

Road crashes kill 11, injure 50

STAR REPORT

At least 11 people were killed and 50 others injured in separate road accidents in Chittagong, Tangail, Khulna and Netrakona yesterday and on Wednesday.

Our correspondent from Chittagong reports: Five people were killed and nine others injured in separate road accidents in the port city yesterday.

Four people identified as Nargis, 37, of Natun Bazar area of Bandar, Md Abdul Mannan, 40, of Rupganj under Narayanganj, Abdul Malek, 40 of Babuganj of Barisal and driver of the bus Jasim were killed when a city service bus skidded off the road in front of Customs House under Bandar Police Station at around 6:30am.

The accident occurred as the driver lost control over the steering, leaving the three passengers dead on the spot and ten others injured.

The injured were rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while driver Jasim succumbed to his injuries at around 7:30am, sources at CMCH said.

Meanwhile, a tempo helper was killed in a road accident at

Bahodderhat bus terminal area near Chandgaon Police Station at around 6:30am, police said

The victim identified as Suman, 12, of Kalamia Bazar was working as a helper of the tempo.

The accident occurred when a tempo hit a truck parked on the road near Chandgaon Police Station. Suman, helper, was driving the tempo but lost control.

Seriously injured Suman was rushed to the CMCH where on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Our correspondent from Tangail adds: Three people were killed and 20 others injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Sadar upazila in the district yesterday.

Of the dead, two were identified as Mohammad Matiar Rahman, 25, and Abdus Salam, 35. The identity of another person aged about 30 could not be known immediately.

The accident took place at around 5:00am yesterday when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Gaibandha and a Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge-bound speedy truck from Dhaka collided head-on at Ashekpur area near Tangail town, police and witnesses said.

Of the dead, bus passengers

Matiar and Salam died on the spot while the unidentified bus passenger succumbed to his injuries on the way to hospital.

The injured were rushed to the Tangail General Hospital.

Sadar police sent the bodies to morgue for autopsy.

Staff correspondent from Khulna adds: Two people were killed in a road accident near Sonadanga Truck Terminal in the city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Rokhsana Khanam, 20, and Ratan Rishi, 35. Rokhsana was an HSC examinee while Ratan Rishi was rickshawpuller.

The accident occurred when a passenger bus hit the rickshaw, leaving its passenger Rokhsana and driver Ratan dead on the spot.

Police arrested bus driver Azizul Sheikh and its supervisor Abdul Karim.

The angry people damaged the bus and put up barricade on Sonadanga road for over an hour in protest against the accident.

Our correspondent from Netrakona says: One person was killed and 21 others injured in a road accident on Mymensingh-Netrakona highway at Isobpur

under Purbadhala upazila in the district on Wednesday night.

Police sources said the accident occurred when a Mohangonj-bound bus from Tangail turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch at Isobpur as the driver lost his control over the steering, leaving one Rahim Mia, 30, dead on the spot.

Police said Rahim, a day labourer, hailed from Gunapogli village under Nagorpur upazila in Tangail. Rahim was going to Sunamganj haor area for harvesting boro paddy with other day labourers.

Of the injured, Yakub Ali, Majnu Mia, Bachchu Mullah, Lablu and Abdul Hakim were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition. Other injured were admitted to Purbadhala Upazila Health Complex.

The injured are also day labourers and hailed from Nagorpur upazila in Tangail. They were going to Sunamganj haor area for harvesting boro paddy.

ASIAN HIGHWAY
UNESCAP team visits Benapole port to assess feasibility

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A delegation of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) yesterday visited Benapole land port to assess the feasibility of the proposed Asian highway. They also conducted a survey on the possible route of the highway at Jessore, Narail, Vatiapara and Kalnaighat area.

UNESCAP consultant Hikarunishi Mura and economic affairs officer Madam B Regni led the team. Rezaul Haque and Mosharraf Hossain, additional engineer of roads and highways department, were also present.

The UNESCAP delegation emphasised setting up a link road between Benapole of Bangladesh and Petrapole of India for better export import activities while monitoring the export-import process through Benapole port.

Later, the team joined a view exchange meeting where Hikarunishi Mura said the communication between Bangladesh and India would be easier and the distance between Dhaka and Benapole will be reduced by about 100 kilometres after completion of the Asian Highway.

Education fair begins in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A three-day education fair began in the port city yesterday with a view to providing students with information about higher studies abroad.

