

8 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Eight people were killed and over 90 others were injured in separate road accidents in three districts yesterday. Three of them were killed in a collision between a pick-up van and a passenger bus on Rupsha Bridge in Batiaghata, Khulna, in the morning, reports our staff correspondent in Khulna. Of the victims, Sohel, 18, son of Monir Hossain, died on the spot while Abbas, 30, and Ferdous, 30, succumbed to their injuries at the Khulna Medical College Hospital. The driver of the bus escaped soon after the accident that took place around 11:00am. Traffic movement across the bridge remained suspended until 3:00pm due to the accident. Another collision between two buses took place at Debduar in

Paikgachha at 1:30pm, leaving five people were severely injured. The injured were admitted to Paikgachha upazila hospital. Police seized both the buses, but the drivers escaped. In Mymensingh, two people, including a girl, were killed and 20 others injured in separate road accidents yesterday, reports our Mymensingh correspondent. The first accident occurred at Beltala in Gouripur at about 12:30pm when two buses collided head-on on Mymensingh-Netrakona highway, killing one Bimal Ghose, 50, the owner of a sweetmeat shop, and injuring 20 others. Of the injured, 18 people were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. In the other accident, an unidentified girl was run over by a tempo on Mymensingh-Phulbaria road at

Berara in the morning. Our correspondent in Faridpur adds: Three people were killed and 42 others injured in two road accidents yesterday morning. Two of them were killed when a Jessore-bound bus coming from Barisal fell into a roadside ditch full of water near Madhabpur in Bhanga on Barisal-Faridpur highway at around 8:30am. They dead are Akkas Hawlader, 40, and Meherun, a seven-month-old baby girl. Forty-two people were also injured in the accident. In another accident, Tasena, 10, daughter of Hanif Bepari, was killed when a speeding bus ran over her at Bakhunda in Sadar Upazila at 10:00am. The bodies were sent to Faridpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.



Jatiya Party Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju speaks at the central meeting of Jatiya Chhatra Samaj at Engineers' Institute auditorium in the city yesterday.

'Only electoral reforms can't ensure fair polls'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaving the common people unaware of their civic rights and duties, free and fair elections cannot be ensured only by bringing in reforms in the electoral system, said Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju yesterday. To substantiate his claim Manju said, "In a democratic system, even a beggar who stands in the queues all day long for a morsel of rice or wheat also possesses a vote like other members of the society."

So capitalising the economic hardship of the common people if the moneyed candidates buy their votes on the election day, then what will be the benefit of making any reforms in electoral system? he asked. The Jatiya Party chief was speaking at the Central Council 2006 of its students' organisation Jatiya Chhatra Samaj (JCS) at the auditorium of the Engineering Institute in the city. Commenting on the current political situation in the country Manju said the country is heading towards an anarchic condition as the issues like price-hike, power crises and high income gap between the rich and the poor are not addressed by the government. Pointing to the issue of forming an alliance with Jatiya Party (Ershad), he cautioned the leaders of different political parties saying, "If you consider the demise of the autocratic government in 1990 as a triumph of the democracy-loving people then do not dare to make play with them."

Sounding a note of warning to vested quarters who plan to implement their evil design in the upcoming general election, Manju said, "This time people will cast their votes to resist all kinds of conspiracy."

"Though we have failed to fight discrimination in the society, we (the older generation) presented you (the students) most valued independence, a constitution and an electoral system," he told the

Acid attack on housewife in Satkhira UNB, Satkhira A housewife was injured when unknown miscreants threw acid on her at Chhutipur village in Devhata in the early hours of yesterday. The victim, Jahanara Khatun, mother of three children, was rushed to Shakhipur Health Complex with burn injuries in her face, chest and back. She told the police that some unknown youths threw acid through the window when she was asleep at around 2:00am. Her husband Akram Hossain was not at home at that time. The police suspect that a land dispute led to the acid attack. However, no-one was arrested as of yesterday evening.

council. "Now you would shoulder the responsibility to root out all types of ills prevailing in the society," he urged the student leaders and activists. JP Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam urged JCS leaders and activists to bring back the golden image of student-politics. JCS President Jahangir Alam Prodhan presided over the programme where its General

Secretary Nazrul Islam, JP Presidium Members Amena Bari, Abdul Latif Mallick, Azam Khan, Vice-chairman Abu Sayeed Khan, Joint Secretary General Sadat Siddiqui and city Convenor Abdur Rahim also spoke. Later, a 101-member executive committee for 2006-07 was formed at the council with Md Nazrul Islam and Md Sabbir Ahmed Karim as president and general secretary respectively.

