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Road accidents kill 37 in 5 days

STAR REPORT

At least 37 people were killed and some 150 were injured in road accidents in the capital and elsewhere in the country in the last four days.

Ferdous Hossain Chowdhury Robin, a student of Tejgaon College, was killed when a bus rammed into his private car near Khilgaon overbridge at about 3:00pm on Monday. His brother Romel, who was driving the car, was injured.

Reshma Akhter, a student of Govt Bangla College, Mirpur died as a CNG-run three-wheeler hit her on Mirpur Road the same day, while one Selim was killed in a road accident in the city on October 12.

An unidentified man, 28, died and two others were injured when a private car ran over some people

waiting in front of Zia International Airport at around 3:00pm on Sunday, while another unidentified man, 60, was killed as a private car hit him when he was crossing the road at West Agargaon in the city.

Mohammad Shipon, 15, was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Dohar road on October 12, while an unidentified man, 45, was killed in another road accident at Basabo on October 13.

Eight-year old Masum died in an accident in sadar upazila of Narayanganj, while another unidentified man, 30, was run over by a bus at Jatrabari in the capital on October 13.

Our staff correspondent from Bogra reports: Two day-labourers were killed when the truck carrying them overturned at Purail of Adamdighi upazila in Bogra Monday morning.

Mohsin, 42, and Bhutta, 38, died on their way to Rajshahi Medical College. Two other labourers aboard the truck were left critically injured.

The same afternoon, Sagar was killed when a truck hit his motorbike from behind at Phultala of Shahjahanpur upazila of the district.

An unidentified man was killed as a truck hit him when he was crossing road at Kichak of Shibganj upazila on Sunday, while two motorbike riders were also killed the same day when a truck hit them at Matidali intersection in sadar upazila. They could not be identified either.

Our staff correspondent from Sylhet reports: Five people were killed and at least 30 others wounded in three road accidents in

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Yunus raises fund for poor children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus on Friday raised \$2 lakh in New York for Bangladesh's destitute children, reports US-based news agency News World.

Captivated by the tunes of Dr Yunus' daughter, soprano Monica Yunus, and co-artists, the audience at the Times Centre listened as Yunus told them his dream about Bangladesh, the dream of marching with time.

Along with some two hundred invited American guests, Cherry Blair, wife of immediate past British prime minister Tony Blair, attended the fund-raising concert flying in from Britain.

Before the audience could lose themselves in Dr Yunus' dream, his daughter enchanted them with her melodious voice as the function started with their presentation.

Amidst pin-drop silence, Monica sang: Ami Banglar Gaan

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PHOTO: NEWSWORLD

Nobel laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus, center, with performers at a function to raise funds for Bangladesh destitute children at the Times Centre in New York on Friday.

6 murdered in 5 days in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six persons including a listed criminal were killed in the capital in the last five days.

Of them, five were killed allegedly by muggers while listed criminal Ashrafur Haque Niloy was suspected to have been gunned down by his accomplices.

The five victims included Hashmat Ali Sheikh, 50, Abdul Karim, 23, Mohammad Suman, 21, Mohammad Jewel, 25, and an unidentified young man.

Jewel and the unidentified person were said to be poisoned by 'Auggan Party' elements.

Police recovered the bullet-riddled body of Niloy, 35, from Lalmatia on Sunday night.

Hashmat, a tailor from Mirpur, was brought to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with marks of injury in his chest and abdomen. Doctors declared him dead.

His nephew told reporters at the DMCH that he was returning home from a local market in the early hours of Sunday. Some people

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Hasina allowed to talk to her children on phone

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was allowed to speak with her children over phone yesterday on the occasion of Eid -- for the first time since her arrest on July 15.

In the afternoon, Hasina called her US expatriate daughter Saima Wazed Putul in Florida and later in the evening, she called her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy in Washington, DC, said Maj Shamsul Haider Siddiqui, Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Prisons, while speaking with The Daily Star.

Maj Siddiqui said, "She [Hasina] spoke for five minutes with her daughter over telephone in the afternoon and in the evening, she spoke with her son for the same duration of time."

Earlier, when Sheikh Hasina made formal requests to the government for allowing her to make phone calls to her children overseas, the jail authorities maintained that the jail code does not permit such privilege for her.