Prof Dr M Emdadul Haq of Chittagong University (CU) inaugurated the fair at the Institution of Engineers, organised by the Port City Exhibition and Event Management Services (PEEMS).

PEEMS Managing Director Salahuddin Rasel presided over the ceremony. Lecturer of the School of Business, North South University, Ameer Khan and PEEMS adviser Aminul Ehsan were also present.

The speakers said students willing to go abroad for higher study often face many problems in absence of proper guidance and related information.

The fair would provide such students an opportunity to know information about admission process, tuition fee, requisite qualification, suitable programmes and accommodation facilities, they said.

Two education consultancy firms -- Study Abroad Limited and Go Study -- are the co-sponsors of the fair while local daily Dainik Azadi is the media partner.

Around 25 institutions, including education consultants and other service providers, are taking part in the fair.

The fair drew a huge number of students on the first day.

Aparna Chowdhury, a student of BBA at Chittagong University, said she is trying to get to know about universities in the UK as she is keen to complete her MBA degree there.

Syed Md Abu Sufian of Study Tent said they help students enrol at universities and colleges in Sweden and Japan.

Shaila Ahmed of New Horizons said the fair would assist the enthusiastic students in selecting the right educational institutions across the globe.



PHOTO: STAR

Residents of South Badda stage a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding adequate supply of water to their area.

2nd round of Nat'l Immunisation Day April 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second round of the 15th National Immunisation Day (NID) will be observed across the country on April 8 in a bid to eradicate the re-emergence of polio from Bangladesh.

The first round of the 15th NID was held on March 3.

The 15th NID aims at vaccinating all the 2.4 lakh children aged below five, Health and Family Welfare Adviser ASM Matuir Rahman said at a press conference at the ministry yesterday.

He claimed that 97.4 percent children were vaccinated in the first round of the 15th NID.

"Besides the polio vaccine, high potency Vitamin A capsules would also be administered to the children while Albendazole, an anti-helminthiasis tablet, would be given to every child aged between two and five years," he also said.

Vaccination centres will also be set up at bus stands, launch and ferry terminals, railway stations and highway toll centres to make sure that the children travelling on the vaccination days are not left out, he added.

Polio is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus which attacks the central nervous system, causing paralysis, muscular atrophy and deformation and in some cases, even death.

Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to an outbreak of polio because of an endemic state of the disease in the neighbouring India.

'Form monitoring bodies to check use of formalin in fish'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fish and vegetable traders yesterday urged the government to form 10 monitoring committees comprising representatives of their association and law enforcers to prevent the use of formalin in fish and sale of jatka.

Dhaka City Fish and Kitchen Market Small Traders' Association made the call at a meeting at the Matshya Bhaban in the city.

The traders also announced that they would not sell fish mixed with formalin, which is harmful to human health.

They also suggested that Dhaka City Corporation or the Department

of Fisheries should issue licences to fish traders and if any trader sells fish mixed with formalin or jatka, his licence should be cancelled.

At the same time, a campaign highlighting the bad effects of applying formalin to fish and netting Jatka should be conducted, they added.

Speaking at the meeting, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser CS Karim said no imported fish can enter the country without being examined. But the people should remain alert so that no fish can be smuggled into the country.

"Honest traders should resist those who try to sell jatka and fish mixed with formalin," he said.

He also said Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation would sell fish in covered vans in city areas at a reasonable price.

The government is also trying to increase production of fish through different projects, he added.

Secretary to the fisheries and livestock ministry Syed Ataur Rahman, Chief Health Officer of Dhaka City Corporation Col Dr Md Azizul Huq, Director General of the fisheries department Nazrul Islam, the daily Amar Desh Editor Ataus Samad, General Secretary of Bangladesh Shanjukta Sramik Federation Mokaddem Hossain and President of Small Traders' Association Anwar Hossain Shikder also spoke.

