

Road crashes kill 7, injure 75

STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed and 75 others, including eight women, injured in separate road accidents in different districts yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Chittagong adds: A shop owner was killed and another injured in a road accident in the port city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Nantu Dev Nath, 40, son of Axmoy Nath of Halishahar.

The accident occurred a speeding bus rammed into a roadside grocery shop at South Kattali Shahid Nagpara area under Halishahar Police Station at around 7:30 am, leaving Nantu and an unidentified boy injured.

The bus got into the shop when the driver lost control over the steering while returning carrying some workers in a nearby garment factory, the on-duty officer in Halishahar Police Station said.

The injured were rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where Nantu succumbed to his injuries at around 8:30am.

Police arrested the bus driver Rasel and helper Sabuj and seized the bus.

UNB reports: An unidentified pedestrian was killed on the spot when a Chittagong-bound truck knocked him down in West Patia area at about 11:30am.

Yet in another accident, a cab driver, Shahabuddin, died on the spot and three passengers were injured when a Dhaka-bound bus hit

the cab while overtaking another bus in Fajdarhat area at noon.

The injured were admitted to a local hospital.

Our Correspondent from Kishoreganj adds: One person was killed and two others were critically injured in a road accident at Karimganj road yesterday.

The dead was identified as rickshawpuller Khurshid Mia, 55 of Jangalbari village of Karimganj upazila and critically injured rickshaw passengers Zahurul Islam, 35, and his brother Kamrul Islam, 33, of Tarapara area of Kishoreganj town.

Police and locals said the accident occurred when a Bhairab-bound speeding bus hit a rickshaw coming from opposite direction at Zeetur Mill area, leaving Khurshid dead on the spot and Zahurul and Kamrul injured.

Kamrul was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Karimganj police said.

Police seized the bus but the driver managed to escape.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha reports: At least 48 people were injured when a passenger bus plunged into a roadside ditch at Dhaperhat under Sadullapur Upazila on Rangpur-Bogra highway early hours of yesterday.

A Khulna-bound passenger coach with 65 devotees from Kurigram suddenly turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch at Dhaperhat on Rangpur-Bogra highway when the driver lost his control over the steering. The devotees were going to attend an urs in

Khulna.

The fire service men from Gaibandha rushed to the spot and rescued the passengers trapped inside the coach. The driver and helper, however, managed to escape soon after the accident.

Due to impact of accident 48 persons were received injuries, four of them critical. The seriously injured are Asad, 47, Mofizul, 52, Razzak, 38, and Shahidul, 36 were sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

A case was filed with Sadullapur police station.

Our Correspondent from Patuakhali adds: At least 20 people, including eight women, were injured when a passenger bus fell into a roadside ditch at Dumki.

The accident occurred at about 3:30pm when the driver of a Patuakhali-bound bus lost his control over the steering.

Of the injured, Goutam, 30, Parvin, 22, Kahinur, 30, Nasim, 32, Shahadat, 28, Jahangir, 35, Yunus Ali, 40 and Nurul Islam were rushed to Dumki Lutheran Healthcare Clinic in critical condition.

Our correspondent from Brahmanbaria says: A youth was killed when the wheels of a speeding truck on Brahmanbaria- Comilla highway at Kasba Upazila of the district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Ripon, 15, son of Bahar Mia of Chandanasar village.

According to an eyewitness, the Comilla-bound truck from Brahmanbaria knocked down Ripon while he was crossing the road near

Tinlake Peer bus stand.

Ripon succumbed to his injuries on the way to hospital.

The driver and helper along with their truck managed to escape.

Our correspondent from Moulvibazar adds: A man was killed and another one injured seriously in a road accident on Dhaka-Moulvibazar-Sylhet highway yesterday.

Srimongal police said Masaddar Ali, 55, a health inspector of the local upazila health complex, died on the spot when a speedy covered van hit from behind their Mishuk (country-made three-wheeler) at Noagaon.

Karim, another passenger of the Mishuk, was injured and he was admitted to Srimongal health complex.

Police seized the covered van.

A case was filed with Srimongal Police Station in this connection.

Our correspondent from Chandpur adds: A minor boy was killed in a road accident on Chandpur-Comilla highway on Wednesday night.

He was identified as Bappi, 6, son of Monir Hossain of Mohmaya village under Hajiganj upazila.

Police and witnesses said Bappi came to attend a Waj Mahfil at Devpur when a Chandpur-bound bus from Comilla ran over him killing him on the spot.

The angry mob put barricade on the busy Chandpur-Comilla highway for over an hour.



PHOTO: STAR

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman launches a book titled 'Bangla language, literature and cultural movement' by Prof Rafiqul Islam at Nazrul Mancha at the Bangla Academy in the city yesterday. On his left is Prof Anisuzzaman while on his right are the author and Prof Sakawat Ali Khan.

Change mentality to serve people with disability

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called for implementing Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001 to involve physically and mentally challenged people in the main stream of life.

They also stressed the need for change of mentality at familial, societal and state level to make people with disability self-confident in leading their life.

The workshop titled 'Role of the government and civil society for the implementation of Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001' was organised by Action on Disability and Development (ADD) at the seminar room of Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) in the city.

In a written statement Fazlul Azim of ADD said although a total of 10 percent of the population is disabled they are deprived of different facilities at familial, societal and state level.

"If the Zila Committees for persons with disability are made active, problems regarding their admission in school, free education, vocational training and training for their teach-

ers can be resolved," he added.

Speaking as chief guest Muhammad Maksudur Rahman, additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka district, expressed regret that the Welfare Act 2001 is yet to be implemented completely.

Stressing the need for changing mentality, he urged all to work together for the development of the people with disability.

DU 'Ga' unit admission test today

DU CORRESPONDENT

The admission test of Dhaka University (DU) under 'Ga' unit will be held today.

Students seeking to enrol on first year honours courses under Business Studies Faculty for 2006-07 session will take the test beginning at 10:00am.

This year, a total of 25,800 application forms were sold against 844 seats in this faculty.

"Economic constraint is not the major obstacle but mentality," he added.

Shafiqul Islam, deputy director of Social Welfare Department, pointed out the lack of adequate manpower to coordinate all the matters related to disability issues.

He also observed that often the specialised and training institutions for the people with disability at district level are found empty.

He urged their families to utilise these institutions.

Rina Roy of Manusher Jonno, Aktar Hossain and Joly Aktar of National Grassroots Disabled Organisation, and Mostafa Kamal of ADD also spoke on the occasion.

"Smritir Sat Kahon" published

BSS, Dhaka

The publication ceremony of a book of memoirs titled "Smritir Sat Kahon" written by former civil servant Sultanuz Zaman Khan was held at National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday.

Renowned educationist Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui was the chief guest at the function with elderly journalist, rhyme composer and poet Faiz Ahmed in the chair.

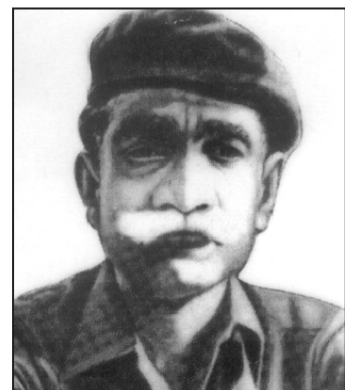
Finance Adviser AB Mirza Mohammad Azizul Islam was also present as special guest.

Prof Qazi Madina moderated the function while publisher of the book Mafidul Haque and Managing Director and Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury also spoke.

"This book of memoirs bears the complete testimony to his experiences that will be beneficial for those who want to join the civil service in future," observed Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui.

The finance adviser congratulated the writer for publishing such an impressive book. "The book is wonderful as it has been written by a bureaucrat, something that is rare in our country," he said.

Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury described the book as a master piece that has contained last 50 years' socio-economic changes into a documented scripture.



Death anniversary of Gen Osmani today

Today is the 23rd death anniversary of General MAG Osmani, the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces during the War of Liberation, says a press release.

Different organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

Bangabir Osmani Smriti Parishad will place wreaths at his graveyard in Sylhet in the morning and hold a discussion at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital at 4:00pm.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain, Maj Gen (ret'd) Mainul Hossain Chowdhury and Maj Gen (ret'd) Sayed Muhammad Ibrahim will take part in the discussion.

