as a small shop owner; a third one was said to be an ex-employee of a government department in the beginning. In all such cases,

their strategy has remained the same: when one set of titular political heads of their organisations lose ground, another new set of titular heads with links with political quarters take their place, but the elements who actually are said to wield real clout continue their games of collecting big amounts of toll money to fill their pockets.

It is further alleged that under the aegis of different organisations of transport owners' and labour unions on the national plane, there are more than 500 branches of unions as members of the central bodies, all collections from whom go into the pockets of their leaders, who tenaciously cling to their seats of power as a means of amassing their fortunes.

It is alleged that a part of the Dhaka Road Transport Samity is the most powerful and it controls all the bus terminals of the Dhaka city. There are other allegations that all the five bus terminals of the city have become centres of criminals, leaders of toll collectors and conduits for drug trafficking. There has been emergence of new godfathers with the change of time. Under their aegis, the reign of terrorism, lawlessness, incidence of toll collection and harassment of bus passengers go on unchecked, as set in the past.

According to some knowledgeable sources, more than two

hundred identifiable terrorists and criminals are in control of the five bus terminals of the city. They reportedly act as private cadres of some influential bus owners and leaders of transport workers who are all engaged in the job of illegal exactions of tolls from the operators of transports in the terminals. As a result of the power struggle among different groups of transport workers' organisations, the real casualties appeared to be the absence of orderly environment, breakdown of law and order and mismanagement in the terminals.

A similarly gloomy picture afflicts the Sadarghat launch terminal which is said to have been held hostage by a circle of musclemen. There are prescribed rates of portage, but in most cases they are not followed. Allegations are there that the porters charge much higher than the fixed rates. It was reported that a system of 'contractors' operates at the launch ghat under which the so-called contractors take the lion's share of the collections made by the porters.

As a result of the widespread harassing practices at the city's bus and launch terminals, the passengers are subjected to unbounded suffering without any prospect of relief through effective measures by the authorities concerned.

# Procession in Barguna to protest load shedding

**From Staff Correspondent**  
BARISAL, Sept 19: A hurricane procession was brought out at Barguna this evening protesting continuous load shedding in the town and its adjoining areas.

The Barguna Electricity Consumers Association brought out the procession which was followed by a rally in front of the Barguna Press Club. Speakers at the rally demanded regular supply of electricity, cancelling Barguna with the power supply line of Patuakhali substation. Now, Barguna is connected with the grid line from Barisal.

# Bus service to & from Rajshahi still suspended

**From Our Correspondent**

RAJSHAHI, Sept 19: Bus service between Rajshahi and the rest of the country remained suspended for the third day today.

Rajshahi District Motor Sramik Union had called the strike for an indefinite period following a clash between transport workers and Awami League supporters at Puthia Tuesday last.

The Motor Sramik Union has raised three demands that include arrest of the attackers on transport workers in Puthia, immediate and unconditional release of the two union leaders and safety of the transport workers on roads.

The union leaders also threatened to extend the transport strike all over the northern region of the country if their demands were not met by Monday next.

# People want JP in power: Ershad

Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad yesterday said failure of BNP and Awami League governments proves there is no alternative to his party to run the administration smoothly, reports UNB.

"People now want to see Jatiya Party in power following failure of BNP during its five-year regime and also 14 months' rule of Awami League," he told a meeting with the Jatiya Sramik Party leaders.

The former president said, "BNP could not do a quarter of what the JP government did for the well-being of working class. The present government also didn't take any positive step."

Ershad asked them to highlight the success of his government and take organisational steps to unite the working class for materialising their demands.

JP leaders Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, Nazir Rahman Manzur, Hasanuddin Sarkar and Sramik Party president Shah M Abu Zafar also spoke on the occasion.

# Kibria leaves for HK

# World Bank-IMF board of governors' meet Sept 23-25

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria left Dhaka yesterday to attend annual meeting of the board of governors of World Bank-IMF to be held in Hong Kong from September 23 to 25, reports BSS.

He will lead a seven-member Bangladesh delegation in the meeting, says a PID handout. The members of the delegation included ERD Secretary Dr Mashur Rahman, Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Governor of Bangladesh Bank Lt. Governor Rahman Sarkar, alternate executive director of World Bank Syed Ahmed, commissioner of Bangladesh embassy in Hong Kong Badiuzzaman Khan.

# Train accident kills seven in London

LONDON, Sept 19: Seven people were killed and 150 injured when a high-speed train collided with a freight train in Northwest London before catching fire, rescue services said today, reports AFP.

A London fire brigade spokesman said there was an explosion after the crash at a major rail junction. Four people remained trapped inside the overturned carriages.

Some of the coaches caught fire following the explosion, he added, saying he did not know what caused the blast.

Many of the passengers were MPs and journalists returning to London from Cardiff after Thursday's referendum on Welsh devolution.

# Political showdown

From Page 1

ties came specially following Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad's public announcement that his party had decided to withdraw from the government and was "willing to play the role of a 'truly opposition party'". The JP, one of the partners of the government of Sheikh Hasina, however, is yet to withdraw its secretary general from the cabinet.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister held separate discussions with at least three 'moderate' and left-wing political parties - Gano Forum, Communist Party of Bangladesh and Workers Party - over the last few weeks. Responding to the PM's call to rally round her party against the alleged BNP move to organise the Islamic fundamentalist forces, the parties told the Prime Minister that they would continue to pursue secular and democratic ideals in the coming days. Some leaders attending the meetings with the Premier told this correspondent separately that they were critical of the government for "giving concessions" to the fundamentalist forces from the very start of the government. They also told her that they would continue to speak loudly about sufferings of the people and that they would be doing so independent of BNP influence.

