

# JOYPURHAT TRAIN-TRUCK COLLISION Probe body identifies 7 causes behind crash

STAR REPORT

The enquiry committee formed to probe Tuesday's tragic train-truck collision in Joypurhat has identified seven causes, including unprotected level crossing, absence of speed breaker and cautionary traffic signal and allowing passengers on train engine without tickets, for the accident.

The committee in its report submitted to Joypurhat deputy commissioner on Thursday also put forward an 11-point recommendation, including posting of two gatemen round the clock at Kashiabari level crossing, construction of speed-breaker at the level crossing and putting a stop to illegal carrying of passengers on the engine and roof of trains.

At least 13 people were killed and 50 others injured when Khulna bound Rocket mail train rammmed a sand-laden truck on the unprotected level crossing at Kashiabari in Sadar upazila of Joypurhat on February 17.

Following the accident, the three-member committee was formed with Additional District Magistrate Sitara Begum as its head.

According to the report, other causes are absence of signboard with warning on both sides, callousness of the truck driver, abnormal height of the level crossing from the road which caused the truck to get stuck suddenly while crossing the railway track and

violation of rules by truck driver for not slowing down speed or stopping the vehicle or not looking around to be sure that train is not coming.

The 11-point recommendation of the committee also includes ensuring train blowing whistles before reaching the level crossing, creating awareness among bus and truck drivers and helpers by bus, truck and motor owners associations and at government and non-government level about passing of level crossing.

It also recommended making it mandatory for the bus or truck owners to compensate for death and injury if any accident occurs due to their fault and taking steps against automobile drivers so that they cannot drive vehicles without licences.

Joypurhat DC Shafiqul Islam said he received the enquiry report and will take steps to implement the recommendations made by the committee.

Sources in the administration and locals said 35 people were killed in a train-bus collision at the unprotected level crossing of Akkelpur in Joypurhat on July 11 in 2006.

District administration had then formed an enquiry committee but the recommendations of the committee have not been implemented yet though over two and a half years have passed after the accident.

PRAYERS BY POLITICIANS

## HC orders today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) today will deliver orders on the bail prayers filed by some politicians convicted in absentia in the cases against them.

On February 18, after the hearings on the petitions, the HC bench of Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moeenul Islam Chowdhury fixed February 22 as the date for orders on the matters.

Former AL lawmaker Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Mostafa Rashid Suja, Jatiya Party (Manju) chairman Anwar Hossain Manju, former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman's son Shafiqur Rahman Babu, surrendered before the court and filed prayers for bails in different criminal cases in last January.

Earlier, they were convicted in absentia by the trial courts on different criminal charges.

Deputy attorney general (DAG) of the bench Motahar Hossain Sajju yesterday told The Daily Star that the HC bench would pass orders today as the bench earlier held hearings on 18 bail petitions filed by 14 accused, most of them are politicians.



Eminent singer Shahnaz Rahmatullah receives a crest from Shamsur Rahman, former president of Dhaka Club Limited, at a ceremony at its auditorium in the city yesterday. Dhaka Club honoured its members who won the Ekushey Padak at different times at the ceremony.

## Dhaka Club honours Ekushey Padak recipients

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Club Limited yesterday honoured its members who achieved Ekushey Padak at different times, recognising their special contribution to the nation.

Those honoured with crests include National Prof Dr Sofia Ahmed (language), Dr Razia Khan Amin (literature), Ferdousi Rahman (music), Ferdousi Majumder (drama), Shahnaz Rahmatullah (music), Mohammad Kibria (fine arts), Kalim Sharafi (music), Faiz Ahmed (journalism), Qaiyum Chowdhury (fine arts), Mustafa Bashir (fine arts), Dr Anisuzzaman (education) and Syed Shamsul Huq (literature).

