

Five killed, 58 injured in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least five people were killed and 58 others injured in separate road accidents in Gazipur, Gaibandha, Mymensingh, Patuakhali, Sylhet and Brahmanbaria yesterday and on Thursday.

Our Correspondent in Gazipur adds: A collision between two trucks on Gazipur-Tangail highway left one person dead on Thursday night.

The victim was identified as Zahidul Islam, 30, a worker who hailed from Aatgram of Bogra.

The accident took place near Kaliakoir Bazar. Police seized both the trucks.

A case has been filed with Kaliakoir police.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha reports: One person was killed and at least 45 people were injured in separate road accidents here yesterday.

Police said a loaded trolley suddenly turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch at Kishamat Bagchi on Gaibandha-Sadullapur road, leaving one Sohel Mia, 12, dead on the spot.

Meanwhile, a Panchaghar-bound BRTC coach from Gaibandha collided head-on with a Sunderganj-bound coach com-

ing from opposite direction due to thick fog at Dakgharh on Gaibandha-Palashbari highway.

At least 45 passengers of both the vehicles sustained injuries. Of the injured, five were rushed to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition and 15 others admitted to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital.

Two separate cases were filed with Sadullapur and Palashbari police stations.

Our Correspondent from Mymensingh adds: A woman was killed and her son was injured critically in a road accident at Dhara on Mymensingh-Haluaghat highway in Haluaghat upazila here yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Nasima Khatun, 25, wife of Md Nurul Islam of village Nagua in Phulpur upazila.

Police and locals said the accident took place when a truck crushed the rickshaw in which Nasima and her son Waliullah, 7, were going to Dhara Bus Stand in Haluaghat upazila at around 10.30am, leaving Nasima dead on the spot and her son injured critically.

Waliullah was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College

Hospital (MMCH) from where he was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for better treatment.

The body was sent to MMCH morgue for autopsy.

Our Correspondent from Patuakhali adds: One killed in a road accident on Patuakhali-Kuakata road yesterday.

The victims was identified as Nurul Haq Molla, 70, of Auliapur village under Patuakhali sadar upazila.

Witnesses said Nurul Haq crushed under the wheels of a police van of Mirzaganj Police Station when he was crossing a road at Basak Bazar area. Local people rushed him to Patuakhali General Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 2:00pm.

Victim's relatives assaulted Dr Musahid Uddin for his alleged negligence.

Later, a group of people led by one Badsha and beat up the victim's relatives. Victim's son Siddikur Rahman, 40, Kamal Hossain, 25, grandson Rezaul, 14, and relative Rajib, 22, were admitted to a local clinic in critical condition.

UNB from Sylhet adds: A man

was killed and six people were injured critically in two road accidents on Sylhet-Tamabeel road yesterday.

A middle-aged man was killed and his wife injured critically when a truck rammed a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Chamelibagh area, leaving its passenger Rastru Miah, 45, dead on the spot and his wife Marzina, 35, injured critically.

Marzina was admitted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital.

In another accident, five people were injured seriously when a truck hit a human hauler at Chiknagul area at about 1:00pm.

The injured were admitted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital (SOMCH).

Our Correspondent from Brahmanbaria adds: Six people were injured when a tempo fell into a wayside ditch near Nasirnagar Degree College under Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila in the district on Thursday night.

The injured are tempo driver Shahjahan Mia, 35, Khaleque Mia, 35, Rareshed Mia, 22, Ramij Ali, 30, Nayon Mia, 32, and Habib Mia, 22.



PHOTO: STAR

Relatives of arrestees gather in front of the court hajat at the Judge Court in the city yesterday in search of their near and dear ones. Several hundred people were arrested in a countrywide drive ahead of grand alliance's blockade programmes on January 7 and 8.

DIESEL CRISIS IN N-REGION

People suffer as bus service disrupted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Short supply of diesel has led to the suspension of several bus services on various routes in the northern region, causing untold suffering to people trying to reach their destinations after celebrating Eid at their village homes.

Leaders of Sirajganj transport owners and workers association said people have started to return to cities and towns to join their work after Eid holidays, but the diesel crisis has forced the transport operators to suspend bus services.

Blaming the caretaker government for the diesel crisis, the leaders demanded adequate supply of fuel oil and steps to

control its prices.

They said the filling station owners have raised the price of diesel by Tk 5 to Tk 8 per litre on the plea of Eid vacation, but it is difficult to charge the passengers extra fare.

Some filling station owners said Baghabari oil depots have failed to supply diesel to them. The oil lorries have returned from the depots without diesel supplies.