2 criminals killed in 'shootouts'

STAR REPORT

An alleged criminal was killed in a "shootout" between him and Rab members in Rajshahi on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Ali Zafar Babu alias Langra Babu, 40, son of Lutfar Rahman at Resham Patti.

Rab said they raided Babu's house near Rajshahi Government College at about 6:30pm. Sensing their presence, Babu fired at them prompting them to retaliate.

Babu was injured during the shootout.

He was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at 7:40pm.

Rab members seized a 9mm pistol and four rounds of bullet from the scene.

In a press release, Rab said Babu was a top terrorist who was involved in arms and drug smuggling.

Meanwhile, a criminal was killed yesterday in "crossfire"

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Kokil textile mill closed indefinitely

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Kokil Textile Mills in Brahmanbaria was closed for indefinite period yesterday as workers went on strike to press home their demands for appointment letters, bonus allowances and others.

The workers are also demanding equal pay for all workers, the stop of expulsion of workers, and two days of casual leave every month.

The authorities of the mill claimed the workers did not inform anything about their demands earlier.

Ashutosh Bhoumik, general manager of the mill, said they have started the factory on June 1. The workers are new and apprentices.

"I would address all their - the factory begins full-

3 killed, 30 hurt as train derails in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Dhaka-bound intercity train from Chittagong derailed near Bartakia Railway Station in Mirersarai upazila of Chittagong Saturday morning killing at least three people and injuring 30 others.

The rear five compartments of the 16-compartment Mohanagar Prabhati express derailed and rolled on to a cornfield around 8:30am killing Giasuddin, 28, of Mymenisigh, Al Amin, 25, of Akhaura and Makbul Haider, 32, of Bajitpur, Kishoreganj on the spot. Railway sources said the train started for Dhaka from Chittagong at 7:20am.

Locals and railway staffs rushed to the spot and recovered the dead body of Gias. The other two bodies were buried beneath the compartments. They were recovered that afternoon when two rescue trains from Pahartali and Akhaura

removed the derailed compartments. The injured had primary treatment at the local health complex.

The train, with a capacity of around 850 passengers, was actually carrying 1,186 passengers, said Chittagong Railway Station Manager ATM Golum Mostafa. It was the day before Eid and people were heading home.

The incident did not disrupt train services that much, as there were two tracks there, said Mostafa. Officials in the railway department preferring anonymity said the accident could have occurred due to technical glitches in the derailed compartments.

The train, however, resumed its journey around 10:00am with seven compartments, leaving behind four compartments at Bartakia station, sources said.

Communication Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) MA Matin visited the

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Lalshak price slumps to Tk 20 a maund!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Farmers in Bogra who sold *lalshak* (red amaranth) at Tk 600 a maund (around 37 kg) during the Ramadan did not find any customer yesterday to sell it at Tk 20 a maund.

Prices of other vegetables have also gone down to a great extent in Bogra's largest wholesale vegetable market at Mahasthan.

Mokhesur Rahman, a 60-year-old farmer, was found unhappy yesterday at the market as he did not find any customer to buy *lalshak* at Tk 20 a maund till 1:00pm though he sold it at Tk 600 during the Ramadan.

Moslem Uddin, 80, another farmer, was also waiting for customers to buy a maund of *lalshak* till 1:30pm.

"I've sold this vegetable at Tk 500 (a maund) in the middle of Ramadan. I have heard that the price has fallen...but it was beyond

