

8 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least eight people were killed and 13 others injured in separate road accidents in different districts yesterday.

UNB from Keraniganj reports: A young man was killed and 10 other were injured when a bus hit a CNG-run three wheeler and a rickshaw in Kadam Ali area in South Keraniganj yesterday.

Witnesses and hospital sources said the accident occurred at 10:00am when a Dhaka Zoo-bound bus rammed into the three wheeler and the rickshaw van, coming from opposite direction, near second Buriganga Bridge's slope, leaving 10 people injured.

The injured were rushed to Mitford Hospital and Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Of them, an unidentified young man died at DMCH at 12:00 noon while the condition of Mahbub, 22, Wahid, 23, and three wheeler driver Nur Hossain, 35, was stated to be critical at Mitford Hospital.

Police seized the bus but its driver managed to flee.

Our Correspondent from Khulna adds: A man was killed in a road accident at Shibbarhi intersection under Sonadanga in Khulna yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Nawab Ali, 36, a rickshawpuller by profession.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when a passenger bus ran over Ali killing him on the spot at about 10:00am.

The bus was detained but the driver and the helper managed to escape.

A Correspondent from Natore adds: One person was killed and another injured in separate road accidents in Natore yesterday.

Witnesses said helper Zia, 35, fell from a bus and was crushed under the wheel while it was taking turn towards Pabna at around 8:30am.

Zia was rushed to Natore Sadar Hospital where on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Zia was the son of Md. Mogaher Ali of Mougram village under Singra upazila in Natore.

A motor-bike driver hits a nut seller Sugon, 12, at Kalur Moor area of the town at around 11:00am. Sugon was rushed to Natore Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha adds: A woman was crushed under the wheels of a speedy truck at Palashbari on Rangpur-Bogra highway yesterday.

Police said a speedy iron-loaded truck hit one Kohinor Begum, 45, of village Bhabanipur under Palashbari upazila from behind while she was returning home from doctor's chamber at Palashbari after treatment. She was crushed under the wheels of the truck and died on the spot.

Our Correspondent from Sirajganj adds: A woman was killed and her husband was seriously injured in a road accident at Tengasia area on Sirajganj-Enayetpur road in Belkuchi upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified as Amina Parvin, 35, wife of Jahangir Hossain of Belkuchi village. She was also a computer operator at Khawja Yunus Ali (R) Medical College and Hospital in Enayetpur.

Police and local sources said the accident took place at around 9:00am when a goods-laden truck hit a motorbike from behind at Tengasia area, leaving Amina dead on the spot and Jahangir injured.

The injured was taken to Khawja Yunus Ali (R) Medical College and Hospital at Enayetpur in a critical condition.

Police sent the body to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our Correspondent from Barisal adds: Three people, including two children, were killed and two others injured in a road accident on the Barisal-Dhaka highway in Gournodi upazila of the district on Friday.

The dead were identified as driver Joyal Fakir, 35, Khadiza, 8, and her sister Mouri, 6.

Joyal Fakir and Khadiza died on the spot while Mouri succumbed to her injuries on the way to hospital.

Witnesses and police said the accident occurred at about 8:00pm near Illa bus stand when a

microbus hit the engine drive 'Nasiman' from behind in which Abdur Razzak along with his two daughters and one son were traveling.

Local people rushed Razzak and his son Rasel, 18, to Gournodi Hospital from where Razzak was released after first aid.

BSS from Rangpur adds: Two people were killed and another injured in separate road accidents in Naogaon and Dinajpur district on Friday.

Sources said a pedestrian named Mamunur Rashid, 23, son of Anisur Rahman of Birampur Rail Colony, was killed on the spot when a picnic bus knocked him down on Dinajpur-Bogra Highway at Birampur Bazaar point under Birampur upazila in Dinajpur district.

Birampur Police arrested the driver of the bus Azad Ali and seized the bus.

In another incident, a motorcyclist was killed on the spot and his companion was injured when a truck knocked the motorcycle at Dohali point near Mohadebpur upazila in the district.

The victim was identified as Jasim Uddin, 42, son of Asir Uddin of Srirampur village in Naogaon district while the injured is Mahbuba Alam, 23, son of Solaiman Ali of nearby Gobindapur village under Mohadebpur upazila of the district.

Mohadebpur Police seized the truck from the spot but the driver managed to escape.

Meanwhile, a housewife was killed after being knocked down by a Rangpur-bound rod-laden truck from Bogra in front of Dreamland Nursery on Rangpur-Dhaka Highway under Palashbari upazila in the district on Friday evening.

