



PHOTO: STAR

A BIWTA vessel salvages the launch that sank in the Buriganga at Kholamora in Keraniganj with about 200 passengers aboard yesterday. The capsized launch left two children killed and several missing.

Chhayanaut Bhaban fund Tk 9.53 lakh collected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of Tk 9.53 lakh has so far been deposited to the fund for construction of the Chhayanaut Bhaban.

Construction cost of the Bhaban is estimated at Tk four core. Of this, Tk one crore will come from the Chhayanaut's own savings.

The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo are cooperating in the fund collection process.

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Monorail for capital on

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the government has decided to introduce monorail in Dhaka City to reduce traffic jam and ease the movement of people.

He said this while addressing a meeting at the Communications Ministry yesterday.

The structure of the electric

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Announcement

Banking Diploma Examinations result on Page-10.

Erratum

The report headlined "BTTB blocks dubious payment to Alcatel" mistakenly said Catherine Soubise, area sales manager of Alcatel, admitted that the nomenclature of "Engineering in France" was totally illegal. It should be read *totally incorrect* instead of *totally illegal*. We regret the error.

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Prayer Timings

| August 1 | | |
|----------|-------|--------|
| | Azan | Jamaat |
| Fair | 4-30 | 4-55 |
| Zohr | 12-45 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 5-00 | 5-15 |
| Maghrib | 6-50 | 6-55 |
| Esha | 8-15 | 8-45 |

Source: Islamic Foundation

Two girls die in launch capsize

Angry mob sets another ablaze

UNB, Dhaka

At least two children drowned and a number of others went missing after a passenger launch sank in the Buriganga at Kholamora ghat in the Keraniganj area yesterday.

The angry locals also set fire to another launch of the same owner - Zakkia - in a violent backlash.

Witnesses said the Lucky Seven capsized shortly after sailing from the Sagar terminal in old Dhaka with about 200 passengers on board at 9:00am.

About 150 passengers managed to swim ashore immediately after the launch capsized and rescuers continued search for the rest.

"Local people tried to salvage the launch but failed due to heavy currents in the river," said a spot report of the accident.

Bodies of the two children were recovered from the river. They are Fatema, 7, and Shikha, 3.

Sources said Shikha's brother was among the missing passengers. Witnesses claimed many of the passengers, including women, jumped out as the launch went down but could not swim ashore.

Police, firefighters and divers rushed to the spot, but they could not start rescue operation as they came under attack by agitated local people who kept a watch on the sunken launch.

State Minister for Health Aman Ullah Aman visited the spot.

Police Super and OC of Keraniganj were supervising the salvage operation. Additional police were deployed in the terminal area.

New deadline for illegal workers in Malaysia

BSS, Dhaka

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf yesterday said that if still alive, Osama Bin Laden must be in Afghanistan.

Replies to questions at a breakfast meeting with editors and senior journalists, he said Bin Laden cannot move alone and it was not possible for him to move out of Afghanistan with troops as well as his security apparatus.

"I think he is not alive," he said.

President Musharraf said it should have been impossible for him to survive the hundreds of bombs dropped on the Torabora area.

"Thanks, none alleged that Bin Laden came to Bangladesh," he quipped.

Sajal murder Mockbul, 12 others asked to appear in court Sept 21

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday directed former Awami League lawmaker Alhaj Mockbul Hossain and 12 others accused in the Sajal Chowdhury murder case to appear before the court on Sept 21.

Judge Mohammad Rafiqul Islam passed the order after the case was placed before him.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka on July 15 sent the case to the Sessions Judge's Court for trial.

Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted a charge sheet to the court on July 28 under the caption, "Reign of real estate terror".

In the rejoinder, Babul said the allegation that the Jamuna Builders were constructing without any approval from Rajuk is totally false and fabricated. He denied allegations that they exercised fraudulent practices to grab the land. He said the land on which the "largest market in Asia" is being constructed was in fact "a gutter that spread putrid smells, and was a place for mosquito breeding". He said that in 1999, he held meetings with the landowners who "volunteered" to sell their land to him.

"In the year 2000 we applied to Rajuk to approve the project layout, and on the basis of the application, Rajuk issued a certificate on August 19 of that year," Babul added.