Int'l conference on MIS held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international conference on "Minimally Invasive Surgery: Innovative Approaches" was held at a local hotel in the capital yesterday. Eminent surgeons from home and abroad attended the conference to exchange their views. Minimally Invasive Surgery (MIS) is a combination of modern technology and surgical innovation, which aims to surgical procedures with minimal physical and psychological trauma. Nowadays, MIS has become the standard of care for different surgical procedures. It is widely accepted in nearly all medical specialities, replacing traditional, open method of surgery, the surgeons observed. The conference was organised by Lab Aid Specialised Hospital. Professor MA Hadi, president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) was the chief guest in the inaugural ceremony of the confer-

ence. Four scientific sessions followed the inaugural session, dedicated to four disciplines of MIS and focusing on the development and possibilities of this kind of surgery. Gastroenterologist Dr K Ravindranath, gynaecologist Dr Gautam Khastgir, neurologist Dr CE Deopujari and Dr Alok Ranjan, urologist Dr Amit Ghose, all from India, Dr Dean Chi-Siong Koh from Singapore, and some eminent surgeons of the country presented papers in the conference. Prof Md Khademul Islam, Prof Humayun Kabir Chowdhury, Prof Md Afzal Hossain, Dr Kanak Kanti Barua, Prof MA Wahab and Prof Shahla Khatun were the chairpersons of different scientific sessions. Although we are lagging behind in institutionalising MIS in different disciplines of surgery, speakers hoped that the conference would help to develop professional expertise in the country.

WEATHER TODAY

Temperature may fall

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi division during the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a forecast. It said that day temperature may fall slightly over the country. Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Sylhet and the lowest of 23.9 degrees at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:48pm today and rises at 5:21am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	percentage	Humidity in	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.5	27.0	80	65
Chittagong	32.0	26.2	76	--
Rajshahi	32.7	27.5	81	75
Khulna	33.5	27.0	91	78
Barisal	31.8	26.6	84	76
Sylhet	35.0	25.7	81	63
Cox's Bazar	30.5	25.4	89	--

Call to resolve loadshedding in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Speakers at a rally yesterday threatened to stop payment of electricity bills in near future unless the problem of severe loadshedding is resolved. They also threatened tougher agitation from next month if the government does not allocate necessary fund for implementation of development projects in greater Khulna. The rally was organised by Sushashaner Janyo Pracharavijan, an NGO, at the Picture Palace Square in the city. Earlier, a human chain was formed to press home the demand.

DEATH OF KALANDIAR KABIR Police take Ibrahim on remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday took Ibrahim on a one-day remand for interrogation in connection with the mysterious death of Kalandiar Kabir, a freedom fighter. Kabir, 54, committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of his house in the early hours of Friday after alleged pressure from Ibrahim, a money-lender, over a financial transaction. Kalandiar acted as guarantor when his friend Tushar, managing director of Ghomoti Auto Mills, took Tk 38 lakh as loan from Ibrahim around eight months back, family sources said. As Tushar failed to repay the money in due time Ibrahim exerted excessive pressure on Kalandiar to get back the money which prompted him to commit suicide, they added. Kalandiar left a note where he blamed Tushar responsible for his death. Kalandiar's family members said both Tushar and Ibrahim are responsible for his death as they jointly conspired to take the possession of their house. Police have been looking for Tushar who went into hiding since Friday.

