

Two killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

Two people were killed and 20 others injured in road accidents at Tangail and Khulna in the last two days.

Our Correspondent in Tangail reports: A collision between a bus and a truck left one person dead and 20 others injured on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Mirzapur yesterday.

Police and witnesses said a Kurigram-bound bus from Dhaka collided head-on with a Dhaka-bound sand-laden truck in Kumarjani area at around 1:15pm. A passenger of the bus died on the spot. His identity could not be known immediately.

Local people rushed the injured people to Mirzapur Kumudini Hospital. Police took the body to Mirzapur Police Station.

The busy Dhaka-Tangail highway remained blocked for about an hour because of the accident.

UNB adds: A man was crushed under the wheels of a minibus on Khulna-Satkhira road at Golna in Dumuria on Thursday night.

Sources said Atiar Rahman, 45, was crossing the road when the minibus bound for Satkhira ran over him.

Doctors declared him dead when he was rushed to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

President, CA greet Irish President, PM

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed have greeted the Irish president and the prime minister on the occasion of the National Day of that country.

In his messages to President Mary McAleese of Ireland, President Iajuddin expressed his firm belief that the existing friendly relations between the two countries would be further developed in the coming years.

He also wished her good health and happiness and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly Irish people.

In another message to Irish PM Bertie Ahern TD, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin expressed his firm conviction that the existing bond of friendship between the two countries would be further flourished in the years ahead.

Robbers stab businessman to death

UNB, Narsingdi

Robbers stabbed a businessman to death and injured his wife seriously while committing a robbery at a house in Narsingdi in the early hours of yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Jamaluddin, 50.

Police said a gang of robbers numbering about 12 entered Jamal's house by breaking the window grills at Gankulpara village under Belabo upazila at 2:00am.

As Jamal and his wife Jyotsna Begum tried to resist, the gang stabbed them indiscriminately, leaving both of them seriously injured.

The robbers then looted valu-

ables including gold ornaments worth about Tk 1 lakh and left the house safely.

Hearing their cry for help, locals rushed in and sent them to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where Jamal died at 9:00am.

In another incident, at least 15 people, including eight Madrasa students, were injured in an attack by local musclemen at Bajhibari village under Manohordi upazila over the construction of a boundary wall of a mosque yesterday.

Police said the hired goons of one Based, owner of a piece of land adjacent to the mosque, attacked the mosque and nearby madrasa as the mosque authorities had planned to build a boundary wall.

336 smuggled firearms, over one lakh bullets seized in two years

UNB, Dhaka

Huge illegal weapons and drugs continue to be smuggled into the country from neighbouring India as statistics show that Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized 336 firearms, including rifles, revolvers and pistols, and 108,740 bullets in last two years.

Illegal firearms are usually smuggled into the country through Sylhet and Rajshahi frontiers, a senior BDR official said.

Although the number of smuggled firearms was less in 2006 than in the previous year, the number of smuggled bullets was more last year than in 2005.

In 2005, BDR seized 192 firearms and 44,979 rounds of bullet, while in 2006, they seized 144 firearms and 63,761 bullets.

Of the seized firearms, 51 were rifles, 36 revolvers and 88 pistols.

Apart from firearms and ammunition, a huge quantum of drugs, including contraband phensidyl was also being smuggled into the country from India.

Some 500,000 bottles of phensidyl and 60,000 litres of liquor were seized in last two years.

Besides, 17,200 kilograms of 'ganja' (hemp) and 84 Kgs heroin were recovered during the period.

The BDR official said the youth community in the country is alarmingly getting addicted due to easy availability of drugs mainly through smuggling.

At the BDR-BSF Director General meeting in New Delhi early this month, the Bangladesh side conveyed its concern and sought action from the Indian authorities against the smuggling of firearms and drugs.

The Indian side assured that necessary action would be taken in this regard.

Death anniversary

Today is the 48th death anniversary of Shirumonnesa Shiru Begum, mother of Waheed Marud, a poet and banker, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at Bhashantek Minar Mosque after Asr prayers and at Panchabaki Jame mosque at Swarupkhati in Pirojpur after Zohr prayers.

'Full-scale production in two plants improves power supply'

BSS, Dhaka

Resumption of full-scale production in two state-run power plants with adequate gas supply has improved the electricity generation scenario, said a Power Development Board (PDB) press release yesterday.

It said the 180 mw capacity first unit of Rajuan Power Station and the 80 mw Tongi Power Station resumed their full capacity production from early hours of Friday and Wednesday respectively, getting supplies from the newly launched Bibiana gas field.

Inadequate gas supplies forced these plants to remain almost inoperative for nearly two months. "In view of the improved situation, the total power generation is expected to be as high as 3,370 mw this evening," PDB's Public Relations Director Bazul Haque told BSS.

According to the PDB estimates, the current peak hour demand for power is 3,900 mw while, until last week, the deficit was estimated as high as 1,100 mw at times because of the closure of plants for routine rehabilitation, forced outage or disruption in gas supplies.

