

Road accidents kill 12, injure 82

STAR REPORT

At least 12 people were killed and 82 others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Faridpur, Comilla, Tangail, Sirajganj, Netrakona, Jhenidah, Rajshahi and Naogaon yesterday and on Wednesday.

Staff correspondent reports: Driver of a private car was killed when a passenger bus hit his car in the city's Motijheel area yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Majid, 48. The accident took place near the Motijheel Police Station at around 11:30am, leaving the driver dead on the spot.

His body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Majid's family sources said the accident occurred when he was returning to his employers' house at Mirpur from Motijheel.

Police seized the bus and the private car and arrested bus driver Majnu Mia.

UNB from Faridpur adds: Three people, including a woman, were killed and 13 others injured in two road accidents in the district yesterday.

Police said the accident occurred when a Sathia-bound microbus from Dhaka collided with a truck at Madhukhali at about 1:00pm, leaving microbus passengers Abul Hashem, 60, and Mosharraf Hossain, 62, dead on the spot and 11 others injured.

Three of the injured were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital while eight others to Madhukhali Upazila Health Complex.

In another accident, Dilruba Begum, 36, wife of senior official of PWD Khairul Islam, died on the spot when a private car skidded off the road and fell into a ditch near the Faridpur town at noon as the driver lost his control over the steering. Two others -- Meghmala, 9, and

Bipasha Bari, 32, - were rushed to Faridpur Medical College Hospital with injuries.

Another report from Comilla says: An unidentified man was killed and 10 others were injured as a bus fell into a roadside ditch at Shaheednagar in Daudkandi upazila on Dhaka-Chittagong highway yesterday.

Police said a Dhaka-bound bus from Homna plunged into a ditch as its driver lost control over the steering at about 10:00am, killing a passenger on the spot.

The injured were rushed to different hospitals.

Our Correspondent from Tangail reports: Two minor boys were killed and 10 others injured in two separate road accidents at Sadar and Delduar upazilas in the district yesterday morning and Wednesday night.

Police said an second accident took place at around 10:00am yesterday when driver of a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Rangpur lost his control over the steering.

The bus turned upside down on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Nagar Jalpai area in Tangail Sadar upazila and fell into a ditch, leaving an unidentified boy, age about 12 dead on the spot and injured 10 others.

Local people rescued the injured and rushed them to Tangail General Hospital.

Another accident took place at around 8:00pm on Wednesday when a Nagarpur-bound passenger bus from Tangail ran over a minor boy on Tangail-Aricha road in Elasin Shanbari area in Delduar upazila when he was crossing the road.

The minor boy died on the spot. The dead was identified as Mohammad Hassan, 14, son of Anwar Hossain of Elasin Shanbari village in Delduar.

Local people seized the passenger bus and set it on fire following the accident.

Delduar police rushed to the

spot and brought the situation under control.

Police also sent the bodies to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our Correspondent from Sirajganj adds: At least two people, including a woman, were killed and six others injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Bogra highway in Soyadabad area on western side of Jamuna Bridge in Sirajganj yesterday.

The injured were rushed to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital and local clinics in the town.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place at around 12 noon when a Dhaka-bound microbus collided head-on with a goods-laden truck, killing two people on the spot and injuring six passengers.

Identities of the dead could not be known immediately.

Police sent the bodies to Sirajganj General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our correspondent from Netrakona says: At least 20 people were injured in a road accident on Netrakona-Kalmakanda road at Goturabazar under Kalmakanda Upazila in the district yesterday.

Police said The accident occurred at Goturabazar when a Netrakona-Kalmakanda bound passenger bus turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch as its driver lost his control over the steering, leaving 20 people injured.

Of the injured, Amena Begum, 65, Mohabbat Ali, 40, and Babul, 6, were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition. Others were admitted to Kalmakanda Upazila Health Complex.

Police seized the bus but its driver managed to flee.

Our Correspondent from Jhenidah adds: One person was killed in a road accident on the

Dhaka-Khulna highway near Baishakhi Filling Station yesterday.

The dead was identified as Ruhul Amin, 30, son of Laila Uddin of Solaimanpur village in Jhenidah.