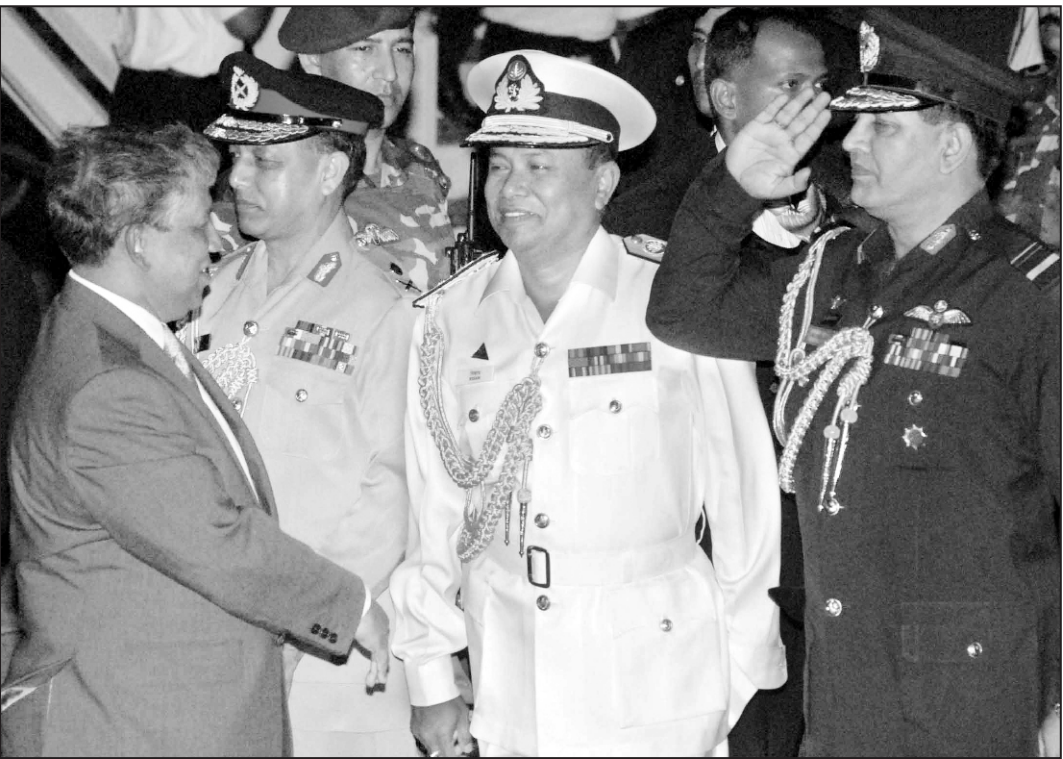


PHOTO: STAR

Chiefs of three services welcome Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at Zia International Airport in the city yesterday on his return from New Delhi where he attended the 14th Saarc Summit.

RAB BEATS 14
Elderly woman dies of cardiac arrest in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

An elderly woman, who was beaten up along with 13 others of her family and neighbours by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Tuesday, died of a cardiac arrest at Ramchandrapur Boubazar in the city yesterday.

Momtaz Begum, 56, a mother of eight sons and two daughters, was buried at Tikapara graveyard.

She had been suffering pain in her chest since she was assaulted by Rab, said her daughter Sufia Begum.

On Tuesday night, plainclothes Rab members beat up her son Sahim, a student of class nine, following a scuffle with them over their identity, sources said.

They also beat up 12 others of Sahim's family and neighbours when they rushed to the scene hearing his screams, the victims claimed.

Police from Boalia Police Station recorded statements of the victims.

Among the injured, Angura Begum, 55, Sufia, 26, Biplobi, 22, were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. Other injured are Golam Mostafa, Tajul Islam, his father Nur Mohammad, Nazrul and Ramzan.

Talking to The Daily Star, Rajshahi Rab commanding officer said he has already ordered an investigation into the incident.

At that time, the Rab members were conducting an operation against smugglers, he said, adding that they also arrested two persons with huge Indian goods.

Ajker Kagoj celebrates 16th anniversary

The daily Ajker Kagoj celebrated its 16th founding anniversary yesterday, says a press release.

The celebration was attended by eminent poets, litterateurs, journalists, politicians and cultural personalities of the country at the Ball Room of Hotel Sheraton in the capital.

Poet and playwright Syed Shamsul Haq was awarded 'Kagoj Sahitya Purashkar' while Hamim Kamrul Haq received 'Kagoj Tarun Kotha Sahitya Purashkar' for the year 2007 at the programme.

Syed Haq received a crest, certificate and cheque for Tk one lakh while Hamim received a crest, certificate and cheque for Tk 25000.

Editor of the daily Kazi Shahed Ahmed handed over the prizes to the winners.

Newly married woman murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newly married housewife was allegedly killed by the family members of her in-laws in the city on Wednesday.

The deceased, also an SSC examinee, was identified as Swapna Sarker, 16, a student of Badda Alatulnnesa High School and daughter of a businessman Sukumar Sarker.

