Seminar on 'traffic management' held

# Road mishap rate in Bangladesh highest in Asia

By Staff Correspondent

The rate of accidents in Bangladesh is highest in Asia. This is due to poor road conditions, inadequate intersection management for smooth traffic flow, serious traffic congestion, absence of smooth bus systems. poor quality fuel and bad traffic regulations, said a World Bank official on Thursday.

"The rate of accidents is about 70 per thousand, highest in Asia and many other coun-tries of the world" said Mohiuzzaman Quazi, Transport Engi-neer of World Bank, while addressing a seminar entitled "Traffic Management for Dhaka vision for Future."

Quazi said, Accidents in Dhaka are different in nature as compared to other cities of the world and pedestrians are usually the victims. "Only a scientific approach to resolve the prevailing transport problem will help the situation," he

"Automobile related air pollution has become a major hazard for the entire city population, due to steep increase in use

Mass reception to

Hasina to be aired

live on BTV

The 51-member Steering

Committee, constituted to ac-

cord a reception to Prime Min-

ister Sheikh Hasina for receiv-

ing the UNESCO Peace Award;

at its first meeting yesterday

formed several sub-committees

to make the reception a success,

City mayor Mohammad Hanif

in the chair, decided that the re-

ception would be held at the his-

toric Paltan Maidan. It was also

decided to broadcast live the

function over Bangladesh Tele-

venor of the reception commit-

tee while Abdul Jalil, Abdul

Mannan, Prof. Abu Sayeed,

Syed Hasan Imam, Akhtar-Ul-

Alam, Prof A K Azad Chowd-

hury and Salahuddin Badal

will be the convenors of the finance, publicity, publication, cultural, discipline and stage

decoration sub committees re-

One killed in

road accident

Sajwar Hossain Khan, a businessman, was killed when

he was knocked down by a

speeding truck near Momenbag

in the city on Wednesday night,

Managing Director of the

"Manu Electrical Works" in the

Shamsul Hossain Khan of vil-

lage Porra under Manikganj

BUET admission

By DU Correspondent

of first year honours classes for 1998-99 session of Bangladesh

University of Engineering and

Technology (BUET) was an-

are available on the campus.

selected for the nine depart-

ments of Engineering Faculty

and the department of Urban

and Rural Planning of Archi-

Fifty-five students were se-

lected for the Architecture De-

Fertiliser

From page 1

monia leakage was sometimes

so serious that workers and of-

ficials, while working on the

reactors, had to keep sipping

vinegar to reduce the risk of suf-

Ghorashal Urea Factory said

that for 1,400 staff of the fac-

tory, they had 27 full and 40

half-size masks for protection

from a possible accident or ex-

lic protests both factories were

now discharging toxic wastes

directly into the river Sita-

lakhya bypassing the lagoon.

The general manager, however, claimed that they carried out

tests of the wastes twice every

count of ammonia we neutralise

it with acid and then discharge

formalities for procurement of

a generator that can produce the

required 16 megawatt of electricity. This would cost us Tk 80

crore and we hope to bring the

situation under control." the

tory produces around 1,000

tonnes of urea fertiliser every

day against its installed capac-

ity of 1,422 tonnes. The factory

produces around 634 tonnes of

ammonia every day to manu-

facture 1,000 tonnes of urea.

Palash Fertiliser Factory pro-

duces around 300 tonnes of urea

was possibility of the corroded

vessels to explode, the officials

said, " we are all sitting on a

When asked whether there

Ghorashal Fertiliser Fac-

General Manager said.

"If the waste contains high

"We have nearly completed

Other sources said after pub-

posure to ammonia.

Fire and Safety officials of

Another official said am-

tecture and Planning Faculty.

said a BUET press release.

nounced yesterday.

partment of BUET.

cial said.

focation.

it," he said.

per day.

Result of the admission test

List of the selected students

A total of 670 students were

Shantinagar area. He was 49.

Khan alias "Manu" was the

He was the eldest son of late

Mayor Hanif was made con-

vision and Bangladesh Betar.

The meeting, with Dhaka

reports BSS.

spectively.

reports BSS.

district.

of two-stroke engines, increased traffic congestion, use of old and badly maintained buses and poor quality fuel," he said.

Bangladesh has decided to ban the use of leaded fuel for vehicles, saying it is responsible for severe air pollution in the capital Dhaka and other major cities.

The authorities have asked the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) to enforce a ban on leaded fuel being imported and refined in the country, industry sources said. The ban is with immediate effect on all new contracts.