POLICE HOSPITALS Nursing attendants demand reinstatement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighteen female and one male nursing attendants of six divisional police hospitals and Sarda Police Academy Hospital, who recently lost their jobs, yesterday urged the authorities to reinstate them in their jobs. They protested the authorities' decision to abolish the nursing attendant posts from the police hospitals and said having lost the jobs, they are leading a miserable life, as they have no other way out of income. They also threatened to go for tougher movement if their demand is not met immediately. They were speaking at a press conference at Photojournalists' Association office in the city. They said they had been working since April 2004, after getting appointment for the post under Bangladesh Police Hospitals Modernisation Project. Bithika Rani Mistri, convener of Nursing Attendant Movement Committee, asked the authorities how they abolished the post of nursing attendants while the other posts under the project remained effective. "There are the nursing attendants at different hospitals and recently the government ran an advertisement for the post for Ansar and VDP but here the authorities abolished it," said Bithika. She said they met the director of the project Doctor Md Harun-or-Rashid (director of central police hospital) on July 12 but he said he has nothing to do for them.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

The Millennium University will organise a seminar entitled 'Healthcare, global economy and generics- how to partner'. Venue: Democracy auditorium at Momenbagh. Time: 3:30pm.

Memorial meeting

Sanskriti Bikash Kendra will hold a memorial meeting to pay tribute to Mizanur Rahman, founder editor of 'Mizanur Rahmaner Troimashik Patrika'. Venue: Kendra meeting room. Time: 7:00pm.

Book launch

A novel entitled 'A list of offences' by Dilruba Z Ara will be unveiled. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.



Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a view exchange meeting with the leaders of 16 garment workers associations at the party office in the city yesterday.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION RULES 2006 Professional bodies concerned over delay in implementation

Six professional and civil society organisations have expressed grave concern at the government decision to delay the implementation of the Building Construction Rules, 2006 (BRC-2006) for Dhaka until December 31, 2006, says a press release. In a joint meeting recently, they urged the government to immediately implement the BRC-2006 for greater public interest. The organisations are the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), Centre for Urban Studies (CUS), Real Estate and Housing Agencies of Bangladesh (Rehab), Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), and the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB). They said the BRC-2006 was framed through intensive three years of efforts by professional bodies, experts and civil society

members in consultation with the government, after examination of building control tools in various countries, and with specific consideration of land supply, population density and resource constraints of Bangladesh. BRC-2006 replaces the archaic constraints of the previous rules, which encouraged its evasion and abuse. They alleged that a vested quarter in the Rajuk for self-interest is negatively portraying the BRC-2006 through disinformation to public as well as to the government with a view to preventing the implementation process. On July 1, the BRC-2006 officially became effective, but for no reason a new circular signed by a senior asst secretary of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works extended the life of the old rules till December 31 this year. The professional and civic bod-

ies said the BRC-2006 is a landmark step for rescuing Dhaka from the road to decay and it promises immense benefits to all landowners. They further said the government should take appropriate steps for wide publicity of the benefits of BRC-2006 and the professional bodies will extend all cooperation to this effort. On behalf of their respective organisations, Engr Emdadul Huq from IEB, Prof Gholam Mortaza, general secretary of BIP, Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of CUS, Engr MA Awwal, president of Rehab, Shahidul Huq Khan, general secretary of Bapa and Khadem Ali, president of IAB were present. Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela), whose representative could not be present at the meeting, also endorsed the demand.



Save the Environment Movement and Guardians' Forum to protect the Rights of the Intellectually Disabled form a human chain at Shahbag in the city yesterday protesting construction of buildings on playground.

Under-fire Syria gets 'ready for anything'

AFP, Damascus

Syria is bracing itself for "any eventuality" as the regime nervously eyes a relentless Israeli operation over the border in Lebanon and faces up to increasingly hostile US rhetoric. "Syria is in confrontation with Israel. It is watching the situation and is ready to defend itself against any eventuality," said Elias Murad, editor of the ruling Baath party newspaper Al-Baath. He expressed fear of an "extension of the Israeli operation in the south of Lebanon or towards Syria," a move that would open a third front on top of Israel's continuing operations in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. An irate Israel has lumped Damascus together in an "axis of terror" with Iran over their backing for Hezbollah, whose capture of two Israeli soldiers sparked the Lebanon offensive that has already left more than 60 people dead. The sabre rattling from Israel has been matched by comments from US President George W. Bush, already at odds with Damascus over its alleged role in the murder of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