The accident took place when a Jessore-bound truck from Jhenidah hit a motorbike near Baishakhi Filling Station, leaving Ruhul Amin dead on the spot.

Police and locals said Ruhul Amin and his friend Azim Uddin were coming back to Kotchandpur. Azim, 22, son of Tofazzel Hossain of Mander Baria village was seriously injured. He was rushed to Kaliganj Hospital.

Police sent the body to Jhenidah Hospital morgue for autopsy. They seized the truck but the driver and the helper managed to flee.

RU correspondent adds: A minor girl was killed in a road accident at Khoyra crossing under Mohanpur upazila of Rajshahi on Wednesday.

Police said the accident occurred at about 7:00am when a Rajshahi-bound microbus hit the girl, leaving her dead on the spot.

The victim was identified as Bithi, daughter of Fayez of Mohandpur upazila.

The microbus managed to escape.

Meanwhile, one person was killed and 22 others were injured in a road accident in Manda upazila of Naogaon district on Wednesday.

Local and police said the accident occurred when a Bhutubi, human hauler, fell into a roadside ditch at Manda Bazar.

The victim was identified as Babul Hossain, 30, of Manda upazila.

The seriously injured were rushed to Rajshahi Medical College (RMCCH).

They are Moyna, 25, Monthu, 40, Dulal, 30, Sumaira, 6, Surma, 25 and Ambia, 5.

Others were sent to different hospitals and clinics in Manda upazila.

UK announces simpler visa forms, online application

UNB, Dhaka

In a move to make applying for a visa to the UK more straightforward and convenient, the British High Commission in Dhaka has announced introduction of a new, simpler visa application forms and unveiled online applications facility.

The new forms include simple step-by-step instructions, directing applicants to the next question, explaining how to complete each section and avoiding technical jargons, said a British High Commission press release yesterday.

The forms to be completed in English, also come with comprehensive guidance notes explaining how to answer the questions, and what documents the applicants will need to submit with their application.

With effect from October 29, all visa applicants applying for a visa/entry clearance to the United Kingdom will need to use the new application forms.

These forms will be available from the local VFS offices in Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong and from the UK visas website: www.ukvisas.gov.uk

Visa application centres will continue to accept the old forms up until November 9 after which applicants must use the new application forms.

In a parallel move, the British High Commission has also unveiled online UK visa applications for the first time in Bangladesh.

From October 29, applicants will be able to submit applications electronically via the VFS website: www.vfs-uk-bd.com

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury said, "This is a good news for applicants. More straightforward application procedures mean that our visa service is less likely to need to ask genuine applicants for more information or call them in for interviews. This will mean applications can be dealt with even more quickly."

The High Commissioner said, "We warmly welcome genuine applicants to the UK and we continue to look for ways to provide a world-class service for them. The convenience and efficiency of online applications is a sign of our commitment to modernise and make things easier for people."

Two judges appointed to Khagrachhari Judge Court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The government has appointed two judges to Khagrachhari District Judge Court for the first time.

Nitai Chandra Saha was appointed as chief judicial magistrate and Md Mahabubur Rahman as judicial magistrate. They joined their new offices on Tuesday and are expected to start judicial work on November 1, said Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md Khalilur Rahman.

Banani graveyard to be expanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Banani graveyard will be expanded with 6.78 bighas of land in the city.

This was decided at an inter-ministerial meeting presided over by LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal at the auditorium of the ministry yesterday.

The new graveyard will be free and open to all.

Considering the growing number of city dwellers, the meeting also decided not to allow anybody to buy grave for preservation.

However the meeting proposed to make a guideline for those who want to preserve the graves of their relatives for a certain period and not forever.

The meeting also decided to direct the housing companies to keep a portion of land in their housing areas as graveyard for the plot owners.

A few months ago, the Rajdhani Unnayan Katripaksha (Rajuk) recovered around 10 bighas of land from the illegal occupation of a housing company and the housing and public works ministry was asked to handover the land to Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) at a token price.

Rajuk sold out the land for proposed graveyard in 1992 as plots but they did not get the ownership as it was grabbed illegally.

The adviser directed the Rajuk authorities to hand over them plots in other places.

