

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

Paikgacha at 1:30pm, leaving five people severely injured.

The injured were admitted to Paikgacha 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 Beltaik 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.

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 Janay 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 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.



PHOTO: STAR
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 (BCR-2006) for Dhaka until December 31, 2006, says a press release.

In a joint meeting recently, they urged the government to immediately implement the BCR-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 BCR-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. BCR-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 BCR-2006 through disinformation to public as well as to the government with a view to preventing the implementation process.

On July 1, the BCR-2006 officially became effective, but for no reason a new circular signed by a senior assistant 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 Ghulam 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.



PHOTO: STAR
Save the Environment Movement and Guardians' Forum to protect the Rights of the Intellectually Disabled form a human chain at Shahbagh 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 Athawra 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.

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.

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.

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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.

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.

Three other people -- Malek, Nurul Islam and Sakina -- were also seriously injured at the time. They were rushed to Sadar Hospital.

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 Howlader and Siddiqur Rahman, scrap iron businessmen of Hatchola 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 scrap businessman of Hatchola, and Abdul 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 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 Dak hil 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.

RJU 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 Dak hil examinees from 40 schools and 15 madrasas of the city and Pabu 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 electricified trap in a pond when she tried to catch a bird caught in the trap.

When Wahidullah and Abdur Rob 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, Qurankhawni and milad mahfil will be held at his Narayanganj residence.

Besides, Notun Bakter Char High School and Bandhu Mahal of Bramangunj, Keraniganj will hold discussion, Qurankhawni and milad mahfil to observe the day.

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 about 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.

Temperature may fall

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.

JCS President Jahangir Alam Prodhan presided over the programme where its General

secret