"Syria needs to be held to account" over the dramatic escalation of violence in the Middle East, Bush said in Germany on Thursday. "President (Bashar al-) Assad needs to show some leadership towards peace." The Syrian newspaper ath-Thawra wrote that the only way to resolve the crisis was for Israel "to accept the conditions posed by the resistance", referring to a prisoner exchange steadfastly rejected by the Jewish state. The dramatic escalation in Lebanon has sparked fears of an even wider conflict and fellow US arch-foe Iran lost no time in saying it would stand behind its under-fire Arab ally in the event of any attack. "If Israel commits another act of idiocy and aggresses Syria, this will be the same as an aggression against the entire Islamic world and it will receive a stinging response," said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. "The Israeli aggressions are a result of the weakness of a puppet regime that is on its way towards disappearing," he told Assad in a telephone conversation. Israel has vowed to break

Hezbollah and is also in open conflict in the Gaza Strip with Palestinian militant group Hamas, many of whose key leaders, like political supremo Khaled Meshal, have found sanctuary in Syrian exile. "The Hezbollah would not be able to operate in Lebanon without clear Syrian sponsorship," fumed Israeli foreign ministry official Gideon Meir, branding Iran the militia's "main benefactor." "Consequently, Israel views Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran as primary elements in the axis of terror and hate, threatening not only Israel but the entire world," Meir added. If Hezbollah has long-range rockets and "tries to hit Haifa with projectiles developed with Syria's help, Israel has no choice but to hit Damascus," Yuval Steinitz, the hawkish former chairman of the parliamentary defence and foreign affairs committee said. Last month, Israeli warplanes overflew Assad's palace in northern Syria while the president was inside, an operation Syrian state television called an "aggressive act and an unacceptable provocation".

TRIPLE MURDER CASE Rab detains two for interrogation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday detained two people for interrogation in connection with the murder of two scrap iron businessmen and their employee. The detainees are Hobi Howladar and Siddiqur Rahman, scrap iron businessmen of Hathkola area in the city. On Thursday morning, three mutilated bodies were recovered from drums at Valuka in Mymensingh district. Two of them were identified as Habibur Rahman Habul, 45, an iron scarp businessman of Hathkola, and Abul Kalam, 35, his employee. Wife and nephew of Habul identified the bodies on Friday morning. M A Rob, assistant police super, and Saiful Islam, sub-inspector and investigation officer of the triple murder case, along with police officials of Valuka Police Stations visited Barisal on Saturday. In presence of Sheikh Sobhan and Mohammad Ali, president and secretary of the scrap iron businessmen association, and Md Yunus, a BCC ward commissioner, police seized some documents breaking the locks of the shop of Habul. Local scrap iron businessmen kept the shutters of their shops down on Saturday and hoisted black flag atop the office of their association condemning the killings. Neighbour and other businessmen said Habul and Kalam went missing since they left for Dhaka about seven days ago.

593 students receive 'Mayor Sikkha Padak 2006' in Rajshahi

RU CORRESPONDENT

593 students who achieved GPA-5 in the SSC and Dakhil examinations under Rajshahi board in 2006 received 'Mayor Sikkha Padak-06' yesterday. Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu distributed the prizes among the successful students at a function held at RCC Nagar Bhaban hall room with RCC Education Committee Chairman Gias Uddin in the chair. RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain and pro-VC Prof Mamunul Keramat attended the function as special guests. The mayor said the accolades would encourage the students to keep up such good works in future. He urged them to explore their talents for the welfare of the country and countrymen. The corporation's patronisation will be continued, he assured. Among the GPA-5 holders there were 66 Dakhil examinees from 40 schools and 15 madrasas of the city and Paba upazila. 14 students who got primary scholarships last year were also honoured in the function.

3 electrocuted in Chandpur

UNB, Chandpur

Three people, including a girl, were electrocuted and another three injured at Sholadanga village in Faridganj upazila yesterday morning. The dead were identified as Wahidullah, 50, Abdur Rob, 45, and Shabnoor, 8. Sources said Shabnoor first came into contact with an electrified bird in a pond when she tried to catch a trap caught in the trap. When Wahidullah and Abdur Rab came to the aid of the girl, they also suffered electric shocks and died, said a witness. Three other people -- Malek, Nurul Islam and Sakina -- were also seriously injured at the time. They were rushed to Sadar Hospital.

Death anniversary



Today is the 34th death anniversary of Gazi Alauddin Master, a freedom fighter, academic and founder general secretary of Keraniganj Thana Awami League, says a press release. On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his Narayanganj residence. Besides, Notun Bakter Char High School and Bandhu Mahal of Bramangonj, Keraniganj will hold discussion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil to observe the day.