PDB officials said out of nearly 100 units in 26 government and private sector plants some 20 are closed due to routine maintenance or technical troubles but they are expecting eight of them to resume operation by June this year.

Huge medicine, cash looted in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

Unidentified robbers looted huge quantity of medicine and Tk 35,000 in cash from a pharmacy in Anwara sadar upazila of the district on Thursday night.

Police quoting local people yesterday said the robbers stormed into the Jyotsna Pharmacy owned by Midrul Dutta at midnight by breaking its collapsible door and took away the goods and money.

Anowara police said none was arrested in this connection as of last evening.



PHOTO: STAR

Holiday market at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital draws a large number of buyers yesterday.

Robber killed in police firing

BSS, Feni

A robber was killed when a team of patrol police opened fire on a gang of robbers committing robbery at Tultuli Bazar area on Feni-Maizdi highway on Thursday night.

Sources said that as the policemen challenged a gang of 10-12 robbers who were committing robbery by putting up barricade on the highway, the robbers attacked them.

Police opened fire in self-defence, leaving one unidentified robber dead on the spot. Others members of the gang fled the scene, leaving behind the body.

Police recovered one chapati, two mobile phones and Tk 4,000 from the spot, the sources added .

Ex-JCD leader gets 10 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A Rangpur court on Thursday sentenced Dr ABM Maruful Islam, former president of JCD unit at Rangpur Medical College, to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment in an arms case.

Judge of the Special Tribunal-1 Sunil Chandra Paul handed down the verdict to Dr Maruful Islam alias Maruf, who was also the vice-president (VP) of the student union at the college.

According to the prosecution, members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Maruf along with a pistol from his room at Dr Milon Hall on March 30, 2006.

Two held with foreign currency

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police arrested two illegal dollar traders at Bhullai Bazar in Thakurgaon district on Thursday night, according police sources.

The arrestees were identified as Abdul Halim, of South Arazi village and Ramzan Ali of Arazi Keshurbari village in Thakurgaon sadar.

Police sources said acting on a tip-off, a police team led by Magistrate Shafiul Alam raided Bhullai Bazaar and caught them red-handed with 204 pieces of 50 US dollar notes.

Mystery shrouds death of domestic help Employer arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested the employer of a domestic help who was found dead at his house at Khilgaon in the city on Thursday night.

The employer, Monir Ahmed, claimed that 10-year-old Pakhi Khatun committed suicide by hanging herself from the door handle inside the bathroom, although the handle is as high as her nose.

Receiving information, police went to the house at Block-C, Road No.-2, Mahanagar Project at Khilgaon, after midnight and found that the body was lying on the floor.

Monir, an engineer of a private firm, told the police that Pakhi went to the bathroom at around 7:00pm but did not come out even after a long time.

Monir was not at home at that time. He returned home at around 8:30pm.

"As Pakhi did not respond despite repeated attempts, we broke open the door and found her hanging from the handle of the door with her frock," he said.

But the height of the door handle aroused the suspicion of the police. They suspect that the girl might have been killed.

A Dhaka court sent Monir to jail after the police produced him at the court yesterday.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue in the morning for autopsy.

Sources at the morgue said that they have found only one mark around her neck.

Pakhi, who hailed from Comilla, had been working in the house for the last two years for Tk 300 a month.

CU IRREGULARITIES

Syndicate member critical of UGC probe beginning today

CU CORRESPONDENT

A Syndicate member of Chittagong University (CU) yesterday criticised the formation of a committee to investigate various alleged irregularities of the university including the LLB certificate scam.

Prof Helal Uddin Nizami said the University Grants Commission (UGC) cannot investigate any matter related to examination.

"As far as I know the education ministry in a letter has directed the UGC for investigating the irregularities in the appointment and promotion of teachers that took place in last five years," he said.

"The UGC has no right to investigate any matter or decision taken by the Syndicate," he added.

Prof Helal alleged that the UGC is trying to save a 'special person', who holds a fake certificate that has already been cancelled by the university authorities.

Mentionable, a 5-member UGC team headed Prof Sultan Hossain is scheduled to start its probe into LLB certificate scam today.

Current nets worth Tk 2.3 cr seized in Barisal

UNB, Barisal

A total of 4,52,360 metres of current nets worth Tk 2.29 crore were seized during drives in rivers and water bodies of the district from March 8 to 15.

Bangladesh Navy with the help of fisheries department and local administration conducted the drives to check catching of 'Jatka' or young hilsa.

District fisheries office sources said naval Ship BNS Shah Amanat led by Lt. Com. Redwan conducted the drives and also recovered a huge number of 'Jatka'.

The nets were burnt in presence of fisheries officials and 'Jatkas' were distributed among the orphans and distressed people.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) has kept coils of cables on Mouchak-Rampura Road in the city, creating obstacles to smooth traffic movement.

BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 22nd edition of BBC Bangladesh Sanglap will be held at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre in the city at 5:45pm today.

BBC World Service Trust and BBC Bangla Service are jointly organising the programme.

Barrister Mainul Hossain, adviser for law and information to the caretaker government, Abul Mal Abdul Muhith, member of Awami League's advisory council and former commerce minister, Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, senior BNP leader and former commerce and water resources minister, and Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, an NGO, will feature the four-member panel for this week's Sanglap, says a press release.

The Sanglap will be aired on BBC Bengali Radio at 7:30pm tomorrow and on Channel i at 8:00pm on Monday.

# WEATHER TODAY

## Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 32.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 13.2 degrees at Chuadanga and Sayedpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:08pm today and rises at 6:05am tomorrow.**

The 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	28.1	18.8	40	28
Chittagong	31.0	20.3	50	44
Rajshahi	28.8	15.3	46	23
Khulna	28.5	16.2	51	46
Barisal	29.0	16.4	39	39
Sylhet	29.0	17.7	59	40
Cox's Bazar	32.8	21.0	54	37

354 bottles of phensidyl seized

BSS, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in separate anti-crimes drives, arrested a drug-peddler and recovered 354 bottles of phensidyl from different areas of the districts on Thursday night.

Sources said acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab conducted a drive at Belpukur bypass area in Mathar and arrested Asadul Islam, 30, of Gobindaganj village under Charghat Upazila. One hundred ninety eight bottles of phensidyl were recovered from his possession.

Members of Rab also recovered 156 bottles of phensidyl in two other drives from Mukhtarpur under Charghat upazila and Kholabona village under Paba upazila.

The elite forces also arrested four alleged criminals from different areas of Gaibandha and Rangpur districts. They were identified as Nasima Begum, 45, Momena Begum, 42, Humayun Kabir, 35, and Mozammel Hossain, 27.

# DHAKA TODAY

### Seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) organises a seminar on 'Hegemony of behaviour change communication (BCC) in HIV prevention: A cultural synthesis'. Venue: BISR conference room. Time: 5:00pm.

### Convention

The inaugural ceremony of the 4th National Convention and Scientific Conference of Bangladesh Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation will be held. Venue: Dhaka Sheraton. Time: 9:00am.

### Reception

Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh will accord a reception to the offspring of the engineers who achieved GPA 5 in SSC and HSC in the year 2006. Venue: Multipurpose Hall, IDB Bhaban. Time: 11:00am.

### Exhibition

A photographic exhibition titled 'Japanese Flowers' by Yoichiro Yamashita will begin. Venue: Drik Gallery. Time: 5:00pm. The exhibition will run till March 22 from 3:00pm to 8:00pm everyday.

### Memorial meeting

Abahani Limited will hold a memorial meeting in memory of Zahidur Rahman Pushkin. Venue: Abahani Club premises. Time: After Asr prayers.

### Convention

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### Discussion

Paribesh Bachao Andolon and Agrohee will jointly hold a discussion on the necessity of building a bridge on Ramna Park Lake. Venue: West end of the under-construction Ramna bridge. Time: 8:00am.

### Launching ceremony

Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts will launch an album titled 'Calligraphy of Quayyum Chowdhury'. Venue: Bengal Café. Time: 6:00pm.

### Rotary Dhaka Central

Regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

Modern technology reveals mummy's past

AP, St. Louis

The baby mummy had a European mom, and likely came from a wealthy family. But where he lived and why he died -- and at such a young age -- remain a mystery.

The mummy, exhibited for the first time Thursday at the Saint Louis Science Centre, has been the year-long focus of an international team of investigators. The museum said it may be the most extensive research project ever undertaken on a child mummy.

Acquired by a Hermann, Mo., dentist at the turn of the century in the Middle East, the mummy ended up in an attic of some of his relatives, before being donated to the Science Centre in 1985.

It sat in a museum warehouse until Al Wiman joined the Science Center as vice president two years ago and suggested that modern medical technology could unlock its secrets.

He spearheaded efforts to get medical, science and art institutions in St. Louis, the US, and Egypt to discover the mummy's past.

"I saw the possibility of a scientific paper," said Wiman, who spent 30 years as a medical and science reporter for St. Louis television stations.

A team of radiologists and geneticists from Washington University studied the mummy. Salima Ikram, an Egyptologist and mummy specialist at The American University in Cairo; anthropologist Dean Falk at Florida State University; and conservator Emilia Cortes of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York also agreed to help.

A small snippet of the mummy's wrapping tested for carbon dating suggested the child had lived between 30 BC and 130 AD, in Egypt's Roman period around the time of Mark Antony and Cleopatra.

Three-dimensional images from CT scans of the child's bones, skull, teeth and body cavity suggested the child lived to be seven or eight months. The CT scans revealed a long wooden rod against the child's back that supported the mummy wrapping. All of the scans were done without having to remove the wrap.