The club also honoured Hasnat Abdul Hye (literature), Md Asaf-ud-Dowla (music), Sadeque Khan (language and film), Mustafa Zaman Abbasi (music), Mohammad Inamul Haque (education), Mustafa Monowar (fine arts), Syed Hasan Imam (film), Rafiqunnabi (fine arts), Rahat Khan (literature), Aly Zaker (drama), Ataur Rahman (drama), Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Humayun Ahmed (literature), Jewel Aich (magic), Ramendu Majumder (drama) and Reazuddin Ahmed (journalism).

Former president of the club Shamsur Rahman and incumbent president Sadat Hossain Selim gave away the crests and flowers at its auditorium in the city.

Welcoming the guests, Selim said, "Many of our members are contributing a lot to the nation but remain unrecognised to us. Today's achievement is only a small part of our effort to respect them."

Litterateur Syed Shamsul Huq said the seed of Bangladesh's independence sowed in 21 February which has now grown as a large plant.

"It is our crucial responsibility to help the plant bloom in its every aspect... making a beautiful Bangladesh," he added.

The award giving ceremony was followed by a cultural soiree by noted dancers and musicians.

## RU SHAHEED MINAR Sangskritik Jote barred from holding programme

RU CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Rajshahi University (RU) did not allow Sammillito Sangskritik Jote (SSJ) to hold 'Ekushey programme' at Central Shaheed Minar on the campus yesterday.

Earlier, the university authorities permitted Bikalpa Sahitya Sangsad (BSS), a Shibir-backed organisation, to hold programme at Central Shaheed Minar.

But Sammillito Sangskritik Jote had declared that they would hold programme on Ekushey at the Central Shaheed Minar, as Bikalpa Sahitya Sangsad does not believe in liberation war.

In this backdrop, the university authorities did not allow any organisation to hold any programme to avoid untoward situation.

Earlier on Friday night, the university authorities and police held a meeting and took the decision on imposing restriction at Central Shaheed Minar area to hold any programme except programmes scheduled by the university authorities.

Sammillito Sangskritik Jote activists went to Shaheed Minar to hold programme yesterday morning, but they were not allowed to hold programme there.

Later, they hold a protest meeting and protest cultural programme on left side of the Shaheed Minar and criticised the university authorities for imposing restriction.

When contacted, Pro-VC Prof Mammunul Keramat confirmed that they had imposed restriction to hold programmes by any organisation other than the university authorities at Shaheed Minar area.

# India to set up Ganga River Basin Authority to curb pollution

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India has announced it will set up the National Ganga River Basin Authority (GRBA) to rid the river Ganga of pollution and other forms of degradation.

Minister of State for Environment and Forests Namo Narain Meena gave a statement, to this effect, in the parliament on Friday. The government will issue a notification, in this regard, he said.

The implementation of the GRBA is based on piecemeal basis and focused more on municipal sewage, Meena said adding that the problem is compounded from the inadequate flows of water.

He said, a comprehensive response is necessary to address the problem covering water quality and flow, sustainable access, prevention and control of pollution, security for sustenance, and energy security in the form of national mission by giving the Ganga the status of a national river.

Which is why the government has decided to give the Ganga the status of a national river by setting up the GRBA with the empowerment of planning, financing, monitoring and coordinating

authority for the project under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the minister said.

The prime minister will chair the GRBA and it will include as its members the chief ministers of the states through which the Ganga flows-- Uttarakhnad, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

The GRBA may co-opt one or more chief ministers from any of the states having major tributaries of the river Ganga. It may also co-opt up to five members who are experts in the fields of river conservation, hydrology, environmental engineering, social mobilization and such other fields.

The GRBA, with a holistic approach, will address the problem of pollution in the Ganga. This will include water quality and other issues relevant to river ecology and management.

The GRBA is aimed to development river basin management plan and prevention, control and abatement of pollution in the Ganga to maintain its water quality and to take steps relevant to river ecology and management in the Ganga Basin states.