Sources said the speeding truck hit Kohinor Begum, 40, wife of Abdus Salam of village Bhabanipur under the same upazila, while she was returning home after visiting a doctor in Palashbari town. She was killed on the spot.

Police seized the truck from the spot but the driver and the helper managed to escape.

Fake cable factories unearthed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court unearthed three fake cables and other electronics accessories factories at Nawabpur in the city yesterday.

The joint forces raided the market on Friday night and the mobile court led Metropolitan Magistrate Rokon Ud-Doula inspected the factories yesterday.

The court found them manufacturing cables using low quality raw materials and marketing them using labels of the established brands. It also found a factory marketing low quality electronics products manufactured using names of foreign brands.

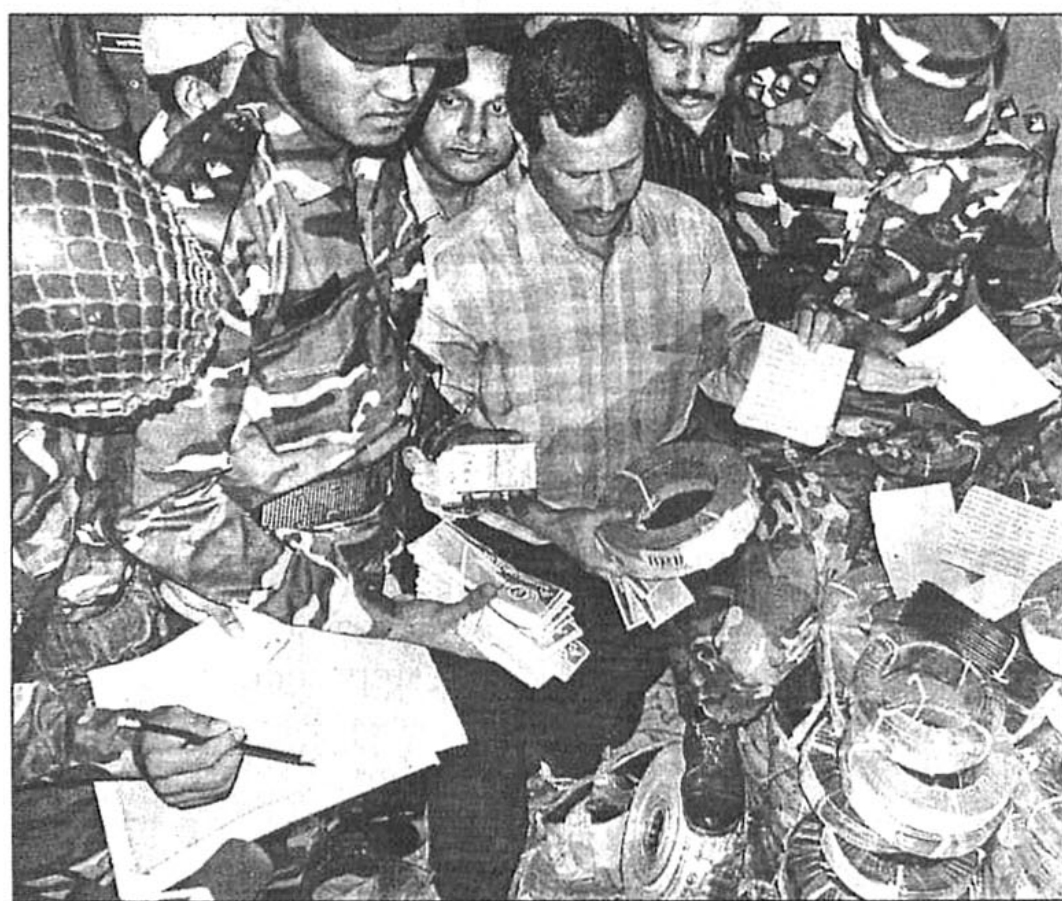
The court seized raw materials and other ingredients and machineries worth Tk 5 crore.

Joint forces arrested five employees of the factories but could not arrest any of the owners.

The mobile court issued warrant against the owners and ordered them to surrender before the court by 10:00am today.

The joint forces seized huge amount of fake labels, BSTI standard and Vat paid seal and other labels from the factories.

The mobile court ordered the concerned police station to seal the factories.



A mobile court led by Metropolitan Magistrate Rokon Ud-Doula in cooperation with joint forces raid fake cable factories at Nawabpur in the city yesterday.

Accomplice of 'Pichhi Hannan' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accomplice of killed notorious criminal 'Pichhi Hannan' was arrested yesterday during extortion at Karwan Bazar in the capital.

