

9 killed, 75 injured in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 75 injured in separate road accidents in Sirajganj, Jessore, Faridpur, Comilla, Manikganj and Bhola yesterday.

Our Sirajganj correspondent adds, two people were killed and five others injured in a road accident on the Bogra-Nagorbari highway at Shamolipara in Ullapara upazila of Sirajganj district yesterday.

The victims were identified as Sher Ali, 45, and Ashraf Ali, 25, of Gayhata village of the upazila.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred at around 7:30am when a Bogra-bound truck hit a rickshaw from behind killing two people on the spot. The injured were taken to Ullapara Health Complex in critical condition.

Police sent the bodies to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our Jessore correspondent reports: One person was killed in a road accident in Jessore yesterday.

Farook, 25, son of Johor Ali of Ichapur under Sadar upazila, was killed on the spot when a speeding truck ran over him in front of the Chakladar Filling Station near Jessore central bus terminal in the morning. Police seized the truck.

BDNEWS from Faridpur reports, three people were killed and 20 others injured as two passenger buses collided head on in the Majhkandi area under Madhukhali Upazila on the Faridpur-Khulna highway yesterday.

Witnesses said a Dhaka-bound passenger bus of Purbasha Paribahan from Khulna collided head on with a Magura-bound local bus coming from Faridpur leaving one person dead on the spot and 22 others injured.

Of the injured, two died at the Faridpur Medical College Hospital

(FMCH). The injured were admitted to the FMCH and the Madhukhali Thana Health Complex.

UNB from Comilla says, a bus helper was killed and 40 others were injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Choudhagram upazila headquarters yesterday.

Police said the mishap took place as a Chittagong bound bus coming from Bagerhat rammed a roadside shop, leaving 41 people, including the driver and helper of the bus, injured.

Of the injured, 20 were admitted to Choudhagram upazila health complex where the bus helper succumbed to her injuries.

Identity of the deceased could not be known immediately. BDNEWS from Bhola reports, one person was killed and 10 others were injured in a road accident near Rastar Matha area on Bhola-Char Fashion road

yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Nitai Chandra, 40, who was a village doctor in Borhanuddin upazila.

Witnesses said, the accident took place when a Bhat Bhati, a shallow engine-driven motor vehicle, carrying passengers hit a palm tree beside the road, losing its control while overtaking a passenger bus.

The injured were admitted to Borhanuddin Hospital.

Police seized the Bhat Bhati. A Manikganj report said, one youth was crushed under the wheels of a truck at Nabagram on Dhaka-Paturia road in Manikganj yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Kalam Azad, 25, hailed from village Galkhali under Shibhal upazila.

Police said a Dhaka-bound truck ran over Kalam while he was crossing the road.

Lost kid gets shelter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At last a lost kid has got a shelter.

Syed Rony, 8, was handed over to the authorities of Mymensingh Government Shishu Paribar by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Before the handing over, Rony was provided with a wheel chair by the SWD.

After losing his legs in a train accident on October 16, Rony was admitted to DMCH where he had been receiving treatment since then.

Rony who hails from Mymensingh, could not specify his address.

He said, "After having a spat with my mother I came to Dhaka. I don't know the exact date or the month. I used to beg at Kamalapur Railway Station. One day when I was playing with my friends, I was hit by a running train and fell down on the tracks. The train ran over my legs."

Social Welfare Department earlier tried to find out Rony's identity, but failed.

After The Daily Star published a story on three missing children including Rony in October, a lot of people and organisations contacted the daily as well as the DMCH authorities to adopt them.

Earlier Asma Sharmin, 10, were adopted by a person in Banani while Tutul, 9, was rehabilitated by the SWD.

Shamokal editor Golam Sarwar resigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Golam Sarwar, editor of the daily Shamokal, resigned yesterday.

"I resigned as the editor of the Shamokal on January 21 for strictly personal reasons," he said in a press statement.

Sarwar was the founding editor of the daily that started its publication in May 2005. He joined the daily after leaving the post of editor of the daily Jugantor in August 2004.

Sources in the daily Shamokal said Sarwar resigned following disagreements with Publisher AK Azad and some colleagues.

