



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed presides over a meeting of the Council of Advisers at his office in the city yesterday.

# Road accidents kill eleven

## STAR REPORT

At least 11 people were killed and 12 others injured in separate road accidents in Chittagong, Bagerhat, Natore, Netrakona and Sirajganj yesterday.

UNB from Chittagong reports: Five people were killed and six injured in a couple of road accidents in Sitakunda upazila yesterday.

Two potato traders were killed and two others injured when a truck overturned on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway and fell into a roadside ditch at Baroaulia Kadamrasul.

Local people said the accident occurred when the driver of the potato-

laden truck lost control over the steering at about 6:00am, killing Tazul Islam, 32, and Rabiul Hossain, 37, on the spot.

The injured, including the truck driver, were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Three people were killed and four others injured when a container lorry rammed into a CNG-run three-wheeler on Foujdarhat Bypass in the upazila at 8:30am.

Rani, 22, and Shamim, 27, died on the spot while another unidentified man succumbed to his injuries at CMCH.

Four people, including driver of the CNG-run three-wheeler, were also

admitted to the CMCH with injuries.

Another report from Bagerhat says: Three fish traders were killed and four others injured when a pickup van overturned on a bridge at Mollahat on Bagerhat-Maowa highway yesterday morning.

Police said two unidentified fishermen died on the spot while five others were injured when the fish-laden van from Dhaka suddenly turned turtle on Major Gaula Bridge.

The injured were rushed to Fakihat Upazila Health Complex in critical condition where another unidentified fish trader succumbed to his injuries.

One of the injured was identified as

Haji Tarek, 35, while identity of others could not be known immediately.

In Natore, a minor boy was crushed under the wheels of a bus at airport crossing in Lalpur upazila on Natore-Ishwardi road yesterday.

Witnesses said a Bagha-bound passenger bus from the capital hit Abdul Matin, 12, of old Ishwardi, while he was crossing the road, killing him on the spot at about 2:00pm.

Later, police recovered the body and sent it to Lalpur Health Complex morgue for autopsy.

Our correspondent from Netrakona reports: One person was killed in a road accident on Netrakona-Barail road nearby Barail Balu Ghat under Netrakona Sadar upazila yesterday.



Artist Safiuddin Ahmed cuts a cake to celebrate his 85th birthday at his residence at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday. Noted personalities, including litterateurs and artists, greeted him with flowers.

## New Cambridge IGCSE in Bangladesh Studies launched

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH, London

New Cambridge IGCSEs in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India Studies were launched this week to mark the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Plassey at London's City Hall.

Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen addressed the event and took part in a panel discussion with historian and author Nick Robins, London Assembly Member Murad Qureshi and broadcaster Huma Price.

Chaired by Channel 4 News Business Editor Faisal Islam, the event brought together members of the Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian communities in London to look at how extremism can be addressed in South Asian Communities through education.



Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen, right, launches new Cambridge IGCSEs in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India Studies at London's City Hall recently.

## RU IRREGULARITIES UGC begins probe

RU Correspondent

A probe body of University Grants Commission (UGC) yesterday began investigation into alleged irregularities, corruption and nepotism at Rajshahi University (RU) during the last five years.

Campus sources said the body took interview of many university officers and employees at the treasurer's room.

Earlier, the Progressive Teachers Society (PTS) denounced the probe body saying that there are allegations against the committee members who were appointed controversially during the tenure of BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

Meanwhile, Registrar Prof Abdus Salam has issued letters to all departments, institutions, hall provosts and deans asking them to inform the probe body of any irregularities or corruptions known to them.

But campus sources said many departments and offices did not receive any letter from the registrar as of writing this report.

For this reason, only some pro-

BNP-Jamaat officers and employees gave interview in front of the body, they added.

PTS Convener Prof Abdus Sobhan told newsmen that the probe body has not communicated with any of its teacher nor they received any letter from the registrar for interview.

When contacted, Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain said he will not make any comment on the investigation.

The five-member probe body led by Prof Mahabub Ullah came to RU to investigate the allegations made by pro-Awami League (AL) teachers against RU authorities for controversially recruited more than 500 teachers, officials and employees during the last BNP-Jamaat government.

The pro-AL teachers met the UGC chairman in Dhaka and demanded exemplary punishment to those involved in mass recruitment violating the University Act.

## Israel detains key Hamas militant in West Bank

AFP, Ramallah

Israeli security forces detained a founding member of Hamas's military wing in the occupied West Bank in a pre-dawn raid yesterday, sources on both sides said.

"The occupation forces detained Sheikh Salah al-Aruri, 42, one of the founders of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades in the West Bank, in a raid on his home in the village of Arura, north of Ramallah," the group said.

Several army vehicles entered the village at 2.30am and surrounded Aruri's home before detaining him, it said on its website.

An Israeli security source confirmed the arrest, describing Aruri as a "senior Hamas terror operative."

"Aruri is a senior active member of the organisation and is one of the leaders of Hamas in Judaea and Samaria (the West Bank), in the prisons and abroad," the source said.

"During the time he served in prison, he was one of the few leaders of the Hamas organisation in the prisons."

## Tearful Hindus pray for return to Indian Kashmir

AFP, Tulmulla

Under tight security thousands of Hindus who fled a Muslim insurgency in Indian Kashmir's summer capital offered prayers yesterday at a revered temple many had not worshipped at for decades.

With flower petals in their hands and tears flowing down their cheeks families gathered at the Kheer Bhawani temple in Tulmulla, 30 kilometres (20 miles) northeast of Srinagar in a Muslim-dominated section of the state.

An estimated 200,000 Hindus fled the Kashmir Valley where Srinagar is located after the insurgency erupted in 1989 and settled in the southern part of the state, known as Jammu, to escape attacks.

The insurgency has claimed 42,000 dead by official count and brought millions of security forces to the divided state which is claimed by Pakistan and India.

"I had never imagined my homeland is so beautiful," said Sunita Koul, 16, who lives in a two-room hut in Jammu.

"I have been told we had a big house in Srinagar that is no more there," she said, as she showered flower petals and milk at Hindu gods

inside the temple.

Her father, who asked not to be named, said their house was set on fire two years after they left Srinagar.

"With a broken heart, I have prayed for our return to our homeland. We want to die here," he said, as police ushered visitors to the temple through metal detectors.

Some Muslim Kashmiri separatist politicians have urged Kashmiri Hindus, known popularly as Pandits, to return.

However, most of them have sold off property or lost it to arson though some say they would like to rebuild as they were welcomed at the shrine by Muslims in the area.

"We want to come and live among our Muslim neighbours," says Bimla Handoo, a retired school teacher. "I have prayed for our union with our neighbours. My house is in bad shape but we will renovate it if we move back," she said.

## 12 rescued from ship stranded off India's coast

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian coast guard yesterday rescued 12 of two dozen crew members on a sinking cargo vessel stranded in the Arabian Sea off the west coast of India, the local maritime rescue centre said.

The vessel, buffeted by rough weather, ran aground and tilted yesterday morning off the coast of India's southwestern Karnataka state, raising fears that it could sink.

"So far, 12 crew members have been brought back. The rescue operation is still going on," said Ram Kumar Navik, a radio operator at the maritime rescue centre in the harbour city of Mangalore, which is close to the accident site.

The ship was carrying 7,500 metric tonnes (8,250 short tons) of black sand, the centre said.