

One killed, 29 hurt in road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One woman was killed and 29 people including five policemen were injured in separate road accidents in Manikganj, Gaibandha and Narsingdi yesterday.

Our Manikganj correspondent reports, a textile female worker was killed and four others were injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Aricha Highway in Manikganj yesterday.

The victim was identified as Shahnaz 20, a worker of Akiz Textile Mill and resident of Dhamrai.

An Aricha bound truck hit five female textile workers at about 8:00am at Golora, killing Shahnaz on the spot and injuring four others.

The injured were rushed to the Manikganj Sadar Hospital and the truck collided near Gobindaganj health complex on Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday at 2:00pm.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent adds, At least 20 passengers, including four women, were injured when a Bogra bound passenger bus and truck collided near Gobindaganj health complex on Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday at 2:00pm. Police said the accident occurred when a truck from opposite direction hit a bus loaded with passengers near

Gobindaganj health complex. At least 20 passengers sustained injuries. Of them, drivers of both the vehicles were sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition, 12 admitted to Gobindaganj health complex and the rest were released after first aid.

BSS from Narsingdi adds, five constables were injured in a road accident at Kamar Tek in Shibpur upazila here on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway on Monday night.

The injured were identified as Ramjan Ali, 21, Ishaq Kabir, 29, Ripan Hossain, 20 and Subedar Rahmat Ullah.

Shibpur police said the four policemen were injured when a speedy truck hit their vehicle from behind at about 10:00 pm. They were escorting Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid Advocate, who was returning to Dhaka from Kishoreganj by a car.

The injured cops were admitted to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital. Of them, Subedar Rahmat Ullah was shifted to Dhaka as his condition deteriorated. Police seized the truck and arrested its driver. The opposition leader kept in touch with the injured after the accident.



Save Chittagong, Jono Udyog and Chattagram Paribesh Andolon form a human chain on the Chittagong Press Club premises yesterday demanding compensation from Naiko for Tengratila blowout.

PHOTO: STAR

BATB free sapling distribution programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of its annual afforestation programme, the British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) launched a free sapling distribution programme at its Dhaka nursery yesterday.

Environment and Forest Minister Tariqul Islam formally inaugurated the programme as chief guest while State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury was present as special guest.

Under the programme, people can collect saplings of different herbal, timber and fruit trees from the BATB's Plant and Planters Nursery in Cantonment Railway Station area from July 5 to 10, from PQS Super Centres at Uttara, Dhanmondi and Shantinagar from July 6 to 7, from Nandan Mega shop at Gulshan from July 8 to 9 and from Meena Bazar at Dhanmondi from July 10 to 11.

Appreciating the BATB's initiative, the minister said, "We need to plant more trees for a better environment. To strengthen the government's effort in this regard, the private companies should come forward to protect the environment for the next generation."

In the last 25 years, the BATB has distributed more than 4.60 crore saplings to speed up the afforestation, said Emil Moskofian, managing director of BATB.

The survival rate of the plants distributed by the company was 90 percent, which made the campaign a success, he added.

Golam Mainuddin, deputy managing director of BATB, was also present at the function.

2 pirates killed in fight on launch in Meghna

UNB, Kishoreganj

Two pirates were killed and 35 passengers injured in a fight between ansars and pirates on board a launch in the river Meghna early yesterday.

Police said a gang of about 30-35 pirates, who boarded the Habiganj-bound launch from Bhairab Bazar in the guise of passengers, swooped on the passengers when the launch reached near Kalapara at about 1:00am.

As the pirates started looting valuables of the passengers, the ansar members opened fire on them, killing two of the gang on the spot.

One of the dead was identified as Mostafizur Rahman Suman, 30, of Barisal. Identity of the other could not be known. The remaining

pirates decamped with the booty worth about Tk 5 lakh.

Meanwhile, a launch with some 300 passengers aboard narrowly escaped an accident in the river Meghna at Haimchar under Chandpur district on Monday night.

Sources said the Dhaka-bound launch, MV Bogdadia-8, developed a crack on its deck as it sailed from Charbhairabi at about 8:00pm.