Only a few filling stations received diesel supplies, but the quantity is too little to meet the demand. So, they are selling diesel at a rate higher than the price fixed by the government, the owners said.

When contacted, Rabiul Alam, superintendent of Jamuna depot,

Abdul Jalil of Meghna depot and Shahjahan Hawlader of Padma depot in Baghabari said they could not supply fuel oil to dealers as the oil barges could not reach the depots in the last seven days. The barges remained stuck on underwater shoals at Nakalia, Mohonganj and Pechakhola points in Jamuna river under Pabna district, they claimed.

They also said that the problem will not be solved until proper dredging is completed.

Leaders of transport owners and workers association called on the authorities to immediately take steps to stop smuggling of diesel to India.

They also threatened to launch tougher agitation if their demand is not met soon.

Hawaiian canoes set for epic Pacific journey

MAJURO, *Apf*

Two Hawaiian outrigger canoes are due to embark on an epic 2,300 mile (3,700 kilometres) voyage from Hawaii to Micronesia today using only the stars and sun for navigation.

The crew of the two double-hulled canoes are reviving the methods of Polynesian sailors of the past who crossed vast distances in the Pacific Ocean without any instruments to guide their way.

The canoe Maisu, launched late last month on Hawaii island, will be accompanied by its more famous sister canoe, the Hokule'a, which made the first modern day canoe voyage from Hawaii to Tahiti in 1976.

Maisu was built by the Hawaii-based Polynesian Voyaging Society as a gift to honour Mau Pialiug, a renowned master navigator from the tiny atoll of Satawal in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Pialiug is credited with inspiring a new generation of Hawaiian navigators and canoe builders.

"It took one man (Pialiug) to get the Hokule'a to Tahiti in 1976 and spark pride in Hawaii and throughout Polynesia," said the Voyaging Society's Chadd Paishon, who was in the Marshall Islands capital Majuro to organise the voyage.



PHOTO: STAR

As a cold wave sweeps the country, a poor woman sits in the sun on a footpath near the Zero Point in the city yesterday to warm herself.

10,000 Chinese domain names vanish amid web chaos

BEIJING, *Apf*

Nearly 10,000 Chinese website operators have lost the use of their .com internet addresses due to telecom problems caused by last month's earthquake near Taiwan, state media reported.

The quake, which severed major international telecommunications lines, caused thousands of .com domain names held by Chinese users to vanish from world registries, the Beijing Times reported, citing domain registry sources.

Lingering disruptions to overseas Web connections also have prevented them from accessing the overseas registries to re-register

the names.

"So far, a large number of domain names held by businesses have been snatched by overseas investors, causing businesses to suffer losses," the newspaper said. It provided no examples.

Domain names ending in .com or other suffixes provide easily recognisable names for website addresses, which are actually a series of underlying numbers.

Though underlying websites are unaffected, the paper said more than 9,000 domain-holders had lost use of their .com addresses, and the number was expected to grow while the internet disruptions last.

The undersea quake damaged cables that carry most of the

region's telecom traffic, sparking widespread communications disruptions affecting Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and elsewhere.

Knock-on problems occurred as far away as Australia.

Telecommunications firms have sent repair ships to the waters off southern Taiwan, where the 7.1 quake hit on December 26, to repair the damage but have said connections might not be fully restored for weeks.

Access in China to overseas websites was cut off for several days following the quake. Though largely restored, the connections remain slower than normal.

Reception to Prof Yunus in Chandpur on Jan 12

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus will be accorded a grand civic reception in Chandpur on January 12.

The reception ceremony will take place on Hasan Ali Govt High School ground at 3:00pm, the organisers said.

A 101-member preparatory committee for the reception has been formed with Chandpur pourasava Chairman Nasiruddin Ahmed as its convener and Chandpur Press Club President Iqbal Bin Bashir as member-secretary.

The committee held a preparatory meeting at the press club on Thursday evening.

Prof Yunus will also visit a Grameen Bank branch at Narayanpur in Matlab South upazila on the day.

Arrest of former state minister demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

District Awami League President Dr Shamsul Hoque Bhuiyan has urged the local administration to arrest ex-state minister for education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon for launching an attack on Kochua unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) President Kamal Hossain and others on Thursday.

While talking to this correspondent he said Kamal received bullet injuries in the sudden attack launched by Milon and his cadres at Kochua sadar.

The district unit of BCL took out a protest procession in the town the same night condemning Milon's attack.

When contacted, Milon denied the allegation.