Police said traders caught Russel, 24, red handed along with two others while demanding Tk 5 lakh as toll from Khandoker Omar Faruk, owner of a compact disc store at DJT market.

An accomplice of Russel brandished a pistol after Faruk expressed his inability to pay the amount.

Traders gathered at the shop hearing the screaming of other salesmen of the store and caught Russel. Later, they beat him up severely and handed him over to police.

However, the two others managed to escape.

Russel confessed to the police that they were long time accomplices of Pichhi Hannan.

A case has been filed with Tejgaon Police Station in this connection.

Miracle!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mental patient jumped from the rooftop of a four-story building at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) but escaped without any major injury in yesterday's early hours.

Anwar Hossain, 50, was admitted to DMCH at 12:30am after he injured his head and hand when he was breaking furniture at his sister's house at Rayerbagh in Shyampur due to his mental illness.

His sister Karima Begum said Anwar got scuffle with his relatives over taking medicine and suddenly he started running to the rooftop of the emergency building. He threw some brick petals to his relatives when they tried to stop.

When asked, Anwar told The Daily Star that he received a minor pain at his chest for the jumping.

Freedom fighter dies in road accident in W Bengal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Md Iqbal Ahmed Shinnu, a freedom fighter and journalist of a Dinajpur-based newspaper, died in a road accident in West Bengal, India, early yesterday.

Family members said the accident took place at Sujalpur village in Malda when Iqbal along with three patients were returning from Kolkata by an ambulance.

Iqbal and the ambulance driver died on the spot as a speeding truck rammed the ambulance at around 4:00am.

Sujalpur police sent the bodies to Malda Hospital for autopsy.

Iqbal, 54, who had been working with the Aker Deshabarta since 2001, went to India on January 10.

TRAIN DERAILMENT Communication disrupted for 11 hours in Jamalpur

UNB, Jamalpur

Rail communication on Jamalpur-Mymensingh route was halted for around 11 hours as a passenger train derailed near Biddiyagang Rai Station in the district Friday afternoon.

Railway sources said the engine and one goods-laden bogie of Bahadurabad bound local train went off the track soon after leaving the station at about 2:00pm.

Four passenger trains Dhaka-bound Tista Express, Jagannathganj-bound Agnibina Express and Jamuna Express and Bahadurabad-bound Brahmaputra Express remained stranded at the station, causing immense suffering to the passengers.

Train service on the route resumed at about 12:30am as a salvage train from Mymensingh rushed in and completed its rescue operation.

Obituary

BSS, Mymensingh

Jahanara Begum, mother of former secretary of Mymensingh Press Club Mozammel Haque, passed away due to old age complications at her Kristapur residence in the town yesterday at the age of 68.

She left behind her three sons and five daughters to mourn her death.

DEEP SEAPORT Prof Yunus' statement unfortunate

Say Khulna leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Leaders of Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee (GKDACC) and different political parties yesterday expressed dismay at the statement of Nobel laureate Prof Dr Yunus about establishing a mega seaport in Chittagong.

They said if the mega seaport is established in Chittagong, the people of southwestern region will be deprived as they have long been demanding that a deep seaport be set up at Akram Point in Khulna.

In separate statements, BNP central leader and city Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, Khulna City Awami League President and former lawmaker Talukder Abdul Khaleque and Khulna City Ameer of Jamaat and former lawmaker Mian Golam Farwar said the comment of Prof Yunus at MA Aziz stadium in Chittagong on Friday is unfortunate as such comment may fuel regionalism.

City mayor said Akram Point at Mongla is the suitable place to establish a deep seaport as the experts recommended it to the government last year after a survey.

Khaleque said establishment of a deep seaport at Akram Point is a must not only for the development of southwestern region but also for the greater economic interest of the country.

Parwar said the statement of Dr Yunus is right as he hails from the Chittagong division. But he should not have made this comment as a Nobel laureate as it will rouse regional feelings among the people, he added.

Mongla Port C&F Agents' Association President Md Sultan Hossain Khan said there is no alternative to constructing deep seaport at Akram Point from economic point of view.

GKDACC Secretary General Sheikh Ashrafuzzaman in his written statement said Prof Yunus should be neutral and careful in making any public statement keeping in mind the greater national interest. If necessary, the people of greater Khulna will continue their movement for a deep seaport at Akram Point, he added.

In another statement, leaders of Khulna unit of Bangladesh Poultry Industries Association termed Yunus' statement a 'deep-rooted conspiracy' against the people of greater Khulna.

Death anniversary

Today is the third death anniversary of Usha Rani Goswami, wife of late veteran journalist Radhika Mohan Goswami and mother of Moulibazar correspondent of The Daily Star Rajat Kanti Goswami.

