



PHOTO: PID
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia reviews a guard of honour by the armed corps on its third armoured reunion and annual conference in Bogra Cantonment yesterday.

Road accidents kill 15 in Narsingdi, Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 15 people were killed and 46 others injured in road accidents in Narsingdi and Chittagong yesterday.

Of them, nine were killed in Narsingdi and the rest in Chittagong.

In Narsingdi, the accident occurred at about 9:00am at Shilmandi under Sadar upazila when a Sylhet bound bus from Dhaka skidded off the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway and fell into a ditch, killing nine on the spot and injuring 46 others, UNB reports.

The identity of the dead could not be known till 6:00pm yesterday. The injured were admitted to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital and Zila Hospital. Of them, five were shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) from Sadar Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Sources said most of the victims were day labourers from Barisal and Dinajpur. The bodies were taken to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, civil surgeon and other officials visited the spot.

A case was filed with Sadar Police Station.

Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong reports: Six people were killed when a Chittagong bound autorickshaw from Sitakundu collided with a truck on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at Bhatary at about 3:00pm.

Ismat Ara, 31, her two sons, Mohammad Fakrul, 5 and Solaiman, 3, Ismat's elder sister Setara, 40, her son Sumon (age unknown) and daughter Munni, 3, died instantly.

Police with the help of local people recovered the bodies and sent them to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for autopsy.

Police seized both the vehicles, but the drivers managed to flee the scene. A case was filed with Sitakundu Police Station.

Armed forces now able to fend off dangers to nat'l solidarity: PM

UNB, Bogra

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said armed forces of Bangladesh are now capable of protecting the country's independence and sovereignty and tackling any situation endangering national solidarity.

"We have taken the initiative to build an army befitting the new century. We are implementing programmes to further strengthen

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 22		5-27 pm
Oct 23	5-59 am	
Prayer Timings		
October 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-30
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Iran agrees to key Nukes demands

European trio press Tehran to comply with Oct 31 deadline

REUTERS, Tehran

Iran yesterday agreed to sign and ratify an agreement on tougher inspections of its nuclear sites and suspend uranium enrichment and processing activities, according to an official declaration obtained by Reuters.

"Having received the necessary clarifications, the Iranian government has decided to sign the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Additional Protocol and commence ratification procedures," the declaration said.

"While Iran has a right within the

nuclear non-proliferation regime to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes it has decided voluntarily to suspend all uranium enrichment and processing activities as defined by the IAEA," it added.

Iran pledged full transparency on its nuclear program yesterday as EU foreign ministers pressed Tehran to comply fully with an October 31 UN deadline to assure the world it is not developing nuclear weapons.

"We are ready for total transparency because we are not pursuing an

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Apec vows to tear down terror groups

AFP, Bangkok

The 21-nation APEC grouping agreed yesterday to widen its mandate to security issues, vowing to dismantle terrorist organisations and halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

"We agreed that transnational terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction pose direct and profound challenges to Apec's vision of free, open and prosperous economies," the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders said in a joint declaration at the end of a two-day summit.

They committed to take "all essential actions to dismantle, fully and without delay, transnational

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Call money rate dips on rising excess liquidity

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Call money rates in the money market dipped to 1.6-2 percent yesterday, one of the lowest in many months, as the banks are straddled with huge excess liquidity.

With Tk 8,655 crore excess liquidity sloshing in the bank vaults and good loan proposals trickling, the market is now saturated with liquidity, bankers said.

Call money rate ranged between 2.5 percent and 3 percent Monday, down from the previous day's 3.5 percent to 4 percent.

On the other hand, the banks had Tk 7,605 crore in excess liquidity on June 30 which shot to Tk 8,655 crore on August 28.

"Lending by the nationalised commercial banks has been briddled," said a banker, explaining the trend. "On the other hand, private banks are also not getting viable loan proposals. This has left them depending on the inter-bank lending to keep their funds rolling."

Bankers foresee a further fall in call money rates as the Mercantile Bank is likely to start lending the

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Dhaka to seek time for EPZ unionism

Delegation meets top US trade officials in Washington next week

RAFIQ HASAN

Dhaka will apprise Washington of the existing working conditions at its exclusive export processing zones (EPZs) and seek more time for preparations to implement trade unionism (TU) at the EPZs in line with a longstanding US demand.

A three-member government delegation is scheduled to meet assistant US trade representative (USTR) E Ashley Wills on October 27 to make the briefing.

The delegation will present a country position paper and likely seek another three years for preparations before allowing trade union

activities at the special economic zones, according to sources at the Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

"We want to deal with the issue in a very constructive way so that interests of both workers and investors are protected," said a high government official, wishing not to be named.

The delegation led by the executive chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) will also meet other high officials in Washington in an effort to get the January 2004 deadline postponed by

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PHOTO: STAR

Traffic policemen signal vehicles in front of a damaged traffic shed at Nabisco crossing in Tejgaon yesterday. A speeding truck hit the structure three days ago, sending it on the edge of collapse, but no urgency for its repair is visible.