However, a concrete polarisation of the political parties are expected to take shape by next month.

# Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka



Schoolboys and girls picked up brooms, baskets and spades, collecting garbage and visiting homes, to resume the Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka campaign yesterday. They moved from house to house urging residents in the city's Shahjahanpur area to keep their neighbourhoods clean. The Dhaka Railway District Scouts arranged it as part of the campaign launched last year jointly by The Daily Star, Bangladesh Scouts, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and the Directorate of Youth. - Star photo by Anisur Rahman

# Vote-buying case Charges against Rao to be framed Sept 25

NEW DELHI, Sept 19: The trial of former Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao in a vote-buying case was postponed today until next week after lawyers filed an appeal in the Supreme Court, reports Reuter.

Trial court judge Ajit Bharihoke told a packed courtroom: "In view of the formal application for adjournment, the next date for framing of charges is September 25."

An impassive Rao, who faces charges of criminal conspiracy and abetting bribery, sat through the brief court proceedings. Behind him sat three of his former cabinet colleagues and two former chief ministers, all accused of buying votes from a regional party to win a 1993 confidence vote in Parliament. "We have already filed a special

# Vote-buying case

# Charges against Rao to be framed Sept 25

cial leave petition in the Supreme Court, so if the charges were framed today, that petition may become infructuous (not fruitful)," defence counsel Nofar Singh said. The Supreme Court has not yet set a date for hearing the appeal.

Last week the Delhi High Court dismissed an appeal by Rao and ruled there was enough evidence to justify the framing of charges against the former prime minister.

Rao, who launched India's sweeping free-market reforms in 1991 as head of a minority Congress government, has said he is innocent in the case.

The charges of bribery and conspiracy carry a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

Rao, who was accompanied by his special security guards, was asked to appear before the court again on September 25.

# Indian team

**From Page 1**

regulations relating to security and customs. For a smooth operation of services, the proposed agreement calls for easier procedure for checks at a single point, preferably in the no-man's land, by the representatives of agencies concerned in both the countries.

According to a source, one way fare for Dhaka-Calcutta trip has been proposed to be between Tk 400 and Tk 500, and the buses must not be more than four-year old. To make the trips comfortable, the usual 52-seat buses has been proposed to be converted into 40-seaters.

About a dozen agencies have so far sought permission from the Ministry of Communications for operating bus services in Dhaka-Calcutta route to be extended up to Ajmeer, destination for many pilgrims from Bangladesh.

Similar services by Indian companies might take some more time. They source said much of comfort would depend on the road from Petrapole to Calcutta in India, which would have to be improved. It is also learnt that the West Bengal government is taking steps for such improvement.

K R Bhatti, a joint secretary in the Indian ministry of surface transport, will lead his country's five-member team to the two-day talks.

The Indian team also consists of representatives from the state governments of West Bengal and Tripura and the Ministry of External Affairs.

Karar Mahmud Hasan, a joint secretary in the Roads and Highway Division, will lead the eight-member Bangladesh team.

The Bangladesh side will have representatives from the PMO, ministries of Foreign Affairs, Communications, Law and Commerce and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority.

# PM: Teresa

**From Page 1**

1995, the Prime Minister said the Mother went straight to the Dhaka Community Hospital at Malibagh from the airport to see the patients there.

The Prime Minister said during her visit she (Hasina) met Teresa at Tejgaon, the memory of which she still cherishes.

She said that the Mother was due to visit Bangladesh and inaugurate Menon Hospital in Chittagong but could not do so due to sickness. She said that a ward of the Menon Hospital has been named after Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa's whole life was dedicated to the distressed, poor, hungry and helpless people. She was an affectionate mother to all, the Prime Minister said.

Recalling her memorable help to the thousands of refugees of Bangladesh during the Liberation War, she said the people of the country would always remember her with gratitude.

Some 14 charity centres of Mother Teresa, including the ones at Dhaka, Sylhet, Barisal, Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi, are being run in the country, Hasina said.

She said Mother Teresa, receiving the Nobel Peace prize for her unending love of the people, had rather added glory to the award.

Paying tributes to Mother Teresa she said, "her death is an irreparable loss to humanity. The world has lost a great server of humanity."

Sister Macdeline, a close associate of Mother Teresa, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dev Mukherjee, Shudhananda Mohathero and Archbishop of Dhaka Michael Rozario also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, two prayer songs were presented by the nuns of the charity centres of Mother Teresa and a poem by Begum Sufia Kamal, dedicated to the Mother, was recited by Maleka Begum.

# Jiang reelected

**From Page 1**

time were top graft-buster Wai Jianxing, 61, and vice premier and senior trade official Li Langling, 65.

The other members who retained their seats include premier Li Peng, 70, who is due to step down next March after two five-year terms and is likely to take over as head of parliament.

Jiang's most powerful rival, current parliament chief Qiao Guh, 72, fell from the politicalroster after retiring from the central committee on Thursday.

Jiang Zemin also retained his job as head of the military today, winning re-election as chairman of the central military commission.

He also succeeded in keeping an important ally on the commission, while two veteran opponents retired. Ageing generals Liu Huaqing, 80, and Zhang Zhen, 83, both retired from their posts as senior vice chairmen of the powerful party commission that runs China's three-million-strong People's Liberation Army.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam  
Printed by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrali, Dhaka-1000 and published by him on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi RA, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edit address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.net