Police sources said when they reached the in-laws house of Swapna at Merul Badda after receiving the news of her death, they found the body hanging from the ceiling fan with scarf.

But nobody was at the house at that time.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Morgue for autopsy.

Sukumar told The Daily Star that Swapna got married in secret with a boy studying nearby her school on December 1, 2006.

Her mother-in-law often forced her to do many household works, he said, adding even she (mother-in-law) did not want to let Swapna to sit for SSC examination.

Sukumar alleged that Swapna was hung from the ceiling fan after

being strangled. Morgue sources, however, said it is a suicide case.

Sukumar filed a murder case with Badda Police Station against six members of the in-laws family with Gopal Das, husband of Swapna, as prime accused.

All the members of the family are at large since the incident.

Reception to Yunus Apr 28

Chittagong University Ex-Economics Students Association, Dhaka will accord a reception to Nobel laureate and chief patron of the association Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus on April 28, says a press release.

The association will also publish a souvenir on the occasion.

Former students of the economics department who are interested in attending the reception ceremony are requested to contact Association General Secretary Md Kamal Uddin (Ph: 01711-538-547) between April 15 and 20 for registration.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Sylhet division and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Chittagong 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, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 37.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest at 19.5 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.16pm today and rises at 5:45am 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	34.5	26.0	70	54
Chittagong	31.8	24.6	71	77
Rajshahi	37.2	23.5	80	51
Khulna	34.0	25.0	79	69
Barisal	33.0	24.5	76	67
Sylhet	32.8	19.5	79	67
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.7	73	72

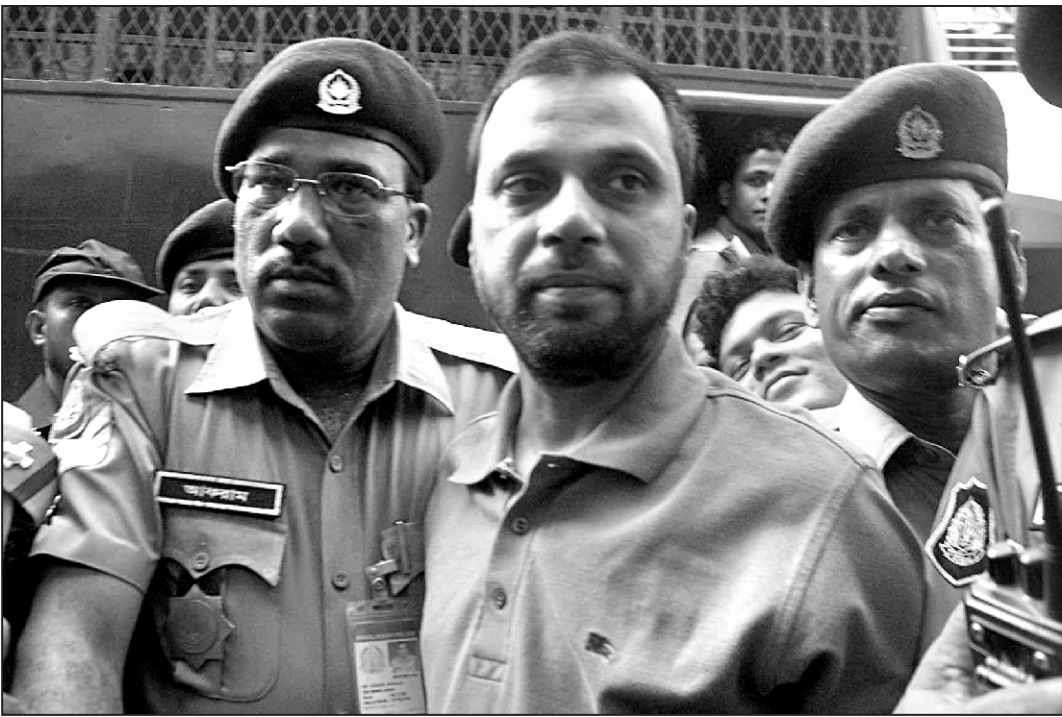


PHOTO: STAR

Giasuddin Al Mamun, a close friend and business partner of BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, being taken to a court in the city yesterday.

Body to probe RU fake admission

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) authorities yesterday formed a six-member committee to investigate fake admission of eight students in social work department.

Led by Prof Khalequzzaman of zoology department, the other members of the committee are university syndicate member Prof Dr Rustam Uddin Ahmed, Prof Rakibuzzaman of applied chemistry department, Prof ABM Shahjahan of Islamic history department, Prof Ashraful Haque of bio-chemistry department and Dr Mostofa Kamal of anthropology department, said sources at social work department.