The meeting asked the DCC authorities, the body responsible to look after the government-owned graveyards in the city, to make a code of conduct to operate the graveyards and submit it to local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry for approval.

The chief executive officer of

the DCC informed the meeting that at present there are five government graveyards in the city.

These are located at Azimpur, Zurain, Mirpur, Banani and Uttara with a total land of 97.8 acre of land which is not sufficient for growing number of city dwellers, he added.

The meeting discussed that as people in Saudi Arab do not preserve graves so here also people should be discouraged to preserve the graves.

At present Banani graveyard has only 460 graves open to all while the total number of preserved graves is 754.

The meeting therefore decided to keep most of the land in new area open to all.

Representatives from religious affairs ministry including Gulshan and Banani society and law enforcers were present at the meeting.

GRAFT CASES Proceedings against Mosharraf, Aman, Salahuddin stayed

UNB, Dhaka

The vacation bench of the High Court yesterday stayed until October 28 the proceedings of the corruption cases against detained former minister Dr Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain, former state minister Amannullah Aman and former BNP lawmaker Salahuddin Ahmed.

After a brief hearing on separate applications filed by the accused, Justice AFM Abdur Rahman passed the interim orders staying the proceedings, court sources said.

Laos Deputy FM arrives tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Laos, Phongsavath Bouppha, will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow to hold bilateral talks focusing on Bangladesh's potential in tapping Laos's growing pharmaceutical, ready-made garment and timber markets.

Foreign ministry officials hope that the visit will allow Bangladesh to link up with the growing economies of South East Asia region that remain untapped.

Bouppha will hold talks with Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain at the Padma State Guest House tomorrow.

He will call on Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Chowdhury on Monday. Bouppha will also meet the representatives of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) to discuss trade opportunities.

Diplomatic sources said the long-scheduled meeting will focus on Bangladesh's trade potential in Laos and look forward to establishing bilateral trade mechanism.

Cooperation in agriculture will also figure prominently in the bilateral talks.

Foreign ministry officials told The Daily Star that Bangladesh is looking forward to meeting the growing demand for consumer products including ready-made garment in Laos which achieved an impressive economic growth of 7.2 percent in 2006.

The economic boom in Laos opens up opportunity for Bangladeshi exporters in different sectors including timber and low-cost pharmaceuticals.

The two sides are likely to discuss the possibility of opening a Laos consulate in Dhaka.

Bangladesh already has Joint Economic Commissions and Joint Commissions with several South East Asian countries, such as Malaysia and Vietnam.

ACC probes

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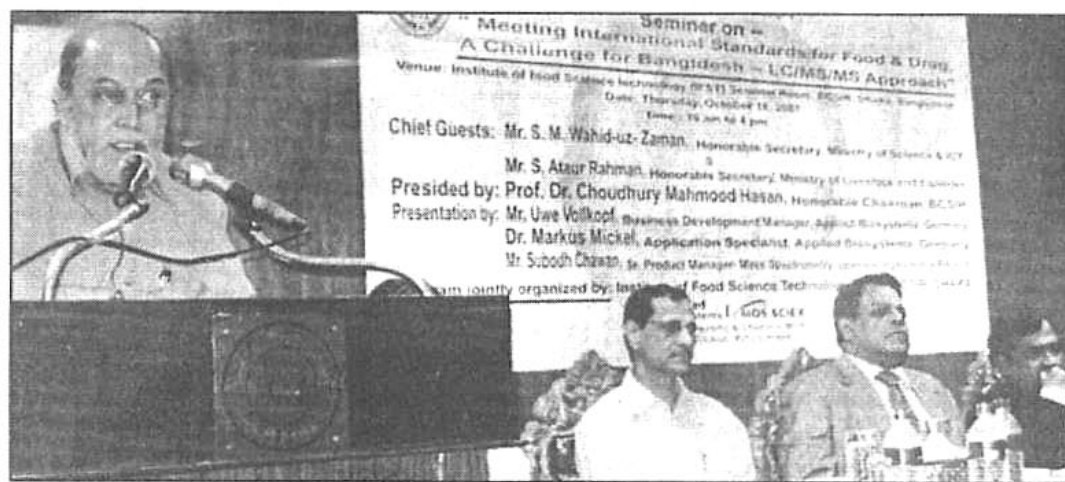
The investigation of corruption allegations during the tenure of Awami League (AL) is nearly completed and evidence of corruption has been found against Hasina, added the sources at the ACC.