Bangladesh imports at least 58 per cent of its refined oil products. The rest is processed at the Eastern Refinery.

The decision followed a World Bank recent announcement that it would provide technical assistance and support to a Bangladesh Air Quality Management Project under five million US dollar pro-

Public exposure to air pollu-

tion in Dhaka has been estimated to cause 15,000 premature deaths and several million cases of illness every year.

Studies last year showed that Dhaka's air during dry season in November-January contained an average of 463 nanograms of lead, one of the highest levels in the world.

The levels of lead in people's blood is at least eight times higher than World Health Organisation recommendations. according to a study on Dhaka children conducted by child neurologist Dr Naila Khan.

Lead can retard the mental and physical development of children. There are some 175,000 motor vehicles in Dhaka, including more than 40.000 auto-rickshaws which use of a particularly hazardous mixture of leaded petrol and

engine oil. The government is planning to phase out auto-rickshaws under the bank-aided programme by 2001," Dhaka city Mayor Mohammad Hanif

said at the seminar. The mayor said, "All illegal rickshaws will be withdrawn from the city street to maintain a jam free capital. If needed I will give more licences to with-

According to a World Bank study, the population of the city which is about 9 million now is projected to become 15 million by 2015, making it one of the ten largest megacity of the

draw illegal rickshaws from the

The seminar was addressed among others by Mohammad Younus, Vice-Chairman Board of Director of Islami Bank, Abdul Matlub Ahmed, Chairman of Nitol Group, M Kamaluddin Chowdhury, Executive President Islami Bank.

Meanwhile ten double deckers buses financed by Bangladesh Islami Bank in cooperation with Nitol Motors were handed over to its owners. The new ten double deckers. first ever in the private sector

will ply on the streets of the capital soon.

# Layoff in Chittagong Steel Mills in a month

The government decided to declare layoff in the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited within a month for conducting BMRE in the outworn industrial unit, reports UNB.

An official announcement said the decision was disclosed yesterday at a high-powered meeting chaired by Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail

Labour and Manpower Minister MA Mannan and Housing and Public Works and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain attended the meeting held at the Industries Ministry audito-

CBA president of the mill MA Quader, general secretary Nazimuddin Chowdhury, leaders of Steel Federation, BSEC Chairman KAM Kamaluddin, Industries Secretary KM Ijajul Huq and concerned high officials were also present "All dues of some 1800 offi-

cials, employees and workers of the mill would be paid off as per the recommendation of the Mannan Committee," said the announcement. The laid off staffers of the

factory would get priority during recruitment when the mill reopens, it said.

The amounts payable to the workers and officials also came up for discussion. According to the recommendations of the Mannan Committee, officials and workers in 5-15 years service will be paid 27 per cent extras on their payoff package.

Those who have served 15 to 20 years will be given extra 22 per cent retrenchment benefits while for 20 to 25 years the perks will be 18 per cent and for 25 years or more 13 per cent. Industries Minister Tofail

Ahmed told the meeting that the mill established in 1966 with traditional machinery incurred loss every year due to its higher production costs.
"To save the mill the gov-

ernment has decided to overhaul it through BMRE as per the recommendations of Mannan Committee, Mustafiz Committee, Cabinet Committee and Industries Ministry," he said. He sought cooperation of all

quarters, including concerned ministers and officials and labourers, in implementing the layoff process in the interest of economic development of the

reports UNB.

City/Town

Chittagong

Rajshahi

Khulna

Barisal

Dhaka

Weather

some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Dawn-to-dusk

Temperature may not change

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or

squally wind is likely over the region of Sylhet till 6pm today,

Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky

The country's highest temperature 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in

26.5

26.0

25.6

27.1

Temperature

in Celsius

35.5

elsewhere over the country during the period. Met Office said.

yesterday at Rangamati and the lowest 24.8 degrees at Comilla.

The sun sets today at 6:23 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:30 am.

#### Khoka condemns police action on BNP activists

By Staff Correspondent Dhaka city BNP convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka has strongly condemned and protested police action and terrorists attack on party's "peaceful" gherao of electricity office programme in the city yesterday.