A religious function will be held at her residence in Moulibazar town at noon today.

Qulkhawani

Qulkhawani of AKM Fazlul Haque (Humayun), son of late Sarafat Ali of Chandla, Comilla, will be held at his residence at 168/5, Green Road in the city after Asr prayers today.

He passed away at Birdem Hospital on Friday after a prolonged illness at the age of 66.

He left behind his wife, only daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His friends and relatives are requested to attend the Qulkhawani to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Boy run over by tractor in Chandpur

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

A boy was run over by a tractor at Shahpur village under Faridganj upazila in the district yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Mohamud Shah Alam, 10, son of Md Fazlul Haque.

Police and witnesses said, the driver suddenly lost control while going up on the road from a paddy field and the tractor knocked down the boy.

He was rushed to Faridganj Health Complex where on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Angry villagers caught hold of the driver. Police rushed to the spot and seized the tractor. Police and locals were trying to settle the matter mutually till filing of this report.

'PURITY POISONED' LAUNCHED Call to bring changes to drug policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new drug policy formulated in 2005 could not meet the expectations of general people as well as the drug producers, speakers at the publication ceremony of a book said yesterday.

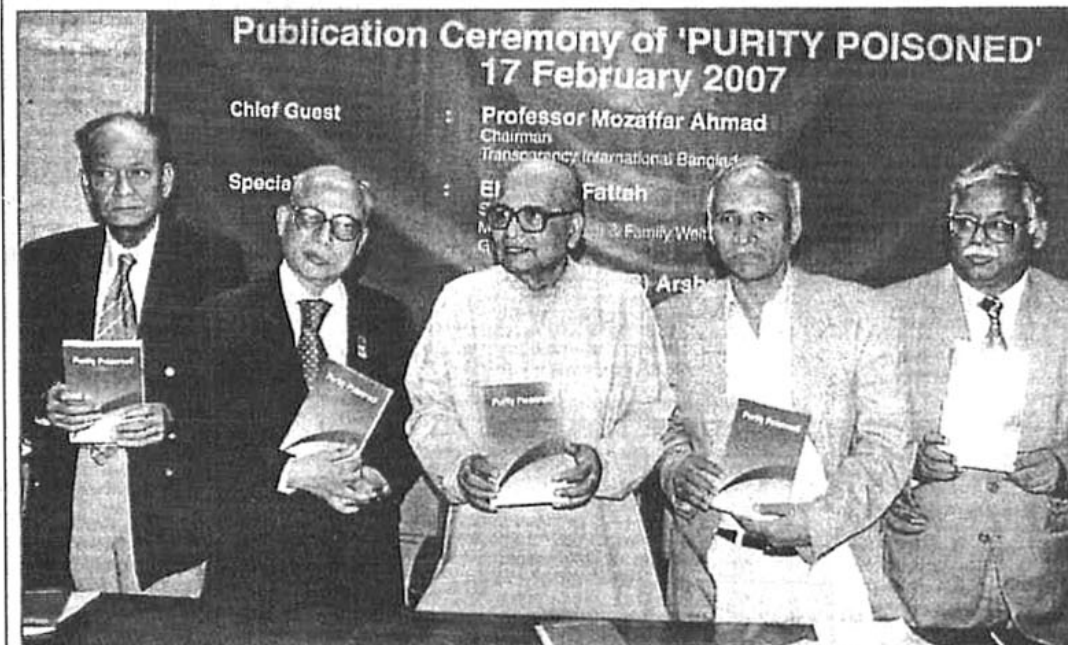
They also called on the authorities to incorporate important clauses of Drug Policy - 1982 into the new policy in order to control the prices of medicines and check marketing of spurious medicines.

Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad launched the book titled 'Purity Poisoned' at the publication ceremony held at the

National Press Club, with National Professor Dr Nurul Islam in the chair.

Edited by Prof Nurul Islam and Prof ABM Faruk, general secretary of the Citizens' Committee for Review of Drug Policies, the book contains, among other topics, recommendations on drug policy and a list of essential drugs. The book suggests that these drugs should be included in the drug policy with a view to checking the prices of essential drugs.

Prof Hasan Al Rashid, Prof Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub and former ambassador Ashrafuzzaman spoke at the programme.



Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad launches a book titled 'Purity Poisoned' at a publication ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right are Prof Dr Nurul Islam and former ambassador Ashrafuzzaman and on his left are Prof Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub and Prof Harun Al Rashid.