## EXPEDITIONS TO HIMALAYAS

# Solo photo show begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-day solo photography exhibition titled 'Icy Siren' by MA Mohit, portraying the daring expeditions by Bangladeshi youths to the Himalayan mountain range, began at Drik Gallery in the city yesterday.

Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam of English department at Dhaka University formally inaugurated the event jointly sponsored by Transcom Beverages Ltd, Dhaka Courier and UNB, a news agency.

A total of 40 photographs displayed in the show captured the serene icy beauty of the Himalaya, the effort of the climbers to conquer the peaks and the Sherpa lifestyle in the high Himalayan region.

Member of Bangla Mountaineering and Trekking Club (BMTCL), Mohit is the first Bangladeshi climber to ascend 7,000 metres in the Himalayas.

He climbed three Himalayan peaks -- Chulu West, Mera and

Singu Chuli -- and attempted to climb the eighth highest peak Manaslu which is 26,758 feet high.

Manaslu peak is considered one of the most dangerous peaks of the world. Only 240 climbers have so far scaled the mountain successfully, while some 52 were killed in their attempts to climb up the peak until 2003.

Mohit and his friends will undertake another expedition aiming to conquer Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world, in April.

"Everest is so close to Bangladesh but we never tried to explore its beauty, while people from across the world successfully climbed its peaks," he said.

"There are no mountains in Bangladesh. The exhibition is an effort to introduce the spirit of the Himalayas to the people of Bangladesh who only know a few hills," he added.

Pemba Dorje Sherpa, the

fastest Everest climber of the world and three-time record holder, was present at the programme as the special guest.

"Mohit captured the spirit of the Himalayas and the true lifestyle of the Sherpas quite perfectly," said Pemba who holds the speed record for climbing Everest in eight hours and 10 minutes in May 2004.

Pemba expressed his willingness to climb for Bangladesh and win a 'Bangladesh-Nepal Friendship Peak' in the Himalayas.

Presided over by expeditor Enam Ul Haque, the programme was also addressed by Deputy Chief of Mission of Nepalese embassy Ramesh Prashad Khanal, Editor of weekly Dhaka Courier Enayatullah Khan and PepsiCo International Country Manager Tejinder Khurana.

The exhibition will be open to all from 3:00pm to 8:00pm every day.



A photo of expedition by Bangladeshi youths to the Himalayan mountain range. A six-day solo photography exhibition titled 'Icy Siren' by MA Mohit, portraying the daring expeditions, begins at Drik Gallery in the city yesterday.

## Save Rabbi's life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Around 6,000 students at a reception ceremony here on Friday urged all to help HSC examinee Rabbi who is suffering from Gulaubury Syndrome, a rare disease.

He is now undergoing treatment at the intensive care unit (ICU) of Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Sixty meritorious students instantly donated their prize money they received at the programme to help the ailing student.

Chittagong City Corporation organised the programme at the Laldighi Maidan to greet the students who passed the SSC and Dakhil examinations with GPA-5 and the junior scholarship examinations in 2007 and 2008.

Touhid Bin Rabbi, 19, a meritorious student of Haji Mohammad Mohsin College is an examinee of this year's HSC examination, sources said.

He obtained talent pool scholarships both in primary and junior scholarship examinations and secured Golden A+ in the SSC examination from Chittagong Govt High School in 2007.

Rabbi, who lost his father when he was a student of class-IV, fell ill on January 5, they added.

Wahidul Alam, elder brother of Rabbi and a student of Chittagong University, told The Daily Star that Tk one lakh twenty thousand is needed every day for an ISGP-Haemoglobin injection which is not available in the country and needs to be imported from Singapore.

He urged all to donate for Rabbi to the account of his mother Anwara Begum (A/C number 011712100006749) at Mercantile Bank branch on Jubilee Road in the city.

## Ekushey observed in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A painting, poetry recitation and essay writing competition was held at Satkhira Women Government College premises yesterday in observance of the International Mother Language Day.