Mozammel Hossain Monju, deputy editor of the Shamokal, has taken over as the acting editor, the sources added.

Indian held at Benapole check post

UNB, Benapole

Bangladesh Rifles arrested an Indian citizen along with huge foreign currency at the Benapole check post on Friday.

BDR sources said they caught Ramesh Podder, a resident of Bongaon in India, when he was crossing the Bangladesh border on way to India in the afternoon.

Huge foreign currency and two Bangladeshi passports were recovered from his possession.

Ban on traffic movement around JS

BSS, Dhaka

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has imposed restrictions on traffic movement on certain routes around the Sangsad Bhaban for security reasons during the winter session of parliament beginning on January 23.

The restrictions include ban on carrying of all kinds of firearms and explosives, procession and demonstration on these routes from 12:00 noon on Sunday night.

The routes are: from Mohakhali crossing to Banglamotor crossing via the Old Airport, from the west side of Banglamotor to link to the Saarc Foara on Sonargaon road, from the east end of Panthapath to Farmgate via Green Road crossing, from Shyamoli Cinema Hall of Mirpur Road to the crossing of Dhanmondi Road No 16 (Old 27), from Rokeya Swarni crossing to Parjaton crossing via Old 9th Division Crossing (Aeroplane), from east corner of Indira Road to west end of Manik Mia Avenue and the protected areas as well as all lanes and bi-lanes within the Jatiya Sangsad compound.

This order will remain effective till the prorogation of the Sangsad's winter session.

Pakundia Samity executives

Former Prof of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) Morntaz Uddin Bhuiyan and Deputy Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture Dr SM Nazmul Islam have been elected as president and general secretary of Pakundia Samity in Dhaka for 2006-2007, says a press release.

Md Samsul Haque, former general manager of BCIC, has been elected as senior vice president in 31 members executive committee of the Samity.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) forms a human chain near Rayer Bazar Martyred Intellectual Mausoleum in the city yesterday demanding demolition of illegal structures along the rivers and water bodies of the city.

'Protect rivers, canals'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People with political influence have been encroaching the water bodies in Dhaka city, inviting environmental disaster, environmentalists said at a rally yesterday.

Political will is a must to evict the encroachers, they said, adding that the local people also have to be united to protect the Buriganga, Shitalakha, Turag, Balu, Debdholai rivers as well as Atrikhal and Haikar Khal.

They also called for strict enforcement of the Wetland Act 2000 and proper management of

rivers, canals and wetlands as per government decisions.

"The influential people and the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) have recently started to encroach on Atrikhal and Haikar Khal by dumping garbage into the canals and constructing culvert although changing the nature of wetlands is against the law," said Mohidul Haque Khan.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organised the rally at Rayer Bazar in the city demanding necessary steps to enhance navigability of the rivers, remove brickfields and illegal establishments from the

banks of the water bodies and to take action against the encroachers.

"Whenever we meet the authorities to discuss the issue, they show a very positive attitude towards protecting the water bodies. But in reality, they do nothing in this regard," said Bapa Joint Secretary JK Baral.

Joint Secretary of Bapa Mihir Biswas, executive committee member Dr Abdul Hai Majumder, Dr Nuruddin, Zahedur Rahman and representatives of Green Voice and Peace were also present at the rally.

Dhaka not prepared for quake, tsunami disasters

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is not necessarily prepared for earthquake and tsunami disasters although it is comparatively prepared to deal with some other natural disasters such as flood and cyclone, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

But despite having infrastructures, the country often fails to handle common natural disasters such as flood, they said.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) Alumni Association organised the seminar on 'Disaster Management in Bangladesh' at the auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (Biam) in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Minister for Food and Disaster Management Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said the preparation of Bangladesh for cyclone and flood management is quite efficient, which is internationally recognised.

To tackle other natural disasters such as quake and arsenic contamination, the country needs help not only in terms of money but also in terms of expertise, he added.

Akio Arai, resident representative of Jica, said Jica's cooperation for disaster management in Bangladesh is based on four components -- reduction and prevention of damage from disaster, strengthening of disaster management system, emergency disaster relief and reconstruction.

With the assistance of the Japanese government, a total of 81 cyclone shelters have been constructed in the coastal areas of the country, he said.