According to the sources, on June 28, 1998, Nico made a proposal to Bangladesh government to develop the 'marginalised' and 'abandoned' gas fields in the country.

Following the proposal, the then government marked Chhatak, Kamta and Feni as 'marginalised and abandoned' gas fields, the sources said adding that in 2001, the then AL government prepared a draft agreement for Nico and in 2003, the then BNP-led four-party alliance government finalised the agreement with Nico.

Meanwhile, the ACC yesterday questioned Talebar Rahman, former director of the then Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and an accountant of Global Agro Trade (Pvt) Co Ltd (Gatco) in connection with the Gatco graft case filed against 13 people including former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

Earlier, on October 16, former minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury's son Shahadat Akbar Chowdhury submitted a wealth statement on behalf of his mother to the commission.



Chairman of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) Prof Dr Choudhury Mahmood Hasan speaks at a seminar on 'Meeting international standards for food and drug' in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 20)

Enhance trade, commerce for mutual benefit President urges outgoing French envoy

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called upon the French investors to invest in Bangladesh.

He also underscored the need for enhancing trade and commerce for the mutual benefit of the two countries when Jacques Andre Costilhes, outgoing French ambassador in Dhaka, made a farewell call on the president at

Bangabhaban yesterday.

The president told the envoy that the upcoming general election would be held in a free, fair and credible manner within the timeframe set by the Election Commission and he invited international observers to observe the election.

Mentioning France as the fourth largest export destination for Bangladesh products after USA, Germany and UK, President Iajuddin thanked the government of France for importing huge Bangladesh products to their market.

He told the ambassador that through the process of Saarc, Bangladesh is working to promote and establish stability and development in South Asia.

Iajuddin conveyed through the ambassador his sincere wishes and best regards to French President Nicolas Sarkozy and invited him to visit Bangladesh at his convenience.

The envoy said the existing bilateral relations between France and Bangladesh are excellent and it would be further strengthened in the days to come. French envoy meets CA

Meanwhile, Costilhes said they truly believe that the caretaker government is committed to living up to the election roadmap.

He said the interim administration has started the technical work for holding the polls.

He made the remarks as he made a farewell call on Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhrudin Ahmed at the latter's office, the CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim told reporters.

Costilhes, who was stationed in Dhaka for last three years, appreciated the country's progress.

Hotelier murdered in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A residential hotel owner was stabbed to death by a drug addict in Tangail town on Wednesday night.

The victim was identified as Mohammad Babul Hossain, 40, former vice president of Tangail district Bangladesh Chhattr League and owner of Hotel Sagar.

Quoting local people, Ashraf Hossain, officer-in-charge (OC) of Tangail Police Station, told The Daily Star that Biman, 30, a drug addict, locked in an altercation with Babul, when he was sitting in front of his hotel along with his friends at around 8:45pm.

At a stage of the altercation, Biman picked up a scissor from an adjoining tailoring shop and hit Babul with the scissor several times, he said.

On information, police rushed to the spot and sent seriously injured Babul to Tangail General Hospital where on duty doctors declared him dead.

Biman, however, managed to escape.

Police arrested one Rafiqul Islam in this regard. However, the reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

Hearing on charge framing against ex-Jamaat MP Shahjahan Oct 29

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A Chittagong court yesterday deferred the hearing on framing of charges against Shahjahan Chowdhury, a former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker, and Faisal Morshed Khan, son of former foreign minister M Morshed Khan.

Acting Judge of Chittagong Divisional Special Judge Court Mirza Md Ayub Ali, who is also the 5th additional metropolitan and sessions judge, fixed October 29 as the next date for hearing.

The court set the new date following a time petition by the state lawyer, sources said.

The two accused remained at large following a graft case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

ACC Deputy Director Abul Kalam Azad filed the case against Shahjahan Chowdhury with Bandar Police Station on July 1.