The authorities asked the probe committee to submit its report as soon as possible.

It also sent the accused clerk Masud Rana on forced leave yesterday.

Our democracy lacks tolerance

Sultana tells Ctg folk festival function

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A four-day-long Loko Utsab O Puratani Mela (folk festival and heritage fair) began in the port city yesterday.

Inaugurating the festival, former adviser to caretaker government Advocate Sultana Kamal said tolerance to other's views was one of the basic components of our thousand-year-old culture, literature and heritage.

"But unfortunately this basic practice of our culture remains absent in our democracy creating the present crisis in the country," she said.

Sultana inaugurated the fair with a slogan 'Matir Tane Praner Gaane' through lightening the Mongal

Pradip at Nazrul Square.

Other speakers hoped that the festival would help all find the oneness of culture and heritage of the nation.

President of Loko Utsab O Puratani Mela Parishad Dr Mahbubul Hoque of Chittagong University presided over the ceremony.

Principal of Ispahani Public School and College Hasina Zakaria and Editor of the local daily Dainik Azadi MA Malek spoke on this occasion.

Later, a cultural function participated by noted artists was held.

Different stalls displaying books, locally-made clothes and toys were on display at the fair.

4 Bangladeshis clear of bird flu Says Kuwait

AFP, Kuwait City

Four Bangladeshi workers who had initially tested positive for bird flu in Kuwait have been cleared of the disease after further tests, the Kuwaiti health minister said yesterday.

"We are happy to declare that the results of the tests ... in the reference laboratory in Egypt have been negative," minister of health Maassouma al-Mubarak told reporters after the latest tests by the World Health Organisation.

On Wednesday, the four workers who had been culling infected chickens in Kuwait were tested positive in preliminary tests, but the ministry of health sent specimens to the WHO reference laboratory in Egypt for confirmation.

They would have been the first cases of bird flu affecting humans in Arab nations of the Gulf, had the cases been confirmed.

The four workers were admitted to Kuwait's infectious diseases hospital with flu-like symptoms on Tuesday. The men have been isolated in a special ward and were still at the hospital on Wednesday.

Since the outbreak of bird flu in Kuwait, 22 people have been admitted to hospital on suspicion of being infected, but later discharged after confirming they were healthy.

The Bangladeshis were part of government teams culling and burying hundreds of thousands of chickens in Wafra, south of Kuwait City on the Saudi border.

Kuwait has culled about 1.7 million birds, most of them egg-laying chickens in four commercial poultry farms, since confirming in February an outbreak of the H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus that is dangerous to humans.

A total of 106 cases of the strain have so far been confirmed in birds.

In November 2005, the Gulf state announced the first case of a bird infected with the H5N1 strain -- a flamingo at a seaside villa.

The H5N1 strain, the most aggressive form, has killed 170 people worldwide, according to WHO, and seen millions of birds destroyed.

H5N1 is an avian influenza subtype with pandemic potential, since it might ultimately adapt into a strain that is contagious among humans.

Obituary



Medical College Hospital on April 4, says a press release.

He was born at village 'Runshin' Jhalokathi in 1930. He was the founder principal of 'Little Gems Grammar School', 'Little Gems Nursery School', 'Oxford English School', 'Oxford School' and 'The Learners' Home'.

A doa mahfil will be held at 112/G, Road No-15 (Old), Dhanmondi, after Asr prayers today. Students, relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

Hasmat Ara Maswood



press release.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held after Asr prayers at Azad Mosque, Gulshan-2, Dhaka, today.

Adoa mahfil will be held at House # 15/B, Apt. # 5B, Road # 99, Gulshan-2, after Magrib prayers on Sunday.

Shajahan Mondol

A CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Shajahan Mondol, former acting principal of Faridpur Polytechnic Institute, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on Wednesday at the age of 58.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Faridpur Rajendra College premises yesterday and he was buried at his family graveyard at Baroidangi in Nagarkanda.

He left behind his wife, a son, two daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Sara Khatun, mother of martyred freedom fighter Nazrul Islam Sachchu, will be held at her residence at Dilapur (KB Road) in Pabna after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

She died of old-age complications at Pabna Sadar Hospital on February 28 at the age of 86. She is survived by two sons, four daughters and grandchildren.

Relatives and well-wishers have been requested to attend the chehlum.