Presenting a keynote paper, Dr Aslam Alam, deputy team leader of Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) of the government, explained different institutional structures at the national level for disaster management.

The government has started the process to establish a Disaster Management Information Centre (DMIC) with links to all districts headquarters, he said. Funded by the European Commission, the

centre will have links to 50 percent of the upazilas at the initial stage.

The disaster management ministry has also a plan to establish an institute of disaster management for training and research purposes, he added.

Giasuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, executive director of the Centre for Environment and Geographic Information Services, recommended strengthening people's participation in disaster management and upgrading coastal embankments to provide greater safety.

Besides, he said, there must be a national master plan to check river erosion as it is one of the major causes of poverty.

Dr Abul Hossain, project director of Multi Sectoral Programme on Violence Against Women of the Department of Women Affairs, and Md Ezhar Uddin, general secretary of Jica Alumni Association, also spoke. Md Azmal Chowdhury, acting president of Jica Alumni Association, presided over the seminar.

Groom children as worthy citizens

Bhuiyan urges guardians

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday called upon the guardians to take more care of their children to build them as worthy citizens of the country.

"Today's children will lead the country tomorrow ... so we should properly take care of them," he said while speaking as the chief guest at a discussion organised by Zia Shishu-Kishore Sangathan at Shishu Academy auditorium here.

The discussion, held marking the 70th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman, was presided over by president of the organisation Sirajul Islam Selim in the chair. It was also addressed, among others, by Director of Shishu Academy M Niaz Uddin Mia.

Paying rich tribute to the memory of president Zia, Mannan Bhuiyan said he (president Zia)

established the Shishu Academy for the children in all district headquarters so that they could learn about the culture and heritage of Bangladesh. Zia undertook various programmes for the children including sending them abroad for flourishing their latent talent, Mannan Bhuiyan said.

He called upon the guardians to build their children as worthy citizens with honesty and sincerity by taking lessons from the life of president Zia.

Mannan Bhuiyan said the present government under the able leadership of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has been working sincerely to establish rights of children in the country.

He also called upon the affluent persons to come forward with their helping hands for the underprivileged children of the country. Later, the minister distributed prizes and certificates among the children.

ARMS CASE

Rab submits charge sheet against Ctg JMB commander

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday submitted a charge sheet against JMB Chittagong divisional commander Mohammad alias Javed Iqbal and Cox's Bazar commander Naimuzzaman alias Jafar in an arms case.

Three cases were filed in connection with the recovery of large caches of explosives, bombs, arms and bomb making materials in Chittagong city.

Two other charge sheets will be submitted within a day or two, sources said.

Rab Sub-Inspector Badrul Mannan, also investigation officer (IO), submitted the charge sheet to the court of metropolitan magistrate Akram Hossain, sources said.

The IO, however, dropped the names of five JMB leaders -- JMB chief Shaekh Abdur Rahman, Majlish-e-Sura member Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, military chief Ataur Rahman Sunny, activists Monirul Islam and Rafiqul Islam alias Noman -- from the charge sheet, sources said.

Their names were dropped as arms were not seized from their possession, sources said.

Eight people, including the five and Mohammad and Cox's Bazar commander Naimuzzaman, were implicated in the three cases filed with the Pahartali Police Station.

Rab arrested Mohammad and Naimuzzaman and recovered a huge explosives, bombs, arms, books on militant activities and bomb making materials from a JMB den at Kattali in the city on December 13.

Obituary



Syed Ziaul Karim, a renowned businessman and social worker, passed away at a city hospital on Friday at the age of 66, says a press release.

A philanthropist, he was the founder of the Shakti Niketan, a welfare organisation for the elderly and children, and a member of the governing board of Suravi.

His kulkhwani will be held at Suravi, House # 16, Road # 5, Dhanmondi, at 6:00pm tomorrow.

Khorshedi Alam



Khorshedi Alam Dolly, wife of Iftekharul Alam Kitchlew, past president of FBCCI and founder-chairman of North

South University, passed away at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 75, says a press release.

She was buried at Banani graveyard. Her kulkhwani will be held at Azad Mosque at Gulshan after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Mozahar Ali Khan

BSS, Dhaka

Mozahar Ali Khan, father of senior journalist Abdur Rahman Khan, passed away due to old-age complications at his village home at Uztirpur under Barisal district yesterday at the age of 100.