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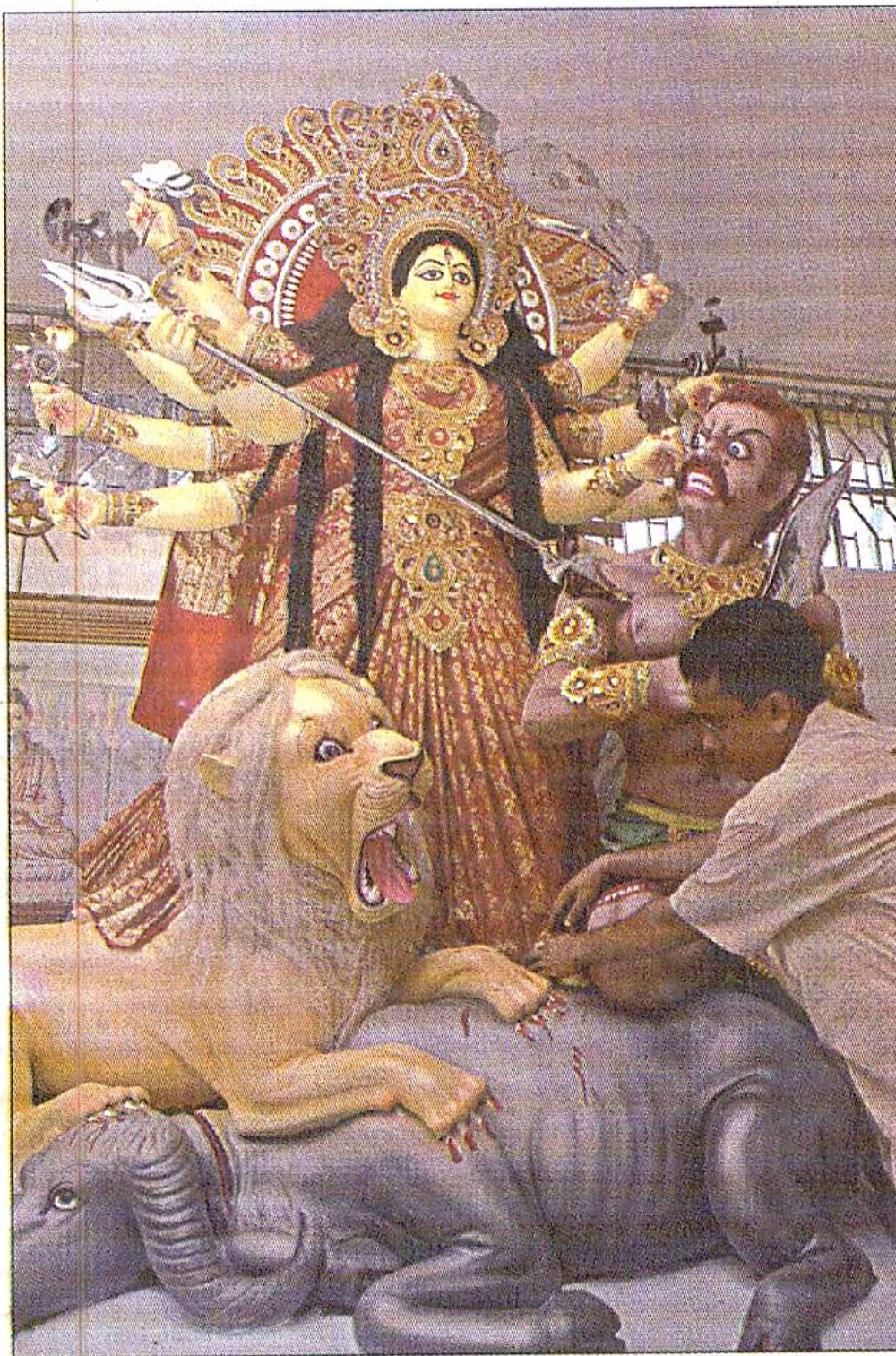


PHOTO: STAR

Finishing touches are being given to the idol of Durga yesterday as the greatest religious festival of the Hindus begins today. The photo was taken from Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University.

Offices reopen in holiday mood

UNB, Dhaka

After Eid vacation, government offices, banks and newspaper offices reopened yesterday.

Attendance in the government offices was remarkably thin as many officials and employees were enjoying one-day optional holiday.

Those who attended offices were seen exchanging Eid greetings and pleasantries with their colleagues.

People, who went to their village homes for celebrating Eid with kith and kin, particularly in southern districts, could not return owing to rough weather. The launch services in the country's southern region remained suspended.

Traffic in the city streets was thin. Some small shops owners opened their shops.

Rain and squally wind disrupted normal life in the capital yesterday.

Suranjit for talks to forge national unity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) presidium member, Suranjit Sengupta, yesterday called for a broad-based dialogue to forge national unity to tide over the current political crisis in the country.