Meanwhile, Sylhet Division Development Council in a statement yesterday urged the caretaker government to observe the day at the state level.

It will also hold a discussion and doa mahfil at its Naya Paltan office.

Kazi Aref

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Kazi Aref, a leader of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) who was killed along with his four comrades while addressing a rally against terrorism in Kushtia in 1999, says a press release.

He was an organiser of the liberation war.

When the historic six-point was placed before the nation in 1966, Kazi Aref was the president of Chhatra League, Dhaka City unit.

He was the founding member of JSD and had been the president of the party until his death.

To mark the day different socio-political organisations have taken up elaborate programmes.

Kazi Aref Parishad will place wreath and offer prayers at his graveyard in Buddhijibi graveyard in the city at 8:30am.

The JSD will also place wreath at his graveyard in the morning and organise a discussion at Col Taher auditorium in the city at 4:00pm.

Awami League Presidium Member Abdur Razzak, Workers' Party leader Haidar Akbar Khan Rono, President of Secular Bangladesh Shahrier Kabir and General Secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Dr Anwar Hossain will take part in the discussion.

Motahar Hossain Siddiqui

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Motahar Hossain Siddiqui, former editor of The New Nation and a veteran politician, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his Gopibagh residence after Asr prayers.

Prof Nurul Momen

Today is the 17th death anniversary of Nityaguru Prof Nurul Momen, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held.

Different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes marking the day.

Amir Shakil

Today is the fifth death anniversary of Amir Shakil, son of late Hazi Abdul Quader of Zinzira, Keraniganj, Dhaka, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at her son's residence at Block-B, Road-5, Plot-15 at Nawab Faizunnesa Waqf Estate, Dauripara, Pallabi in the city.

Anwara Begum

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Anwara Begum, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at her son's residence at Block-B, Road-5, Plot-15 at Nawab Faizunnesa Waqf Estate, Dauripara, Pallabi in the city.



PHOTO: PID

Foreign Affairs Adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury calls on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Home ministry seeks list of ex-lawmakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry has requested the parliament secretariat to provide a list of all former lawmakers who were elected in parliamentary elections held in the country since independence.

The first parliamentary election was held in 1973 and the last election in 2001.

In a letter sent to the Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad last week, the ministry asked for the list, saying that it needs the list as the former lawmakers will be invited to a function marking the Independence Day on March 26, sources said.

At the directive of the Speaker, officials at the parliament secretariat have prepared the list and it will be sent to the home ministry next week, they added.

The officials said they have prepared a separate list of the lawmakers who passed away.

DMCH snaps 140 illegal power connections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) authorities yesterday snapped at least 140 illegal electricity connections, which were being used by commercial establishments adjacent to the hospital.

The business enterprises, including drug stores and 123 shops at a Dhaka City Corporation market, had long been using electricity through illegal connections from the DMCH, hospital sources said. These establishments are located on the roadside from DMCH emergency gate to Chankhar Pool area.

A DMCH team led by its Director Brig Gen Sarkar MA Matin conducted the drive against the illegal electricity users. The team also seized the electrical cables used in these establishments.

US Mission closed on Feb 18, 21

UNB, Dhaka

The American Embassy offices, including the American Centre, Archer K Blood American Centre Library, the student counselling service and the Consular Section will remain closed on February 18 and 21.

The US mission will be closed in observance of Presidents' Day, an American national holiday, and International Mother Language Day respectively.

UN ANTI-GRAFT CONVENTION TI welcomes CG's decision

Transparency International (TI) has welcomed and commended the decision by the caretaker government (CG) to accede to the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

The decision is most appropriate and prudent for Bangladesh's national interest, said a press release yesterday.

TI has been following with keen interest and expectation the importance attached at the highest level of the caretaker government to combating corruption with a comprehensive approach as reflected in the statement to the nation by Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed on January 22.

"The main thrust being on making the forthcoming national elections free from the influence of corruption and illicit money, we are inspired by some of the initiatives taken by Dr Ahmed's government, which includes measures for an independent judiciary and reconstitution of the Election and Anti-Corruption Commissions, aiming at making these vital institutions truly independent and effective," said Huguette Labelle, chair of TI.