Nato commander rejects talks of Taliban 'spring offensive'

AFP, Tiran Kot

The commander of Nato forces in southern Afghanistan rejected yesterday talks of a 'spring offensive' by Taliban militants, telling reporters 'we are going to take the initiative.'

Dutch Major General Ton van Loon, in charge of the region worst-hit by the Taliban-led insurgency, also said he did not believe militants were capable of the same level of conventional battles they fought last year.

'The spring offensive will not happen because we are going to take the initiative,' Van Loon said during a visit to an Australian and Dutch International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) base in Uruzgan province.

The Taliban militia has threatened a new wave of violence; some military commanders and officials have downplayed the statements as propaganda but others have warned they expect some kind of offensive.

Van Loon was at the base, near the provincial capital Tiran Kot, for the opening of an Australian-run trade school that authorities said was part of providing development and jobs to undermine the insurgency.

Uruzgan sees regular Taliban violence with critics saying the government and its allies only have limited presence and militants can move around at ease.

'I am quite sure that there are some areas in Uruzgan, but also in other regions in the south and even the east and the north and west, where we do not have full control, where the government does not have full control yet.'

Rajpunnah begins today in Bandarban

UNB, Bandarban

The two-day Rajpunnah, an annual festival of tribal Bomang community to pay annual land tax to the King, begins today in the hill district.

On the occasion, the 15th king of Bomang Circle, Aung Shwe Prue Chowdhury, in royal dress, will start receiving Jhum tax from the people at 'Raj Darbar' at about 11:00am. The King's arrival at the Raj Darbar with the Royal guests will be announced sounding the bugle. His Uzir, Nazir and other token soldiers, all attired in traditional dresses, will formally receive the King.

The 93-year-old King will deliver a message greeting his people on the occasion.

According to the royal family, they are celebrating the festival since 1875.

A fair will also be organised in the district marking the festival.

The annual meeting of the Headmen's Association will be held tomorrow, the concluding day of the festival.

Hundreds of tourists have started thronging the hill district to join the festival.

King Aung Shwe Prue Chowdhury said Rajpunnah is mainly a socio-cultural festival. People of diverse national and international cultures could familiarise themselves with the tribal culture through this festival, he added.

Japan turns down Greenpeace help

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan has turned down an offer from Greenpeace to tow a whaling ship that caught fire off the Antarctic coast, recalling that activists of the conservation group had boarded the same vessel almost a decade ago.

The fire broke out the Nishin Maru, the 8,000 ton flagship of the Japan whaling fleet, on Thursday, sparking fears that it could spill oil or chemicals.

Japan's Fisheries Agency said in a statement that the fire had killed at least one Japanese seaman on board.

Maritime authorities said anti-whaling protesters in the Southern Ocean, which clashed with the whalers earlier in the week, were not involved.

'The fire has almost been extinguished,' Hideki Moronuki, a Japanese Fisheries Agency official in Tokyo, told Reuters yesterday. 'But it

will take a while before we can go into the engine room and see whether the engines are okay and the ship can sail on its own.'

Greenpeace had offered on Friday to tow the stricken boat with its converted salvage ship Esperanza as the Nishin Maru wallowed without power less than 100 nautical miles from the world's largest Adelie penguin colony.

'We would appreciate their offer, but I don't think we will accept such an offer,' Moronuki said, recalling that the vessel had been boarded by Greenpeace activists in New Caledonia in 1998 as it lay in port after another fire.

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Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Noakhali and Comilla in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country, said Met Office.

Night temperature may rise slightly over northern part and remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 28.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 11.4 degree Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:55pm today and rises at 6:29am 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	26.9	16.3	68	36
Chittagong	28.6	15.3	70	49
Rajshahi	26.2	13.2	76	52
Khulna	25.8	15.2	79	70
Barisal	25.8	14.5	61	75
Sylhet	27.0	13.6	60	46
Cox's Bazar	27.5	15.5	66	57

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh will hold a seminar on 'Curbing corruption and good governance: Role of the engineers'. Venue: IDEB auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion

Communist Party of Bangladesh will hold a discussion to mark the Ekushey February. Venue: CPB office. Time: 4:30pm.

Discussion

Jalila Samajtantrik Dal will hold a discussion to mark the Ekushey February and International Mother Language Day. Venue: Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University organises a two-day workshop on childhood cancer. Venue: Blam auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

Roundtable

Shushashoner Janney Nagorik-Shujan- organises a roundtable on 'Duties to hold a fair and meaningful election'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Street drama

Monpala, a cultural organisation, will stage a street drama 'Bipak' to mark the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day. Venue: Swoparito Swadhinota Mancha. Time: 6:00pm.