Meanwhile, seriously injured BNP leader and Chairman of Akania Union Parishad Mizanur Rahman's brother Khalilur Rahman filed a case with Kochua Police Station on Thursday night accusing 12 BCL leaders for injuring his brother.

Following the case, police arrested BCL leaders and activists Shahabuddin, Mostafa, Helal and Sharif from Kochua health complex.

Woman chopped to death after rape in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

A woman was chopped to death after rape by miscreants in Meherpur district on Thursday night.

The victim was identified as Mabiha Khatun, 36, daughter of Zobed Ali of Mujibnagar village. She was a widow.

Police said a gang of criminals stormed into the house of Zobed and picked up Mabiha at gunpoint at about 9:30pm.

The gang raped the woman and chopped her into four pieces at an unknown place.

Later, they dumped the body in front of Mujibnagar BDR camp.

The BDR has confirmed the incident.

The body was sent to Meherpur General Hospital yesterday morning. A case was filed with Mujibnagar Police Station in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR

Leaders and activists of grand alliance stage a demonstration in Chittagong yesterday demanding resignation of President Iajuddin Ahmed as the chief adviser to the caretaker government and announcement of fresh election schedule.

Comrade Aruna Sen passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran communist leader Comrade Aruna Sen, wife of late Shanti Sen and mother of Gono Sanskriti Front leader Chanchal Sen, passed away due to brain haemorrhage yesterday morning at the age of 96.

She had been undergoing treatment at National Medical College Hospital in the city.

Her dead body was taken to Raamvodropur village at Shariatpur for cremation.

Aruna Sen was born at Palang at Shariatpur district. Since 40's she had been working to organise the disadvantaged women for rights movement and continued till 1970s as the member of undivided communist party. She was also the President of Nari Sangram Parishad.

In her long battle against autocracy and communalism she was tortured by the then government and sentenced to jail.

Leaders of the left and progressive parties as well as the women leaders went to the hospital with wreaths to pay homage to the veteran leader.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim, Workers' Party General Secretary Bimol Bishwas, Dilip Barua of Bangladesh Sammayabadi Dal and Haider Anwar Khan of Gono Sanskriti Front were also present.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh (WPB) and 11-party leaders at different statements expressed deep shock at the death of Aruna Sen.

Expressing shock and sympathy for the bereaved family, Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Bimol Bishwas said the nation would remember her for her contributions to generate women movement since 1940.

They also urged all to take lesson from the life of Aruna Sen and work for changing the society.

17 shops gutted in 2 districts

UNB, Dhaka

At least 17 shops were gutted in Jhalakati and Kishoreganj yesterday.

Jhalakati correspondent adds: A devastating fire gutted 10 shops at Niamoti Bazar in Bakerganj upazila in Barisal early yesterday.

Sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at a grocery shop at about 3:00am and soon engulfed the adjoining shops.

Four units of fire fighters from Jhalakati and Barisal city rushed to the spot and doused the blaze with the help of local people.

The affected traders claimed

that cash and valuables worth Tk 70 lakh were gutted in the fire.

Another report from Kishoreganj says: Fire burned down seven shops at Hatrapara Bazar in Karimganj upazila early yesterday.

Fire brigade sources said the blaze originating from an electric short circuit at a shop at about 1:00am and soon engulfed the adjacent shops, burning down valuables worth about Tk 50 lakh.

On information, fire fighters from local fire station rushed to the spot and put out the blaze after one hour of frantic efforts with the help of local people.



Cold wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

The prevailing mild to moderate cold wave over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Khulna and Barisal divisions and northern part of Chittagong division may continue in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

A Met Office forecast said dry weather will prevail over the country and moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins.

Country's highest temperature 25.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 7.7 degree Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:26pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in in celsius	
percentage	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	20.0	09.7	95	82
Chittagong	24.8	12.2	95	70
Rajshahi	21.2	9.4	95	75
Khulna	19.2	10.0	93	-
Barisal	19.8	9.6	100	89
Sylhet	24.8	11.0	100	82
Cox's Bazar	25.2	13.6	79	75

At least 10 people were injured, three of them critically, in a clash between the two groups of farmers on the outskirts of the city yesterday.

The critically injured Nurul, Asiat and Manik have been admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital.

Mathier police said the clash took place when a group of farmers led by Asiat Ali went to cultivate a newly emerged shoal in the river Padma at about noon.

Soon they were challenged by another group led by Nurul Islam.

The clash lasted for an hour leaving 10 farmers of both groups injured.

Additional police have been deployed in the area to avert any further clashes.