

8 killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

At least eight people were killed and 12 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla, Bagerhat and Rajbari yesterday.

Our correspondent from Narayanganj adds: Two workers of a Steel Re-rolling Mill were killed and two others injured when a truck ran over them on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in front of Rupganj Tarabo Municipality at 6.30am yesterday.

The injured were sent to the Orthopaedic Hospital in Dhaka in critical condition.

Police sent the bodies to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

Rupganj thana officer-in-charge (OC) Fazlul Karim said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound rod-laden truck turned upside down as its driver lost his control over the steering. A Narsingdi-bound truck coming from opposite direction ran over the workers while they were removing the rods scattered on the road.

Abdus Sattar, 22, of Panchagarh and Badal, 18, of Tentulia died on the spot. The dead were workers of Birkampur Steel Re-rolling Mill.

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to flee.

A correspondent from Comilla reports: At least three people were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in Chandina upazila in the

district yesterday.

Police said the accident occurred on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Nuritola area when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus of Tisha Service from Comilla collided head-on with a Chittagong-bound truck from Dhaka, leaving one person dead on the spot and five others injured. The dead was identified as Md Ayub Ali, 60, office assistant of Comilla Bakhrambad Gas System Limited.

Meanwhile, a speedy tractor hit a motorcycle from behind on Dhaka-Chittagong highway near Palki Cinema in Chandina upazila, leaving motorcycle rider Abu Musa, 50, of Bishshas village dead on the spot. The accident occurred when Musa was going to his work places.

A truck helper was killed in another accident on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Nawtola area in the same upazila.

The accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound truck from Chittagong collided head-on with a Chittagong-bound truck from Dhaka, leaving truck helper Mukul Hossain, 20, of Syedpur village in Narayanganj dead on the spot.

The injured were rushed to local upazila health complex.

Comilla Kurwali police sent the bodies to Comilla Medical College Hospital for post mortem.

UNB from Bagerhat adds: Two people, including a UP member, were killed and two others injured in a collision between

two motorcycles on Bagerhat-Pirojpur road in Kachua upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Abdul Huq, 65, member of Hoglaphsha union parishad in Morelganj upazila, and Manir Hossain of Gabindupur village in the same upazila.

Police said the accident took place at Badhalbazar in the morning, killing the UP member on the spot and injuring three others. Manir succumbed to his injuries at Bagerhat Sadar Hospital.

The injured were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

Meanwhile, a businessman was killed and three others were injured when a bus hit a nosiman, a local human hauler, on Rajbari-Kushthia regional highway at Charlamipur in Rajbari yesterday.

Police said a nosiman skidded off the road after it was hit by a bus near Charlamipur brick field at about 11:00am, killing one of its passengers on the spot and injuring three others.

The dead was identified as Abdul Kuddus Mandal, 40, a businessman of Gandhimara village in Pangsha upazila of the district.

The injured -- Kamal, 19, Osman, 20, and Russell, 25, -- were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Police seized the bus but could not arrest the driver.



(From left) Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon, anti-British movement veteran Binod Bihari Chowdhury, Prof Muntasir Mamun and Syed Abul Maksud hold copies of a book titled 'Birkanya Preetilata' at a publication ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday on the occasion of the 98th birth anniversary of Preetilata Waddedar.

RAMNA BATAMUL BLAST
PW demands exemplary punishment to culprits

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A prosecution witness, who was injured in the Ramna Batamul blast, yesterday demanded exemplary punishment before a Dhaka court to the culprits responsible for committing such heinous offences.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court recorded statements of businessman Amin Ullah in connection with the case filed for murder. After recording his statement, Amin was cross-examined by the defence lawyers.

The court then fixed May 20 and 21 for next hearing of the case and summoned several other witnesses to appear before the court on the scheduled date.

Earlier, sergeant Amal Chandra Chanda, complainant of the murder case, had given his statement before the court on May 3.

The same court had earlier fixed May 19 for next hearing of the case filed under Explosive Substances Act.

Ten people were killed and scores injured in the blast at Ramna Batamul during Pahela Baishakh celebrations on April 14, 2001. Following the carnage, two cases -- one for murder and another for possession and use of explosive substances -- were filed with Ramna Police Station.

In his deposition, Amin told the court that on April 14, 2001 he went to Ramna Batamul where Pahela Baishakh celebrations were being held. At about 8:15am, a bomb exploded around 15 to 20 yards away from the stage. In the blasts, he suffered injuries in his legs and other parts of the body. He also lost his sense.

He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) for treatment. He was later shifted to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) as his health condition was deteriorating, the witness said.

Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, Arif Hasan Suman, Shahadat Ullah Jewel, Maulana Abu Taher and Maulana Abdur Rauf, now in jail custody, were produced before the court during yesterday's hearing. Another accused Maulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, now on a High Court bail, was also present in the court.

Maulana Tajuddin, younger brother of former BNP deputy minister Abdus Salam Pinto, and seven other accused have been absconding since filing of the cases.

War hero Selina fought for repression-free society

Speakers tell publication ceremony

DU CORRESPONDENT

Politician and social worker Selina Banu in her entire life had fought to establish a society free of repression and discrimination as well as to realise rights of the commoners, speakers at a book launching ceremony said yesterday.

They said Selina, who participated in the anti-British 'Swadeshi' movement and later in the liberation war of 1971 in male dress, was at a time a social worker, noted

politician and friend of the deprived quarters in society.

The speakers said this at the publication ceremony of the book titled 'Selina Banu: Sangrami Nari' (Selina Banu: A struggling woman) published by Jatiya Sahitya Prokashoni at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban on the Dhaka University campus.

Addressing the ceremony, DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique termed the book a precious work and hoped that it would help

young generation know about Selina and build their lives following her ideology.

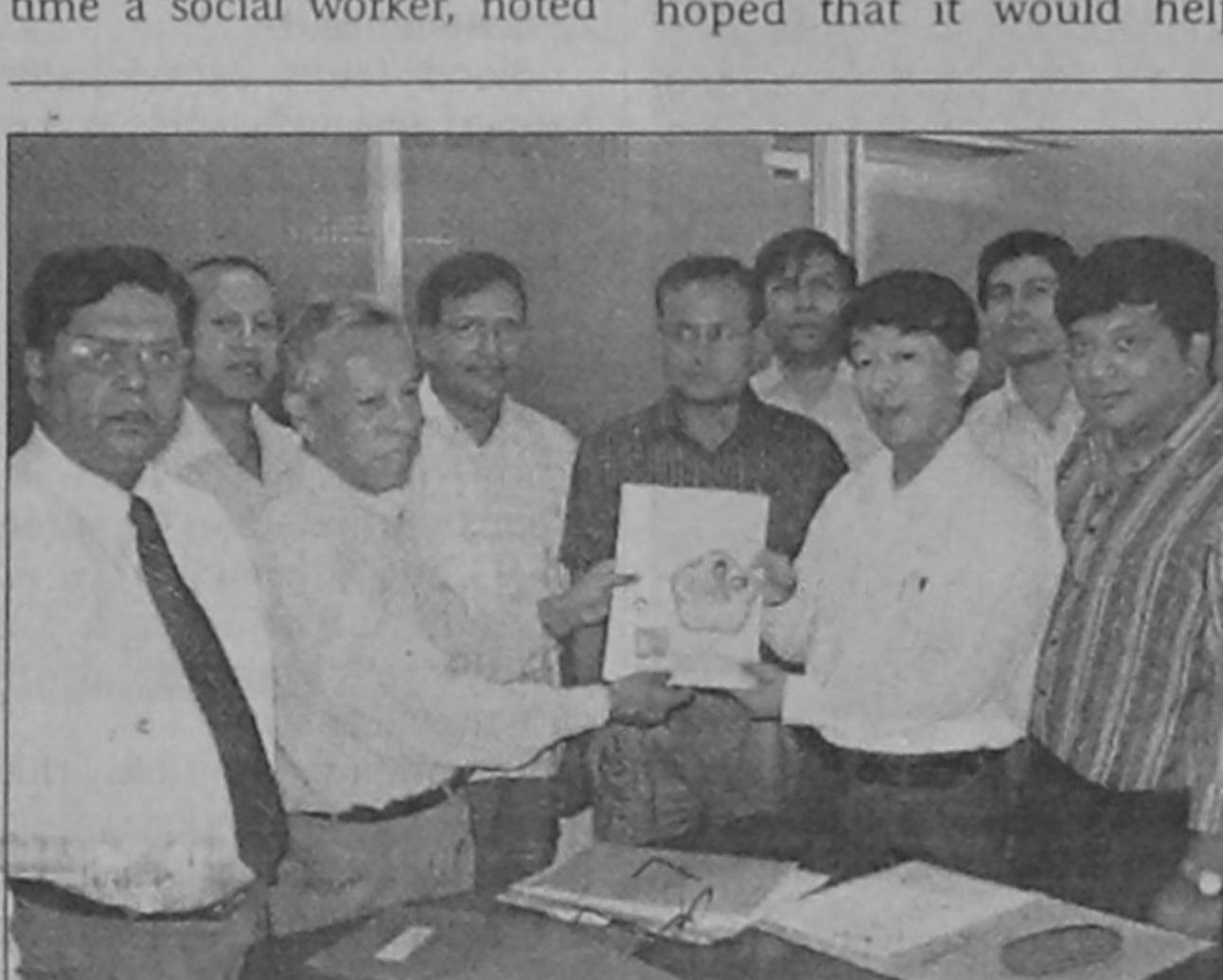
"Human beings pass away, but their memories and works left. Contributions of Selina to the society would keep her alive in people's minds," the VC said, adding that she played a vital role in the country's social and political arena by winning people's hearts through love and her activities.