"As much as we have been concerned over the years by Bangladesh's poor score in TI's Corruption Perceptions Index, we are deeply encouraged now by the significant recent steps sending strong signals nationally and internationally about the highest level of the commitment for real change."

"The initiatives reflect the demands and aspirations of every citizen of Bangladesh. If properly implemented with supportive legal and institutional reforms, the basis will be created for effective and sustainable control of corruption and establishment of transparent and accountable governance in the country," said Dr Iftekhar Zaman, executive director of TI-Bangladesh (TIB).

Ti's secretariat and TIB are ready, within their capacity, to provide any assistance that may be needed to expedite the process of Bangladesh's accession to the UN Convention, as well as implementation of other reform initiatives taken by the government, said the press release of TIB.

BRRRI RECRUITMENT Body to probe allegations of corruption

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The agriculture ministry has formed an investigation committee to inquire into the allegations of irregularities and corruption in the recruitment of scientific officers at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) in Gazipur.

The probe committee headed by Dr Dil Afroza, joint secretary (research), Ministry of Agriculture, will visit the institute on February 18, BRRI officials said.

The BRRI had invited applications for 38 posts of scientific officer and completed the written examination and vive voce of the candidates. But the ministry suspended the recruitment process at its final stage following complaints lodged by the candidates.

When contacted, BRRI acting Director General Dr Md Nur-e-Elahi confirmed the formation of the investigation committee but denied the allegation of corruption in recruitment process.

Obituary

BSS, Rajshahi

Prof Syed Mostaque Ali, former registrar of Rajshahi University (RU) and Islami University (IU) in Kushtia, died of old age complications on Tuesday night at Birdem Hospital in Dhaka at the age of 81.

He left behind his two sons and one daughter to mourn his death.

Prof Mostaque was buried at Rajshahi central graveyard.

RU Vice-chancellor Prof M Altaf Hossain and Pro-VC Prof Mamunul Keramat expressed deep shock at his death.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Syeda Sufia Khatun will be held at her residence at Gurigam village of Brahmanbaria after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

Sufia breathed her last on Monday at Green Life (New Al Razi) Hospital.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Advocate Salahuddin Ahmed will be held at his village home at Sonapur West in Feni after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

He passed away in Dhaka on January 6 at the age of 55.

Md Anwar Hossain

Chehlum of engineer Md Anwar Hossain will be held at his residence at 76 Borobagh, Mirpur-2, in the city today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held after Juma prayers.

He passed away at a hospital at Dhanmondi on January 5.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the milad and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Schoolboy killed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolboy was allegedly killed in the city yesterday.

He was identified as Amir Hossain, 18, a student of class ten of Pallabi Rashid Adarsha High School and son of Shamsul Alam of Rupnagar Residential Area.

Shah Ali police said locals found him lying unconscious in a ditch at Mirpur embankment area at around 7:00pm.

They rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Police said being drunk he fell into the ditch.

Medical sources also said they could smell liquor from the mouth of the victim.

However, Amir's family members claimed that some of his friends

called him out of their house and pushed him into the ditch.

ECDO website launched

A new website of the Sylhet NGO 'Ethnic Community Development Organisation (ECDO) was launched yesterday, says a press release.

The website focuses on the struggle of the indigenous people of North East Bangladesh. It was set up to draw the world's attention to the difficult situation faced by Bangladesh's indigenous people. The website is at <http://www.ecdo-bd.org>.

"This is the first time that information on Sylhet region's indigenous people has become available on the internet," said Lakshmi Kanta Singh, executive director of ECDO.

ECDO is a development NGO which is run by local indigenous people, based in Sylhet.

WEATHER TODAY				
Dry weather likely				
UNB, Dhaka				
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.				
Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.				
It said night temperature may rise slightly over the country.				
Highest temperature 27.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and lowest 11.8 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.				
The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:31am tomorrow.				
Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:				
City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in celsius	
percentage	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	24.5	16.2	75	55
Chittagong	27.0	17.0	92	59
Rajshahi	23.8	13.4	87	50
Khulna	24.5	17.0	77	56
Barisal	25.5	16.5	68	66
Sylhet	23.8	16.0	83	60
Cox's Bazar	27.0	17.0	90	--