He also said that on September 12, 2001 he applied to Rajuk for a "full plan approval" for the ownership documents of the land. But as

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RAFIQ HASAN

Bangladeshi workers on illegal stay in Malaysia have been given an extended deadline until August 31 on condition of having air tickets to leave the country by the time.

With the new decision made, the crackdown on illegal foreign workers in Malaysia will begin after August 31, said sources.

The workers will not be deported, if they report to the immigration authorities and show a return ticket. Nor will they be fined for a stay a month more, according to the information received from the Bangladesh mission in Malaysia.

Earlier, a foreigner had to pay 120 ringgit in fines for overstaying. And Malaysia strongly warned that any foreign worker found after July 31 without valid documents would be deported by force.

Over the last few months, around 15,000

Bangladeshi workers who stayed illegally in Malaysia have returned home, said government officials.

And, as many as 2,500 to 3,000 others on illegal stay are waiting to come back, says a government estimate.

On the other hand, around 70,000 Bangladeshi workers whose work permit expired this June were given an extension of six months.

Of them, 1,500 workers were issued extension letters. The rest will get the permission soon, sources said.

State Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Mohammad Quamrul Islam yesterday talked to Bangladesh High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur Masud Aziz and inquired about the latest on the Bangladeshi workers.

Quamrul told The Daily Star that the government was fully aware of the latest situation.

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DUTA token hunger strike today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) will hold a token hunger strike on the campus today in protest of the police attack on the teachers. The hunger strike will continue from 10:00am to 12 noon at the foot of the Aparajeyo Bangla in front of the Arts Faculty building.

This was decided last evening at an emergency meeting of DUTA with Prof. Abul Khaer, acting president of DUTA, in the chair.

The DUTA members at the meeting also demanded immediate removal of BDR and police forces from the campus and withdrawal of

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Traffic standstill

UNB, Dhaka

Main thoroughfares of the city was virtually choked for nearly four hours yesterday, paralysing the capital's business hub and causing untold sufferings to the people on road.

"This is unbelievable. I didn't experience such traffic jam in the recent past," a businessman said as his car took more than an hour to reach a government office at Segunbagicha from Motijheel Commercial Area.

Movement of vehicles almost came to a halt from Farmgate to Motijheel, both over Shahbagh and Minto Road. The serious congestion also affected vehicular movement over the connecting roads.

Officials at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) mainly attributed the traffic snarl-up to the diversion of vehicles due to student protest at Dhaka University and the

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PHOTO: STAR

Vehicles inch their way forward in a snarl-up on the Topkhana Road yesterday. Some major thoroughfares in the capital remained clogged for hours on end yesterday.

Rajshahi bus crash kills 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

At least 13 people, including two women, were killed and 100 others were injured as two passenger buses collided head-on near the cold storage crossing at Shibpur bazar under Puthia upazila on the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway yesterday noon.

According to witnesses and police, six persons died on the spot, two at the

Putia health complex, two at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) and the rest three died on way to RMCH. The death toll may rise as condition of six people are stated to be critical.

Of the dead, six were identified as Abdur Razzak Manik, 20, Abdul Motaleb, 25, Dollar, 28, of Borgachha, Natore and Soleman, 60, of Bagatpara upazila, Soleman's wife, 45, and daughter, 19. Drivers and helpers of both the ill-fated buses were also killed in the accident. Their identity could not be known.

The accident occurred at around 2:30 pm when Rupali Paribahan (Manikganj Ba 02-0002), a Rajshahi-bound passenger bus from Dhaka collided with a Pabna-bound passenger bus from Rajshahi (Pabna Ja-08-0051) of Chanchal Paribahan.

Of the injured passengers, 60 were admitted to RMCH while others were given first aid at Putia health complex.

Those admitted to RMCH are Ashraf, 28, Zamil, 40, Fayez Uddin, 40, Poltu, 20, Rahim, Kanim, 20, Keramat, 25, Ekrumul Haq, 25, Kartik Kundu, 30, Shushanta, 30, Selim, 28, Saiful Islam, 25, Alamgir Hossain, 35, Shafiqul, 40, Mujibor Rahman, 45, Kasim Uddin, 30, and Abdul Karim, 30, Monir, 50, and Rafiq, 45.

In absence of regular doctors, the interns of RMCH are attending the injured, sources alleged.

Floods wreak more havoc

UNB, Dhaka

Amidst rising trend in major rivers including Padma and Meghna, the flood situation in Dhaka division, and Brahmanbaria and Pabna districts may further deteriorate in 24 hours till 9am today, the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said yesterday.