As some of the passengers saw water pouring into the launch through the crack near Haimchar ghat, the driver drove it to the shore.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Draft of Nat'l Implementation Plan finalised

BONEWS, Dhaka

The draft of the Bangladesh National Implementation Plan to phase out the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) has been finalised, sources said.

The draft will be reviewed at a workshop today with participation of experts and ministers. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) arranged the workshop on the draft of the national implementation plan, which has been prepared following the Stockholm Convention.

"The buy-in of the priority actions of the NIP will be one of the major outcomes of the brainstorming," said a source. The workshop will be held at the IDB Auditorium of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city.

The POPs are a group of toxic chemicals that persist in the environment for a long time and have serious health and environmental effects, which are identified as the source of carcinogenicity, reproductive impairment, adverse impact on developmental and immune system changes, and endocrine disruption.

"The purpose of the two-day workshop is to create sustainable capacity and ownership in Bangladesh to meet their obligations under the Stockholm Convention, including initial preparation of a POPs implementation plan, and broader issues of chemicals safety and management," sources said.

The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect global human health and environment from the adverse effect of POPs, identified in the Stockholm Convention held in May 23, 2001.

Bangladesh is a signatory country. Among the twelve POPs, nine are pesticides, two are unintentionally produced chemicals and the Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) commonly used in the electrical equipment.

The aim of the convention is to phase out POPs from the environment through actions as identified in

the National Implementation Plan (NIP).

PCBs are another POPs, experts said. PCBs are used as safer cooling and insulating fluid for industrial transformers and capacitors, hydraulic fluids, as surface coatings for carbonless copy paper, as plasticizers in sealants, caulking, synthetic resins, rubbers, paints, waxes, and asphalts, and as flame retardants in lubricating oils.

PCBs bio-accumulate in food chain, the highest levels were found in the fatty tissues of the consumers at the top tropic level. Chronic exposure of PCBs causes Chloracne.

Symptoms, including nausea, eye

and respiratory tract irritations, dehydration, weight loss and cyanosis, have been reported, along with altered function of the neuromuscular system, liver, kidneys and pancreas.

Chloracne generally takes the form of dermal lesions and in severe cases, pustules on the face and shoulders. PCBs crossed the placental barrier and hampered the growth and development of embryo. PCB dysfunctions the activities of hormones.

Also, there are reports that the PCBs oil is mixed with cooking oil by a lot of roadside shops after old transformers are abandoned.

BCL LEADER MURDER

Four get life in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

A court here yesterday sentenced four people to life in prison for killing Chhatra League leader Farid Ahmed more than nine years ago.

Farid, a Chhatra League leader of Islamia Degree College, was gunned down in the city on December 7, 1996.

Judge of the Divisional Special Trial Tribunal (STT), Chittagong, M Hassan Imam pronounced the verdict in a crowded courtroom.

The convicts are: Chhatra League leader Rajib Dotto Rinku, Arabindhu Shaha, Mohammad Mohiuddin and Asif Uddin Babar.

They were also fined Tk 50,000 each, in default, to suffer two years more in jail.

The court acquitted five of the nine chargesheeted accused as they were not found guilty. The five are: Sabbir Ahmed, Mohammad

Jahid, Iqbalul Alam, Shaful Bashir and Aminul Islam.

According to the prosecution, the convicts fired shots at Farid Ahmed in front of Sayed Monzil in Kamal Gate area under Doublemooring thana following internal political feud. He died in the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Azz Ahmed, elder brother of Farid, filed a case with Doublemooring thana against seven people on December 9, 1996.

Police submitted the chargesheet against nine people. The court in 49 working days examined nine witnesses, out of 16, before pronouncing the verdict.

Special Public Prosecutor Advocate Ahmed Kamrul Islam Chowdhury Sazzad appeared for the state, while Advocate Salauddin Hyder defended the accused.

Raffles Edn Network opens liaison office

DU CORRESPONDENT

Raffles Education Network has started its operation in Bangladesh as a liaison office of Singapore-based Raffles Education Network on July 2, says a press release.

The office is located at the BSL Anex building of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

The education network has several wings such as Raffles Design Institute, Hartford Institute, KvB Institute of Technology, eLearningSP.

Detailed information about the network can be obtained from the website www.raffles-education-network.com.