In a statement he said terrorists belonging to ruling Awami League attacked BNP procession when it was proceeding towards Power Development Board office at WAPDA bhaban and exploded bombs and fired indiscriminately. Besides the attack, he said

police without any provocation, resorted to lathi charge and lobbed tear gas shells on the processionists. Police also arrested a good number of BNP workers from the spot, he

Khoka said BNP as part of opposition earlier announced programmes brought out a big procession after holding of rally in front of Notore Dame College but the Awami terrorists who had been hiding in secret places exploded bombs and opened fire on the procession as soon as it reached near the PDB

He said the Awami terrorists in a preplanned way launched attack on the BNP procession in cooperation of police. Police also instead of arresting the terrorists resorted to lathi charge an the processionists and passers by and fired tear

The BNP leader alleged that unspecified number of BNP and its front organisations leaders and activists, including BNP central leader. Habibur Rahman Habib, city joint convenor Abdus Salam, DCC commissioners Nabiullah Nabi, Abul Khair Babul and Kayoom Khan, were injured. Police arrested at least 15 leaders and workers from

#### Discussion postponed

By DU Correspondent The discussion meeting on Shaheed Madhusudan Dey, popularly known as Madhuda. has been postponed, said a press release yesterday.

The discussion, marking the 28th death anniversary of Madhuda, was scheduled for tomorrow.

# Ctg customs seize 13000 tolas of gold in 12 years

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Apr 22: About 13 thousand tolas of smuggled gold were seized by customs officials from Chittagong airport and seaport during the past 12 years, sources said.

The haul includes gold bars and ornaments seized from the ships that called at Chittagong port and Biman passengers who arrived here from Middle East countries.

Sometimes, crew of foreign ships were allegedly found involved in the racket, they said. The haul, however, was of small quantity compared to the huge quantity of gold reportedly

smuggled into the country

through sea route and airport.

And the smugglers find the sea and air routes of Chittagong safe for such rackets. Customs sources believe that the consignments of smuggled gold reach here as a medium of 'payment' against the drugs

routed abroad through Chit-

tagong.

The drug traffickers reportedly use Chittagong seaport and airport as transit points, sources said, adding that a large portion of the drug consignment was routed through Chittagong from the 'Golden trian-

In most of the smuggling cases, only the carriers of drugs or gold were arrested, but the kingpins of smuggling are

hardly caught. Even the investigation into these cases move in a snail's pace due to mysterious reasons,

sources alleged The smugglers reportedly

#### 10 light guns recovered from train in Ctg CHITTAGONG, Apr 22: A

special team of the railways police recovered ten modern light guns from a brief-case at Sylhet bound Paharika express just prior to its departure from the railway station today, reports

According to railway police sources, the team on suspicion made a search in the compartment and seized the brief-case. The ten light guns were wrapped in newspapers.

However, none has claimed the possession of the brief-case so far, railway police said.

maintain high channel with the administration and political parties, they added.

Also, some local smugglers pay a huge amount to the identi-fied terrorists to run their busi-

ness undisturbed. Sources say that some of the gold ornaments brought from Middle East countries, have a

high demand in the local mar-Some passengers hailing from northern part of Chittagong, who return from Dubai, are engaged in carrying the smuggled gold sent by the agents of local kingpins and those pas-

sengers are provided with free tickets to do the job. Sources pointed out that as there is no archway at Chittagong airport, the racketeers find it convenient to bring gold from Dubai and other Middle East countries through direct

In recent months, four such consignments of gold of 2600 tolas were seized by the customs surveillance teams at Chittagong airport.

These passengers who were carrying the gold were arrested. but later they were released on



A BNP demonstration in the city yesterday as part of the party's protest programme that included laying siege to the office of Power Development Board (PDB) yesterday.

### DU inter hall debate held

By DU Correspondent The award giving ceremony of Third Inter Hall Debate Competition '99 and debaters' reunion was held at the Teachers and Students Centre (TSC) auditorium of Dhaka University yesterday afternoon.

Vice Chancellor of the university Prof AK Azad Chowdhury distributed the prizes as the chief guest while Dr Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Dr Aminul Islam, Dr Syed Monjurul Islam and Md Abu Yusuf were also present at the programme as special guests. Ziaur Rahman Hall was de-

clared the champion and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall the runner up in the competition.

The programme, organised by the Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) was presided over by its president —Star photo | Hazrat Khan.

# Govt plans environment court

Environment journalists yesterday paraded city streets calling the government to clamp down on the polluters and encroaches immediately to clean the air and water and to protect rare species, reports

Marking the Earth Day 1999, members of the Forum of Environment Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) brought out a colourful procession from in front of the National Press Club yesterday morning.