On October 1, Md Jahangir Alam, deputy director of ACC Chittagong-2, submitted the charge sheet against Shahjahan Chowdhury for concealing wealth in his health statement and Faisal Morshed Khan for abetting him.

Architect stabbed to death in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cg

A young architect was stabbed to death by muggers in the port city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Shakhawat Ullah alias Jewel, 26, son of late Mahib Ullah of Chhunati under Lohagara upazila in the district.

Sources said Jewel, who was working in an architectural consultancy firm Pranayan in Chittagong after graduating from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), fell victim to the attack at around 3:45am.

He was returning home from an

inter-city bus stand at Dampara on his arrival from Dhaka.

As he reached Siraj-Ud-Doula Road between Parade Corner and East gate of Chittagong College, some muggers stopped him on the way, said Jewel's friends quoting witnesses.

Jewel tried to resist the muggers resulting in a scuffle when the miscreants stabbed him in the abdomen damaging some vital arteries.

He was rushed to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) where he was put under life-supporting ventilation at the Intensive Care Unit after an operation.

100 fishermen still missing in Bay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Moderate to heavy rains are likely to continue until tomorrow due to easterly wind that followed the recent well-marked low in the Bay of Bengal.

Meanwhile, over 100 fishermen whose fishing boats capsized in the Bay during a heavy storm caused by the recent depression are still missing.

The met office said moderate to heavy rains might occur in most places of Barisal, Khulna and Dhaka divisions.

"The intensity of rain would decrease by Saturday," said Samarendra Karmakar, director of the met office.

BSS adds: Over 100 fishermen

have been still missing since their 18 fishing boats capsized in the sea during the storm -- many of them are feared drowned.

Altai Hossain, owner of a fishing boat, said one of his boatmen managed to survive and came back.

Quoting the boatman, Altai said many fishing boats had taken shelter in different areas along the coast soon after the storm began.

Besides, about 70 fishermen managed to swim ashore and most of them returned to their homes.

Meanwhile, Commander of Mongla West Zone Coast Guard Captain Abidur Rahman said members of the Coast Guard continued searching for the missing fishermen at different points in the Bay of Bengal.

Obituary

AZM Zulfiqar Haider (Zaed), son of late AKM Israil of Kalaia village at Baula in Patuakhali, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease in the city on October 10 at the age of 47, says a press release.

Zaed was buried at the Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard in Mirpur in the city.

He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter to mourn his death.

His chehulm will be held at his village home in Kalaia.

Poet Farrukh's 33rd anniversary of death today

Today is the 33rd death anniversary of eminent poet Farrukh Ahmed, says a press release.

On the occasion, Farrukh Gobeshona Foundation will hold a discussion and doa mahfil followed by a poetry reading at the National Press Club in the city.

Former chief election commissioner Justice Muhammad Abdur Rouf will be the chief guest at the programme presided over by former secretary Shah Abdul Hannan.

The Foundation will also offer munajat at the grave of the poet after Juma prayers.

Jahurul Islam



Today is the 12th death anniversary of Jahurul Islam, founder chairman of Islam Group, says a press release.

On this occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held simultaneously at all the organisations and educational institutions set up by Jahurul Islam at 11:30am.

All relatives, friends, admirers and employees of the Islam Group have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani of Obaidul Huq today

BSS, Dhaka

The qulkhwani of Obaidul Huq, an eminent journalist and former editor of The Bangladesh Observer, will be held at Banani Jame Mosque (adjacent to Banani Bazar) after Asr prayers today.

Family members of Obaidul Huq have requested all friends, relatives and admirers to attend the qulkhwani.

Obaidul Huq passed away at his Banani residence on October 13.

Sufia Chowdhury



Sufia Chowdhury, a social worker and noted philanthropist, will be held at House No 21, Road No 3,

Dhanmondi (opposite to Delta Medical Centre) in the city after Asr prayers today.

Sufia, vice president of Bangladesh Shishu Kalyan Parishad and member of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, died of a cardiac arrest at Lab Aid Hospital on Monday.

All friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Mukhlisur Rahman

The qulkhwani of Mukhlisur Rahman, former joint chief of Planning Commission, will be held at 140/B, West Agargaon in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Mukhlisur Rahman passed away