State Minister for Housing and Public Works Alamgir Kabir expressed his deep shock at the death of Mozahar.

President and General Secretary of Jatiya Press Club Rezauddin Ahmed and Shawkat Mahmud also condoled the death.



PHOTO: STAR

Police club Awami League activists in front of the AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday when they brought out a procession in support of today's hartal.

DEMAND FOR ENLISTMENT AS VOTERS Expats' agitation at home, abroad soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Expatriates threaten to launch a tougher agitation at home and abroad soon, if their demand for enlistment as voters remains unfulfilled.

We will boycott the national carrier Biman, Sonali bank and other national institutions, leaders of expatriate Bangladeshis declared at a press conference held at a hotel in Sylhet city yesterday.

A number of expatriates from USA, Canada and UK attended the conference while Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury, president of a UK based charity organisation-Bangladesh Welfare Association, read out the written statement.

He said Bangladesh passed a black period last year due to the rise of religious militancy, which embarrassed the Bangladeshis abroad. More over, grenade attack on the personalities like British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury stained the country's

image, he added.

Giving a brief description on the contribution of the expatriates, Chowdhury said we are contributing to the country's economy through sending foreign remittance. But, the government never gives attention to the just demands of the lakhs of expatriates.

Sufferings of the expatriates in the home airports by the immigration officials are yet to be ended while harassment in getting the Biman tickets is a common phenomenon. Even after several commitments in the past, the demand for inclusion of the expatriates in the voter list remained unmet, he added.

Chowdhury called upon the expatriates to become candidates in the next parliamentary election.

Expatriates Nurul Islam, Abdul Latif and Sarwar Ahmed addressed the press conference while officials of Bangladesh Overseas Centre were also present.

Schoolgirl abducted by JCD leader

BDNEWS, Kalapara

A gang of criminals allegedly led by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) General Secretary Mostafizur Rahman of Kalapara MB College abducted a student of class ten of Kalapara Girl's High School in Patuakhali on Friday evening.

Police are yet to arrest the linchpin and rescue the girl, daughter of local businessman Humayun Kabir. One Nur Elahi, 23, was arrested in this connection.

Family sources said the girl was abducted at gunpoint from her house at Natun Bazar area of Kalapara Municipality at around 7:00pm.

A case was filed with Kalapara Police Station against Mostafiz and his eight accomplices in connection with the abduction of the girl.

She was kidnapped as she refused to accept a proposal for love by Mostafiz, family sources said.

Diarrhoea claims 8, affects many at Joypurhat

UNB, Joypurhat

Diarrhoea that broke out in Panchbibi upazila claimed eight lives and affected many others during the last 20 days.

The deceased were identified as Nur Banu, 25, wife of Hossain Ali of east Uchha village, Shajja, 2, son of Saidul of Kutuhara village, Afr Uddin, 80, of Pakuria village, Nasiruddin, 55, of Rasulpur village, Naim, 7, son of Wahidul of Samabad village, Mariam Banu, 40, wife of Mokhesur Rahman of Kamar village, Jaharlal, 40, of Chandpur village and Upen, 25, of Malopara village.

Locals said 34 affected people were admitted to the upazila health complex during the last three days. They said due to shortage of beds some patients are receiving treatment at the veranda of the hospital.

Physicians said the waterborne disease broke out due to severe cold spell and intake of adulterated food and contaminated pond water.

Official sources said several medical teams have been working round the clock in the affected areas.



Fall in night temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country. Met Office said

in a forecast. Highest temperature 29.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 9.0 degrees at Srirongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:38pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.7	12.3	54	41
Chittagong	28.5	15.5	66	54
Rajshahi	27.8	10.4	64	46
Khulna	28.0	14.4	69	50
Barisal	27.8	13.0	80	61
Sylhet	24.1	15.9	89	72
Cox's Bazar	28.5	17.6	51	47



Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin calls on the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov Sergey Victorovich in Moscow on Friday. M Amir Hussain Sikder, Bangladesh Ambassador to the Russian Federation, was present.