The seasoned parliamentarian, however, ditched the idea of a consensus government, mooted by Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President Badruddoza Chowdhury, as unconstitutional and said his party would not move an inch from its stance on the continuation of the constitution and compromise on democracy and secularism.

Suranjit, who returned home on October 10 after a three-month tour of Canada and the US, told The Daily Star that a consensus about holding a free and fair election could be achieved following which

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Al Gore, UN share Nobel Peace Prize

American trio win Economics Prize

AFP, Stockholm

Former US vice-president Al Gore and the UN's top climate panel shared the Nobel Peace Prize Friday, in a major boost to the international campaign for action against global warming.

Leonid Hurwicz, Eric Maskin and Roger Myerson of the United States won the 2007 Nobel Economics Prize Monday for their pioneering work on making markets work more efficiently.

Gore, who has reinvented himself as a climate warrior since failing to become US president in 2000, said he was "deeply honoured" by the award and warned of the "planetary emergency" posed by climate change.

The White House sent its congratulations on the important recognition for Gore's work, but stressed there would be no change in the US administration's environmental policies.

The 2007 prize was jointly awarded to Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)--a UN body of about 3,000 experts which has highlighted the human role in steadily mounting global temperatures.

The Norwegian Nobel committee cited the recipients for their work "to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures

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Putin warns against Iran attack

AFP, Tehran

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday backed Iran's right to nuclear energy and argued against military action, during the first visit to the country by a Kremlin chief since World War II.

Putin, attending a summit meeting of Caspian Sea states, arrived in the Iranian capital amid heavy security and secrecy over his travel plans after reports a squad of suicide bombers planned to kill him.

His visit is of major significance for the Islamic republic at a time of mounting tensions with the West over its atomic drive. Putin is also to meet Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Along with the four other Caspian Sea states, Putin signed a statement supporting Iran's right

to nuclear energy, which the United States claims Tehran only wants as cover for a atomic weapons drive.

It backed the right of Non-Proliferation Treaty members to "research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful ends, without discrimination, within the framework of this treaty and the mechanisms of the UN nuclear watchdog."

The countries had "expressed the idea that peaceful nuclear activities must be allowed," Putin told a news conference.

"Russia is the only country helping Iran to construct a nuclear power station for peaceful ends," Putin added, referring to the still unfinished project to build Iran's first nuclear energy plant in Bushehr.

Amid continued speculation

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Convicted JMB man held in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A sentenced local commander of the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Waliullah alias Abdul Hamid, was arrested at Darail Tarafat village in Bogra's Gabtoli upazila on Monday.

Bogra Detective Branch of Police (DB) arrested the Gabtoli unit chief of the terror outfit who was given a 10-year jail sentence in 2005 for possessing sulphuric acid, used for making bombs.

Police said Waliullah has at least four cases against him, including one for robbery at local Brac office, which he confessed to having committed.

He told police that JMB operatives had orders from Abdul Awal, the executed son-in-law of JMB chief Shaikh Abdul Rahman, to kill 'anti-Islamic forces' -- especially judges, journalists, police, Rab and army men -- adding that JMB activists are still out to implement their ideology.

Waliullah, however, said his duty was to reach out to the people with the invitation of the terror outfit.

Waliullah also admitted to having trained JMB rookies at Gabtoli Taltala Upazila School and said Bogra district unit commander Mamun can make bombs and use AK-47 rifles.

Row over preparations for Benazir's return

AFP, Karachi

A row erupted yesterday over preparations for Benazir Bhutto's return this week after supporters plastered billboards and posters throughout Karachi of the former Pakistani leader.

Benazir is set to land in her Karachi powerbase on Thursday after spending eight years in self-imposed exile in Dubai and London, having fled to avoid corruption charges arising from her two terms in power.

Thousands of followers from her Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have geared the port city of 12 million for her homecoming, lining major roads with billboards, posters and flags of the former premier.

Some posters read "A New Hope" for Pakistan. But Arbab Ghulam Rahim, chief minister of Sindh province, ordered late Monday their removal from public property, prompting supporters to stand guard on Tuesday, fearing police will move in.

"We are soldiers of Benazir Bhutto. We are peaceful and are making peaceful arrangements for our leader's reception," said party worker Mohammad Nazir.

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Prayer Timing

October 17

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:50	5:25
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:38	5:41
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation