

Road accidents kill

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Sylhet in the last four days.

A Sylhet-bound private car hit an auto rickshaw and a rickshaw on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway at about 12:30pm on Friday leaving rickshaw passenger Mahbul Alam Doros, 45, dead on the spot and three others seriously wounded.

The injured were rushed to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital where Sonafar Ali, 44, succumbed to his injuries.

A pick-up van carrying 30 labourers fell into a roadside ditch as its driver lost control over the vehicle at Khushikapon at about 7:00pm on Friday leaving labourer Ahad Noor, 55, of Batia village in Sunamganj dead on the spot and two others injured.

The wounded were rushed to Osmani Medical College Hospital where Abdur Rafique succumbed to his wounds.

In another accident, a speeding minibus ran over a person on Sylhet-Zakiganj road at Lalarchak on Friday evening.

The dead was identified as Riazuddin, 26, son of Intaj Ali of Kanaighat upazila.

Police said separate cases were filed.

Our correspondent from Noakhali reports: A child was killed and 45 people were injured as a Laxmipur-bound passengers bus from Chittagong skidded off Begumganj-Laxmipur road at Kalikapur on Monday morning.

The identity of the dead could not be known.

A pick-up van plunged into a roadside canal after its driver lost control over the steering near Eklashpur Bazar on Begumganj-Maizidi road leaving Masud, 25, helper of the vehicle, dead and five others injured.

Meanwhile, Ranjit Das, 30, a journalist of local fortnightly Lok Sangbad was killed and another person injured when a truck hit his motorbike at Begumganj on Monday afternoon.

Seriously injured Zahirul Haque was admitted to a hospital.

Our correspondent from Narayanganj reports: Three of a family were killed when a microbus carrying them collided with a bus on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Bhairab on Sunday morning.

The dead are Ripon, 24, his brother Hik, 22, and cousin Shaheen of Lakkhankhola.

They were on their way to

Sholakia in Kishoreganj.

A Kushtia-bound truck from Jhenidah ran over Saiful Islam, 28, of Shaikupura upazila in Jhenidah while he was crossing a road near Sheikhpara of Kushtia on Monday.

Our staff correspondent from Khulna reports: Two of a family were killed and another was injured when a Dhaka-bound bus hit a van.

The dead are Abul Khair, 54, and his grandson Sumon, 19.

Our correspondent from Jhenidah reports: Four people were killed and two others injured in separate accidents on Sunday and Monday.

The deceased are Munna, 45, of Rahmatpur village in Jessore, Bichitra, 40, Yakub Ali, 65, and Saiful Islam, 28, of Jhenidah.

Our Manikganj correspondent reports: Two people were killed and 50 others injured in two separate road accidents on Dhaka-Aricha Highway on Monday and yesterday.

The identity of the deceased could not be known.

State-run news agency BSS reports: Two people including a child were killed in two road accidents at Baniachang in Hobiganj and Shibchar in Madaripur yesterday.

The dead are Pakul Mia, 4, and Amzad Pramanik, 65.

Meanwhile, a passenger bus hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Anwara upazila in Chittagong leaving Ismail Hossain, 40, of Boalkhal upazila dead and two others injured yesterday.

Army chief

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Bangladesh caucus Joseph Crowley.

The army chief would then go to Florida to visit his son, who is studying at a university there, and his younger brother.

His brother is reported to have arranged a dinner for the general, to exchange views with local Bangladeshi-Americans.

The general would also visit Boston between October 21 and 23, where he is expected to address a seminar hosted by the Ash Institute of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

He will depart for Macau, China on October 23. Top brass of the army accompanies him.

Suranjit for talks

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other matters including reforms and democratic practice within political parties could be thrashed out.

Saying the constitution does not provide for the formation of a consensus government, the AL leader said his party would not involve itself in anything extra-constitutional.

"Such a kind of government could be formed if an elected parliament reaches a consensus about it after the leader of the house places a proposal to that end," Suranjit said.

Referring to former South African President Nelson Mandela's consensus government, he said Mandela acted under a legal framework, which is not the case for Bangladesh.

"I don't see formation of such a government is possible in any way before the next general elections," said the AL leader.

As to Law Adviser Mainul Hossain's proposal for a Truth Commission, Suranjit said it would be discriminatory and unconstitutional if it were formed to give advantages to a certain quarter.

He, however, gave a nod to the idea if the commission were for all and said a complete proposal for this needs to come from the head of the government, clarifying its motives.

After that we could sit to discuss it, Suranjit said, adding that the head of the government could

form the commission as per Article 93 of the constitution.

The veteran leader called for the restoration of political activities across the country, the withdrawal of the state of emergency and an end to 'political harassment' through filing false and fabricated cases.

Demanding the release of Sheikh Hasina, the AL president, Suranjit hoped that legal and people's courts would clear her of the charges, and said the party will continue the legal battle to get her released.

The AL's acting President Zillur Rahman, meantime, demanded Hasina's release and withdrawal of the state of emergency immediately.

While exchanging Eid greetings with party leaders and workers on Sunday, Zillur questioned the necessity of the emergency as the government is claiming that the country is running smoothly.

Eyes set

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down to around 16 percent in the last three months of the fiscal year. The downward trend is still continuing, he said.

Quoting BGMEA and BKMEA leaders, he said the RMG export is falling due to political unrest and weather changes in the western and European region.

"However, the BGMEA and BKMEA are confident that they can overcome the bad time and if it is possible, the new export target is not unrealistic," he said.

The commerce ministry fixed the target after consultation with all exporters' associations, chambers and different government agencies.

As per the new target, the government aims to earn \$5.4 billion from the weaving sector with a 16 percent growth. In the last fiscal year, the sector witnessed 14.05 percent growth with an export earning of \$4.65 billion against a similar target.

The government has fixed \$5.46 billion as the export target for the knitwear sector with a 20 percent growth. In the last fiscal year, earnings from the sector was \$4.55 billion with 19.3 percent growth against a target of \$4.84 billion.

The RMG makes up 75 percent of the country's exports.

The target in exporting frozen food was fixed at \$600 million with 16 percent growth, \$8 million in tea export with 15 percent growth, \$350 million in jute and jute products with 9 percent growth, and \$295 million in leather and leather goods with 21 percent growth.

Yunus

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Gai (singing the song of Bangla).

"Today's world needs kind people like Dr Yunus very much, people who can sacrifice their lives to make other people happy," Cherry Blair said while talking with NewsWorld.

Grameen Foundation, US organised the function.

Meantime, Dr Yunus congratulated Al Gore on his winning the Nobel peace prize and the Nobel committee for recognising the former US vice president's work.

"Bangladesh is one of the countries which are going to be the worst sufferer for climate change and global warming. As a result of this, 20 percent area of Bangladesh may go under water and millions of people will face disaster," he said, lauding Al Gore's work to create worldwide awareness about climate change, terming it 'timely' and 'humane'.

Obaidul Haque

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"Ekushey Padak" for his outstanding contributions to the field of journalism. Besides, he won several awards, including Bangla Academy Sahitya Padak and Unicef Gold Medal.

He was the chairman of the Dainik Bangla and Bangladesh Times Trustee Board, Nazrul Institute and Bangladesh Press Institute.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed expressed deep shock at the death of journalist Obaidul Haque.

In a condolence message, the president said his (Obaidul Haque) death caused an irreparable loss to the country's press arena.

He conveyed his sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

The chief adviser in his message said Obaidul Haque was a pioneer in the domain of the country's journalism. His contributions to the field of journalism will ever be remembered, he added.

The CA conveyed his sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Information Adviser Mainul Hossain also expressed his deep shock at the death of Obaidul Haque.

The adviser conveyed his sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Both groups of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) condoled the death of journalist Obaidul Haque.

QULIKHWANI The qulikhani for journalist Obaidul Haque will be held at Banani Jame-e-Mosque after Asr prayers on Friday (October 19).

Family members have requested the journalists, cultural activists, relatives and well-wishers to attend the qulikhani and pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

FDI flow

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The government would scrutinise some of the rules and regulations which are hindering the flow of investment, the Bol chairman said adding it would also introduce some new rules to facilitate investment.

He said USA, Egypt, UAE, Norway and UK are the top five countries which contributed about 66 percent to Bangladesh's total FDI last year.

Telecom sector remained at the top as the most FDI receiving sector with about 43.8 percent followed by energy and power at 26.3 percent, trade and commerce 16.4 percent and manufacturing 13.2 percent.

According to the Unctad report, the global FDI rose by 38 percent to \$1,306 billion in 2006 and the three top FDI recipient countries are USA \$175 billion, UK \$139 billion and France \$81 billion.

In South Asian region, India received \$16.9 billion, Pakistan, \$4.3 billion and Sri Lanka \$480 million FDI in 2006.

2 criminals

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between his accomplices and police at Asannagar village in Chuadanga, reports our Kushtia correspondent.

The dead was identified as Tagar Ali, 26, son of Abu Daud of Binodpur in Alamdanga upazila.

Police said acting on a tip-off, they cordoned off an area at Asannagar village where Tagar, chief of Mukti-Tagar Bahini, was holding a secret meeting with his accomplices at about 2:30am.

Sensing the presence of the policemen, they fired on the law enforcers prompting them to retaliate.

Tagar was killed on the spot. Police arrested Tagar's father Abu Daud, 55, and accomplice Torab from the scene.

They also recovered a rifle and 16 rounds of bullet.

Alamdanga Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Kazi Jalal Uddin was injured in the incident.

Police said Tagar was accused in ten cases on different charges including murder.

Rain-fed calamities

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The local roads and highways office said road connections with Rowangchhari, Chiringa-Lama-Alikodom and Ruma were snapped.

Our Khagrachhari correspondent reports: Over 20,000 people were marooned and took shelter on high land and structures yesterday as the onrush of hill water and heavy rain flooded 25 villages under six upazilas.

In Patuakhali, four trawlers with 29 fishermen were capsized in rough sea, reports our correspondent.

A Kuakata-bound trawler rescued 24 fishermen swimming in the sea.

BSS reports quoting Trawlers Association President Golam Mostafa Chowdhury that the trawlers sank 50km south of Ashchara.

Abdus Salam, a fisherman rescued by a trawler, said he saw FV Kalikapur with 16 fishermen and FV Nuru with 13 fishermen capsizing in the Bay.

Relatives of the missing fishermen gathered in Kuakata and Mohipur areas to see if they returned.

Our Sylhet office reports: Three persons including two women have been missing since an engine driven boat capsized in the vast Tangar haor in Tahripur upazila of Sunamganj district yesterday afternoon.

Locals recovered the body of a 10-year boy, Sobag.

Locals said the small boat started from Lakma village with 20 passengers for Moheshkholabazar of Madhyannagar upazila at about 10:30am. It overturned at about 12:30pm.

FIVE KILLED IN STORMS

At least five people were killed and more than one hundred injured when tornadoes ripped through the southern coastal districts and the south-central parts of the country on Monday night.

Over 100 fishermen were reported missing as 18 fishing trawlers capsized in the River Passur during storms caused by land depression.

The gale also damaged hundreds of thatched houses and crops and uprooted trees in their thousands and some electrical poles, disrupting road communication and snapping power supply in the districts.

Mongla Coastguard authorities said they rescued two fishermen from Kochikhal area on Monday night, adding that drive was on to find out the rest.

Our staff correspondent from Khulna reports: Two people, killed during a tornado, were identified as Nazrul Islam, 40, of Fakirhat upazila and Al Amin, 18, of Mollahat upazila of Bagerhat.

Police said both the men died when trees fell down on them during the twister, which also injured around 50 people and damaged over 500 thatched and mud houses in the district.

UNB reports that a whirlwind killed two persons in Bhola by crushing their houses on them and injured 35 others.