Addressing a discussion session on the Earth Day, organised by FEJB at the National Press Člub VIP lounge here, Environment Secretary Syed Marghub Murshed said his ministry is determined to enforce laws and regulations to stop environment degradation in the country. Marghub Murshed gave a

run-down of the actions initiated by his ministry in the last seven months and said environment courts would be set up soon to crackdown on the pol-Deputy Director of the

United States Information Service (USIS) Joy Nelson said her country has been on the forefront of international environment movement and important laws to clean air and water have been adopted in the USA.

FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, who chaired the session gave the background of the Earth Day and said on the

first Earth Day in 1970 about 20 million citizens in the USA had assembled together to create a national environment agenda and they succeeded in creating the US Environment Agency in

He described the Earth Day as a day of the global citizens who take lessons from other countries and take stock of the yearly deterioration and degradation of environment and keep pressure on the governments to chart environment agenda for sustainable development.

FEJB Vice Chairman Gaziur Rahman, General Secretary Bakhtiar Rana and member Shahabuddin Ahmed also

#### test results Rashidpur Gas Field announced

mensingh yesterday.

# Drilling of another well begins today

Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad

Mustafizur Rahman, Bir Bikram at the prize distribution

ceremony arranged by Prof M Lutfur Rahman Memorial

Trust at the Bangladesh Agricultural University at My-

न्द्रध्य विकास राज्य है

From Iqbal Siddiquee SYLHET, Apr 22: Drilling of

each day.

cation at a cost of Tk 117 crore,

provided by the World Bank and

IDA. Both the projects are ex-

pected to be completed by June.

approximate reserve of gas in

the structure would be about

1.32 trillion cft. Four old wells

in the Rashidpur Gas Field had

been producing about 77 to 85

MMCFD gas which is being sup-

plied to the national grid.

Rashidpur Gas Field is one of

the six gas fields under the Syl-

het Gas Fields Limited (SGFL). It

is located in a hilly area of

Bahubal thana under the Habi-

Home Minister addresses rally in Jessore

SGFL sources said that the

a new well in the Rashidpur Gas Field in Habigani district begins tomorrow, said an official last night.

The well, 'Rashidpur-7', is the second of three wells to be drilled in the same structure under the 'Gas Infrastructure Development Programme', fi-nanced by the World Bank and

The drilling of the first well. Rashidpur-5, began on January 5 and it was completed successfully in the first week of April. A gas zone was also struck at a depth of 8950 feet, the source added.

The location of well number 7 is about 13 kilometres off the first well. The drilling rig used in the well number 5 will also be used for the new well, the official said

The project is being implemented by the Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL), a company under Petrobangla. Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) of India was given the task of drilling of these wells under a contract signed on May 27 last year. Japan Oil Engineering Company Limited is working as

hartal in Jaintapur thana on April 26 From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Apr 22: Dawn-todusk hartal has been called in consultant for the project.

Jaintapur thana on April 26 to press 6-point demand of Jainta Under the project, drilling of three wells will cost about Tk Janadal Parishad. The demands include, supply 124 crore including a foreign of gas to greater Jainta, develcomponent of Tk 83.4 crore. On opment of educational institucompletion of drilling these tions, job on priority basis for wells, about 90 MMCFD of gas

locals in Occidental etc. 72 barrels of motor spirit and condensate will be produced Kamalapur Rly After processing, the gas will be supplied to the national grid, Station murder the official said. For processing purpose, two silica-gel plants of still a mystery 45 MMCFD capacity each are being installed at a nearby lo-

By Staff Correspondent Identity of the young man whose beheaded body was found on the rooftop of Kamalapur railway station platform tun-

nel on April 19 could not be ascertained till yesterday. General Railway Police (GRP) thana sources yesterday said they engaged their 'sources' in finding out the identity of the youth and were investigating the cause of the murder.

the body was, however, handed over to the Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam for burial following the autopsy of the body at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on April 20,

# Friendship Society formed

Morning

Humidity in

percentage

Evening

ship Society' was formed last Tuesday with Tanvir Newaz Khan and ATM Saidul Alam as President and Secretary General respectively, reports BSS.

enhance cooperation among different professionals and institutions of 21-APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) member countries.



Chand Sultana, wife of Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Executive Director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) died yesterday morning at Dr Salahuddin Hospital in Dhanmondi. She was 46, says a press release.

Sultana was also associated with Dhaka Ahsania Mission and authored several books on social issues.

after Asr prayers at her residence at House No 11, Road No 13 (New) Dhanmondi residence (the lane besides the Sobhanbagh Mosque).