Satkhira district unit of Sachetan Nagorik Committee (committee of conscious citizens), a unit of Transparency International of Bangladesh, organised the event.

The programme was organised to launch a campaign to create awareness among the teachers and students against corruption and injustice.

Speakers at the inaugural ceremony of the programme said 'Amar Ekushey' teaches us to fight against all sorts of corruption and injustice. They urged the youths and students to come forward to root out corruption which is leading the country towards economic disaster.

The young participants at the competition took oath vowing to root out corruption from the society.

Satkhira Government College Vice Principal Prof Abu Ahmed, Dr Dilara Begum, Advocate Abul Kalam Azad, Prof Pabitra Mohom Das, among others, spoke on the occasion.

A total of 54 students including boys and girls participated at the competition.

# Vegetable vendor found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of a teenage boy with hands and legs tied with rope at Ashulia on the outskirts of the city yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Akhter Hossain, 16, a vegetable vendor at Jirabo Bazar. He was a resident of Tayebpur in the area.

Ashulia police said the children, who were playing near a brick field at Tangabari at around 4:00pm, found the tied hands of the victim under sand stockpiled there.

On information, police

recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy at night.

MA Malek Khan, victim's uncle, told The Daily Star that Akhter went missing since February 17 after his cousin Enamul called him over a cellphone.

Akhter had a feud with his cousin Enamul over a cellphone set a month ago, he said, adding that as a sequel to

the enmity, he might have killed Akhter and dumped the body under the sand.

The victim's family filed an abduction case with Ashulia Police Station accusing five criminals, including Enamul, on February 19.

Ashulia police said they arrested a youth named Rubel on Friday who was put on a three-day remand in this connection yesterday.

### DHAKA TODAY

**Workshop**  
The inaugural ceremony of the five-day workshop on material development for literacy will be held. Dhaka Ahsania Mission and Unesco Dhaka jointly organise the event. Venue: Ahsania Mission auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

**Orientation**  
The inaugural ceremony for parliamentary orientation programme for the members of the 9th Jatiya Sangsad will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 10:00am.

**Debate**  
The Hunger Project and Debate for Democracy jointly organise a debate marking the Ekushey. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

**Film screening**  
Kino Eye Films arranges screening of the film 'Rabeya' directed by Tanvir Mokammel. Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

### WEATHER TODAY

## Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 33.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 9.9 degrees Celsius at Srimongol.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:58pm today and rises at 6:26am 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	30.3	15.0	47	40
Chittagong	31.0	17.0	47	51
Rajshahi	30.5	13.3	68	52
Khulna	31.0	16.3	76	52
Barisal	31.2	14.5	75	62
Sylhet	29.6	14.1	68	48
Cox's Bazar	33.3	17.5	43	49

## AL leaders misbehave with UNO, principal

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Awami League leaders, activists and freedom fighters misbehaved with Hossainpur UNO, AC (land) and a college principal while placing wreaths at Hossainpur Shaheed Minar yesterday morning.

Sources said UNO Wahiduzzaman, Assistant Commissioner (Land) Shah Alam Mukul and Principal of Hossainpur Degree College Nazim Uddin came under the verbal attacks at around 8:00am.

Later, police brought the situation under control by dispersing people with baton-charge, leaving some injured.

Police said discontent among local AL leaders and freedom fighters triggered the incident, as they were not involved in the Ekushey programme by the administration.

Ayub Ali, president, Shah Mabubul Haque, general secretary of Hossainpur upazila AL, Abdul Mutaleb, freedom fighter, MA Halim, president of Jubo League, Makhbul Hossain, ex-president of Chhatra League and other activists chased and threw sandal and shoes to the officials when they reached the spot to place wreaths.

After the incident, Awami League and freedom fighters staged a demonstration and took out a procession at Hossainpur bazar against the UNO and demanded his removal immediately, calling him 'Razakar'.