Four hundred thatched houses were also damaged in three upazilas of the district.

The dead were identified as Lokman, 25, of Chanchra village in Tajumuddin upazila and Sharif, 24, of Daulatkhan, local administration said.

A correspondent from Munshiganj reports: An ice cream vendor, identified as Manik

Sheikh in his thirties, was killed in Louhajang upazila when a date palm fell down on him during a storm.

Storms damaged many houses, uprooted hundreds of trees and disconnected electric and telephone cables, disrupting power supply in the district.

A correspondent from Noakhali reports: A tornado killed a three-year-old, Atiq, and injured 10 others at Bhumiheen Bazar and Morshed Bazar of Hatia upazila yesterday morning.

Condition of one of the injured, Abdur Rashid, 70, was reported to be critical.

Storms damaged more than 50 houses and shops and uprooted hundreds of trees. Local sources said incessant driving rain accompanied by gusty winds caused heavy damage to many houses and trees at Nijhum Island and Kering Char.

Our correspondent from Patuakhali reports: At least 20 persons, including a child and a female, were injured and over 50 houses damaged as a tornado lashed a remote Patuakhali village on Monday.

A correspondent from Chandpur reports: A tornado that lashed five remote villages of Shaharasti upazila on Monday injured at least 25 people and damaged around 100 houses.

Purchase body

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not approve the 150 MW Shikabaha Power Plant Project in Chittagong. Four companies participated in the bid for the project.

Of those, Sinohydro Corporation Ltd of China was selected.

Mirza Azizul said the committee sent back the project proposal to the Energy Division for further scrutiny by government officials and private consultants.

The committee approved a proposal funded by World Bank to improve road network in four upazilas in Brahmanbaria.

6 murdered

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found him lying unconscious near Barabagh mosque and took him to the DMCH.

Abdul Karim from Jatrabari was brought to the DMCH with fatal injuries on Sunday night. A pedestrian, Yunus Ali, who brought him to the hospital, said muggers stabbed him. He succumbed to his injuries in the morning.

Sumon, a private car driver, was stabbed by muggers at Shantibagh while he was returning home from Segunbagicha on Monday night. He was admitted to the DMCH where he died yesterday morning.

Jewel, a rickshaw puller, was taken to the DMCH in the early hours of Friday. Some pedestrians said he was lying unconscious near Gulistan underpass.

Quoting doctors, family members said Jewel died due to poisoning. He had left home with his rickshaw on Thursday. The rickshaw is missing.

An unidentified man of around 25 was brought to the DMCH in an unconscious state yesterday afternoon. He died an hour later. Hospital sources said he was poisoned.

Mohammadpur police said Niloy was a listed criminal of New Market area. They suspected that his accomplices killed him due to feuds.

Aman, wife

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gang of miscreants being instructed by Aman went to West Aganagar Khwaja Market and demanded Tk 25 lakh as extortion from businessman Rabiul Hassan on June 26, 2004.

They also threatened to kill him or demolish the boundary wall of his residence at Dakkhin Keraniganj if he refused to give the amount.

Fearing attack on his life, the victim paid Tk 10 lakh to Aman's wife on May 10, 2005, the complainant added.

An extortion case was filed against Aman and others with Dakkhin Keraniganj Police Station on March 6 this year.

The investigation officer pressed charges on July 10 showing 15 people as prosecution witnesses.

The case was also brought under the Emergency Power Rules for quick disposal.

Earlier, Aman was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for amassing huge wealth through illegal means.

BABUL CASE Metropolitan Magistrate Mizanur Rahman allowed the ACC to interrogate Babul at the jail gate in a case filed for concealing information in his wealth statement submitted to the anti-graft commission.

The court passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Shamsul Alam submitted a petition seeking permission to quiz Babul.

The case was filed on August 19 against Babul, his wife advocate Salma Islam and their son Shamim Islam for concealing Tk 43,980,412 in their wealth statements.

ALAM CASE Judge Mohammad Azizul of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court issued arrest warrants against Alam's

family members as they did not appear before the court.