## The chehlum



will be held today after Maghreb prayers at his residence at 1/15 Humayun Road, Mohammadpur.

Farid, a businessman, died of a massive heart attack on March 11.

His family has requested all his friends and well wishers to attend the milad mahfil and pray for the departed soul.

# RD scheme brings smile to rural women in Tangail

By Reaz Ahmad, back from Tangail

according to WFP.

sold from the pond."

member will get about Tk. 7000,

journalists, Shumari Begum, a

member of the group said

"Within one year of cultivation

fish worth Tk 34,000 have been

take the share of profit right

now. They will deposit the

But they are not about to

Talking to a visiting team of

A wide variety of fish including Ruhi, Mrigel, Katla and Silver Carp glitter in midday sun as fishermen net those. Sitting nearby are poor village women, their faces beaming with hopes for better days.

This has only been made possible by the concerted efforts of a group of hardworking

At Dinna Rampal village in Tangail Sadar, some 12 poor women had formed a group a year back to venture into fish cultivation in a pond leased out to them for ten years under a Rural Development (RD) scheme of World Food Programme (WFP). WFP provided wheat to re-excavate the derelict pond.

Development Organisation (RASDO), a local NGO, provided training and support to the group for fish cultivation. The water body was re-excavated in four months with 13 tonnes of wheat. Fish has been

Rural Agricultural Social

cultivated in half a hectare area of the water body, now called Dinna Rampal Fish Farm. Annual earning from fish production is likely to be around Tk one lakh. Each group money with a bank for more investment, said Gul Bahar, another member "I am hopeful of good returns from my investment" said Mina, youngest among the twelve and one of the three widows in the group. She had sold

her domestic animal for Tk

1.000 to invest in the pro-

The RD is a countrywide programme for the hard-core poor covering projects in fisheries, forestry, roads and water sectors for poverty alleviation and ensuring food security.

gramme.

The fisheries sector alone provides income generating opportunities to about two lakh people and creates employment for some 45,000 men and women annually.

RD is now a fully integrated

development programme, implemented by the government and NGOs. Projects under the RD create employment opportunities leading to assets accumulation and contributes to infrastructure development and

environment protection. The NGOs provide training to the target group in income generating skills to achieve sustainable development and improve their lot.

The RASDO is involved in implementing fisheries schemes under the WFP since 1995-96. Over the period, RASDO has developed 12 hectares of water bodies with a total assistance of 250 tonnes of

wheat RASDO operates in four districts. It covers all the eleven thanas in Tangail. Besides training the target groups in fisheries and forestry, RASDO also provides for adult and child education, mother and child healthcare, homestead gardening and legal aid education. Besides WFP, funding also comes from the government. BRAC, CARE and Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council



A GOOD CATCH: Poor women of village Dinna Rampal in Tangail invested money to cultivate fish in a pond under Rural Development programme of the WFP that promises better future for them. -Star photo

#### Police will have to win their fight against terrorists JHUMJHUMPUR (Jessore), Ansar — to nab the terrorists Apr 22: As the country's police and smugglers in the region and chief yesterday declared "war" raze their dens to the ground to against terrorists in the southensure peace of people. western region, Home Minister "I don't want to hear any

gani district.

Mohammad Nasim told the law enforcers they would have to win it, reports UNB. "I'm not a minister of Ramkrishna Mission that I will show sympathy to the crimi-

nals. Also, I'll not hear any ex-

cuses for failure of the law enforcing agencies," he said addressing a huge public rally after inaugurating a police camp The Home Minister asked the forces under his ministry paramilitary, BDR, police and

more the names of Sarbahara

and extremists. They will have to be crushed," he said. No terrorists would be spared. Nasim warned and said

have to face action. As the years-long terrorism in the region forced people to live amidst constant fear and tension, Inspector General of Police AYBI Siddiqui earlier said: "We declare a war against

even if they turn out to be of his

own Awami League, they would

the terrorists. Our war against the terrorists is on.' He said it is for the first time

that we got all facilities from the government. "Now you will have to show result," he told the police forces and asked them not to show any sympathy to dacoits and terrorists who even commit barbarous offence like

warning that he would dismiss those who would fail to perform their special duty in the region. the IGP said: "I'll beat you if you come back beaten up by the terrorists . . . you'll have to return

Echoing the Home Minister's

# APEC-Bangladesh

'APEC-Bangladesh Friend-

The society was formed to



### Obituary

The qulkhwani of Chand Sultana will be held tomorrow

#### Chehlum