The flood situation in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Manikganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria, Tangail, Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Pabna, Rajbari, Faridpur, Madaripur and Shariatpur districts is likely to worsen during the period.

However, as the Brahmaputra-Jamuna continued to fall at all points except Aricha, the flood situation in Kurigram, Rangpur, Bogra, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Jamalpur and Sherpur will improve further.

The FFWC in its regular bulletin said yesterday that the Padma at all points, Meghna at Bhairab Bazar, Shitalakha at Narayanganj and the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar.

The swelling rivers were still flowing above danger level at 11 points yesterday. These are - Dharaula at Kurigram, Brahmaputra at Chilmari, Jamuna at Bahadurabad, Sirajganj and Aricha, the Old Brahmaputra at Jamalpur, the Kaliganga at Taraghat, Padma at Goalundo and Bhagyalak, the Shitalakha at Narayanganj and the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar.

Out of 46 water level monitoring stations, 22 recorded rise and 21 fall in 24 hours, the FFWC said.

Our Natore correspondent adds: The overall flood situation have been deteriorating fast in Natore and its adjoining areas following continued rise of water in rivers as well as Chalan Beel and Haltee Beel.

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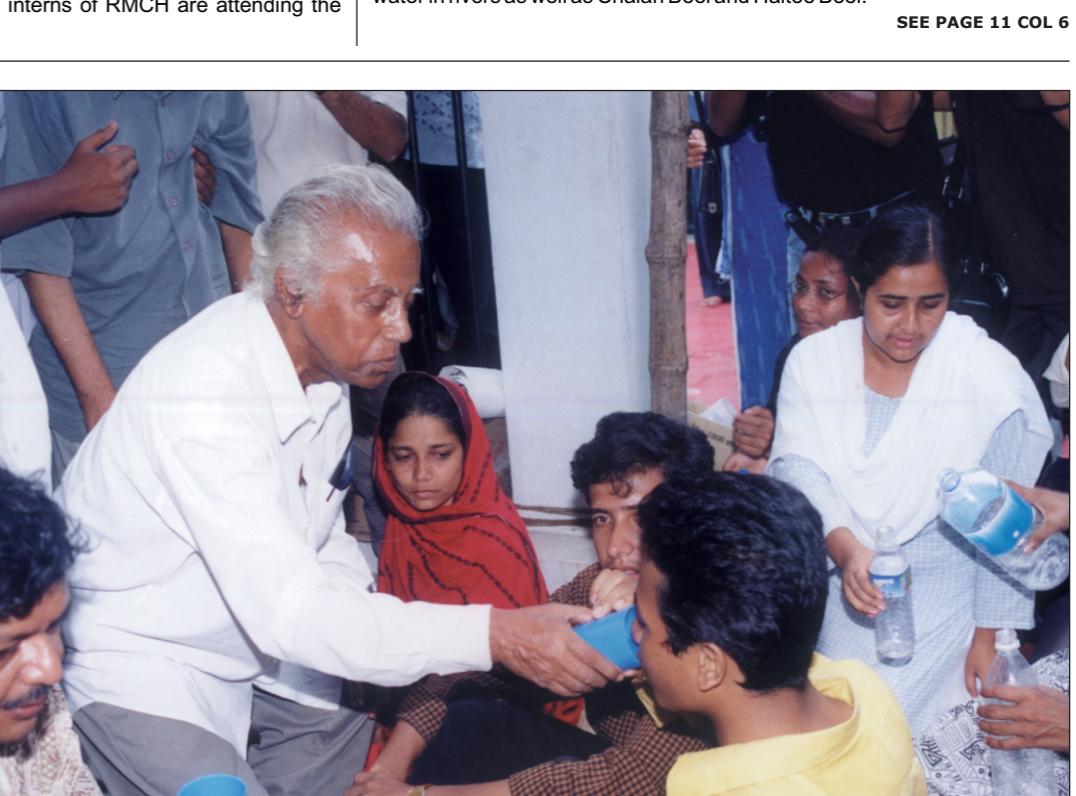


PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka University students shout slogans at Shahbagh on the eighth day of agitation against police atrocities on the campus while Abdul Matin (right), a language movement hero, breaks the fast unto death of striking students at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.