They are Alam's wife Hasina Chowdhury, brother Khorshed Alam Mintu, son Abu Sayed, daughters Mahmuda Akhter and Mahfuza Akhter, son-in-law Selim Miah and brother-in-law Rahamat Ali Labu.

ACC Assistant Director Abdul Latif submitted the charge sheet on October 7 against Alam and others in the graft case filed on June 13 in connection with concealing Tk 7 crore in their wealth statements.

3 killed

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spot Saturday afternoon. The adviser directed senior officials of railway to find out the cause of the accident immediately.

Communication Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, Railway Director General Belayet Hossain, General Manager (East Zone) Iqbal Mollah and other senior officials accompanied the adviser.

Bangladesh Railway and communication ministry formed two probe committees regarding the accident.

Divisional Transportation Officer of Railway Mokhsedul Arefin was made the convener of a five-member probe committee formed by Bangladesh Railway. Other members of the committee are Divisional Mechanical Engineer Nur Ahmed, Divisional Signal Engineer Shariful Islam, Divisional Engineer (I) Abdul Jalil and Assistant Engineer (Mechanical) Md Solaiman.

Joint Secretary Shafizuddin Ahmed, head of the four-member probe committee of the communication ministry, is scheduled to visit the spot today.

Nuclear

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Congress, before elections there in late 2008.

C Uday Bhaskar, former head of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, agreed that "the deal has gone into a long pause mode."

According to a senior Indian Communist Party official, the government was forced to reconsider when its other legislative allies expressed their reluctance to face early elections.

On Friday, Singh admitted that "one has to take certain disappointments."

"For Congress allies, the nuclear deal is not an issue on which elections can be fought and won, though it would have improved India's image abroad," said political analyst Rashed Kidwai.

"They are more interested in issues that the electorate are bothered about."

Unnamed US officials meanwhile told the Washington Post they were deeply disappointed with the decision, which they described as unexpected.

US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns -- who in early May reported "extensive progress" on the deal -- and other top US officials frantically worked over the weekend to try to revive the deal, according to the Post.

In late June, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice described the deal as "historic and pathbreaking," and said it could be clinched this year with enough commitment from both sides.

Putin warns

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over the possibility of a US military strike against Iran, the Caspian leaders also agreed never to allow their territory to be used for an attack on a fellow littoral state.

"The parties emphasise that in no circumstances will they allow their territory to be used by a third country to commit aggression or other military action against one of the parties," the declaration said.

"The Caspian Sea should unite us rather than divide us," Putin told the summit, which groups the heads of state of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan.

Putin's comments highlighted the differences over Iran's nuclear programme between Russia and the West, which is seeking more unilateral and UN sanctions to punish Tehran for its defiance.

Russia however has insisted diplomacy is the way to solve the standoff and has said it is not convinced by the Western claims Iran's nuclear programme is military in nature. Tehran insists the atomic drive is entirely peaceful.

Reports on Russian news agencies of an assassination threat had cast doubt over whether Putin would go ahead with the visit and his arrival was delayed from the scheduled touchdown on Monday evening.

But much to the relief of Iranian officials, his plane finally landed at Tehran's Mehrabad airport early Tuesday.

Russia's Interfax news agency, citing a source in the Russian special services, had reported on Sunday that a group of suicide bombers would try to kill Putin in Tehran. The Kremlin said Putin had been notified of the report.

Iranian media reported that Putin's armour-plated car had been air-freighted into Tehran ahead of his visit to ensure his security.

His exact travel plans were kept closely under wraps, with Kremlin officials refusing even to disclose what time he left Germany after talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel for the five hour flight to Iran.

Putin had insisted that he would "of course" press ahead with his visit, saying that talking directly to Iran's leaders could help end the standoff over its nuclear programme.

The Islamic republic has regularly hosted allies who share its antipathy towards the United States such as Belarus President Aleksander Lukashenko, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez.

But a visit by a statesman of Putin's stature -- his country is a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN Security Council -- is a major event.