Selina was born on October 12, 1926 in Pabna and played a vital role in women's education and was involved in the left-leaning student politics. She was an active worker at all secular movements and took part in demonstrations when the 'communal clashes' were continuing in 1964.

The Statesman published an interview titled "A shy girl with gun" of Selina on April 12, 1971 when she was in the battlefield of the liberation war.

The veteran war hero died on January 26 in 1983.

Noted journalist Kamal Lohani presided over the programme which was also addressed by Communist Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim, Duta President Prof Khandakar Bazlul Haque, Prof MM Akash and Prateeti Dutta.



Hiroshi Omura, head of the Information & Cultural Division of the Embassy of Japan, hands over the official logo sticker of the membership of The JF Nihongo Network to Dr AKM Moazzem Hussain, president of JUAAB, at its office in the city recently.

UK student visa process gets simpler

METRE DESK

UK Border Agency (UKBA) has introduced a new system making student visa application process simpler and easier to understand, says a press release.

According to the new point-based system, which is already in place from March 31, students willing to study in the UK need to score a minimum 40 points.

Thirty points are given against a certificate of acceptance from the university or college in the UK while the rest 10 points are given to the applicant's financial ability.

Speaking at the event Sarah Balfour, entry clearance officer of Visa Services Directorate of the British High Commission, Dhaka, UK Border Agency, advised the students to process their student visa applications through the approved agencies.

The seminar was followed by an education fair,

where the member of the BASAS exhibited the study programmes offered by the British educational institutions.

The amount needs to be



Stuart Percival, head of immigration, Visa Service Directorate of the British High Commission Dhaka, UK Border Agency, speaks at a seminar on 'UK Student Visa, Tier 4; Points Based System' at Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday. Sarah Balfour, entry clearance officer of Visa Services Directorate of the British High Commission Dhaka, UK Border Agency and Raiqah Wallie Khan, manager of Education and Society of British Council, Dhaka, are also seen in the picture.



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(From left) Shah Alamgir, Farah Kabir and Prof Shahidul Islam hold copies of an anthology titled 'Withered policy reforms in education: Lessons and challenges' at its launching ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Vitamin-A plus campaign on June 6

UNB, Dhaka

Aimed at protecting infants from blindness and death risks, the government will launch a vigorous campaign on June 6 when children across the country will be fed vitamin-A capsules and anti-worm tablets.

Dr Mokim Ali Biswas of Institute of Public Health Nutrition (IPHN) told UNB yesterday that the high-powered vitamin-A capsule will be fed to children aged 1 to 5 years and anti-worm tablet to those aged 2 to 5 years.

IPHN, under its planning and advocacy programme, is now holding meetings at district level to make people aware of the need for protecting the children from blindness and worm related diseases.

Dr Mokim said they have already completed similar meetings at the divisional level. Gradually they will go to the upazila and union level to make

the people aware of the programme. He said child blindness is not yet a serious problem in Bangladesh. It is estimated 0.04 percent of the children are suffering from night-blindness.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the night-blind is termed as problem if it is found among more than one percent children, he added.

Citing recently held study reports, Dr Mokim said Vitamin-A capsule protects the children not only from blindness but it also decreases the rate of child mortality. Besides it decreases the range and complexity of diarrhoea.

The IPHN official said they are working in dealing with some other programmes, including Breast Meal Substitute (BMS) Code, Universal Salt Iodisation (USID), Bangladesh Nutrition (BAN) and School Health.

Int'l eye bank team meets Dipu Moni

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of International Federation of Eye and Tissue Banks met with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Vice-President of the federation Philip A Felton and Director Daniel Delap jointly led the team.

The delegation praised the activities of Sandhani National Eye Donation Society and said the activities of the organisation set a unique example for other countries. They also assured the minister of assisting the society.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was once the vice-president of Sandhani National Eye Donation Society.