

Road crashes kill 8

METRO DESK

At least eight people were killed and 69 others injured in separate road accidents in Kurigram, Noakhali, Brahmanbaria, Netrakona, Narail and Khulna yesterday and on Thursday night.

UNB from Kurigram reports: Two people were killed and 40 others injured when a bus plunged into a roadside ditch in Garohari Bridge area in Razibpur upazila on Thursday night.

The deceased were identified as Deul Miah, 28, and Chand Miah, 29, residents of Korakandi village in Roumari upazila.

Police said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus of Doel Enterprise from Roumari skidded off the road and fell into a ditch about 11:00pm as its driver lost his control over the steering, killing the two young men on the spot and injuring 40 others.

The injured were rushed to Upazila Health Complex. Meanwhile, a woman and her minor son were killed as a passenger bus hit their motorbike on Maizdi-Choumuhoni road under Begumganj upazila in Noakhali yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Rahima Akhter Mita, 32, wife of Mohammad Hanif, a local construction contractor, and their 11-month-old son Omar Faruk at Char Jubli village in Subarnachar upazila.

Police said Hanif along with his wife and son were going to his father-in-law's house at Pallabazar in Chatkhil upazila

in the bike.

The accident occurred near Globe Biscuit factory at around 1:30pm when a Comilla-bound bus from Sonapur hit their bike from behind, killing Rahima and Faruk on the spot and injuring Hanif.

The driver and helper of the bus managed to flee the scene.

Our correspondent from Brahmanbaria says: One person was killed and five others were injured when a tempo fell into a roadside ditch at Datmandal village under Nasirnagar upazila of the district on Thursday night.

The dead was identified as Monna Mia, 22, son of Malai Mia of Kalikatcha village under Sarail upazila.

Witnesses and police said the accident occurred when a Nasirnagar-bound tempo from Brahmanbaria fell into a roadside ditch while it was crossing Datmandal turning point as its driver lost his control over the steering. Six people were injured.

Of the injured, tempo driver Monna succumbed to his injuries on the way to hospital. Five others were sent to upazila hospital.

Our correspondent from Netrakona reports: One person was killed and 20 others injured in a road accident on Netrakona-Mohanganj road at Khaierbangla under Netrakona Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead was identified as Rahim Mandal, 50, of village Sahata under Barhatta upazila.

Police and locals said the accident occurred when a

Netrakona-bound passenger bus from Mohanganj turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch at Khaierbangla as its driver lost his control over the steering, leaving Rahim dead on the spot and 20 others injured.

Of the injured, Maleka Begum, Golam Rabbani, Saleha Khatun, Saban Mia and Abdus Salam were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

BSS from Narail adds: The driver of a 'nasiman' (locally made three-wheeler) was killed and 250 poultry birds were perished in a road accident on the Narail-Jessore highway at Sitampur in the district early hours of yesterday.

Police said the nasiman driver Palash Molla, 18, was seriously injured when the vehicle with 600 poultry birds plunged into a roadside ditch.

Molla was rushed to Narail Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Witnesses said some 250 birds, out of 600, were perished in the accident.

Another report from Khulna adds: A rickshaw-van puller was killed and three others were injured when a Khulna-bound bus hit his van on Jessore-Khulna highway at Maniktala in the city yesterday morning.

Police and hospital sources said the dead was identified as Mahabubur, 38, son of Afzal Sahata under Barhatta upazila. The injured were rushed to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).



A construction firm dug up a portion of the road in front of Mirpur Bangla High School and College at Mirpur Section-11 in the city to build a footbridge nearly two months ago. But the construction work has remained halted since then, causing suffering to students as well as pedestrians.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

CLIMATE CHANGE

Help Bangladesh face natural calamities

Dipu Moni urges developed countries

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni on Thursday stressed joint consideration and responsible acts by the developed states to help Bangladesh face natural calamities.

"The climate change has a multifarious damaging effect on Bangladesh, including frequent natural calamities, more spending of our scarce resources due to such disasters and thus threatening our food security," she told a function on 'Innovative solutions linking climate change and food security'.

"We are a victim of climate change though not responsible for this phenomenon," she said at the function organised by the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

The foreign minister attended a number of programmes on Thursday on the sidelines of the 64th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

In the afternoon, she participated in the eighth meeting of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers, which was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Uganda.

The foreign minister delivered a statement in the meet where she expressed whole-hearted support and commitment of Bangladesh to the principles, values and norms of the organisation namely democracy, rule of law, human rights, mutual respect, good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence.

She thanked the member states and the Commonwealth for their support in holding a free, fair and transparent parliamentary election in

Bangladesh late last year.

The foreign minister indicated that the nature and results of the election was quite distinct from the previous elections divulging the fact that it was not only a triumph of democracy, but it also displayed the increased pace of women's participation in the election and thus reinforcing women empowerment.

She also attended a high

level meeting on 'Peace and Security through Women's Leadership: Acting on 1325 and Climate Change' invited jointly by President of Liberia Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and President of Finland Tarja Halonen.

She upheld the position of Bangladesh - of its commitment to the UN Security Council resolution 1325, which happened to be adopted when Bangladesh

was a non-permanent member of the Council.

Referring to the victims of the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the foreign minister regretted that women and children are the most vulnerable and affected groups during any conflict.

She also stressed women's active and increased involvement in the decision making organs

of the United Nations in peacekeeping and peace-building process in order to achieve the best performance both during and after conflicts.

The foreign minister also highlighted the need for equitable cost sharing between the developed and the least developed countries for climate change adaptation.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Nepalese Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal hold talks on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. (Story on Page 1)

One crushed under train's wheels in Tongi

UNB, Gazipur

An unidentified person was killed as a speeding train knocked him down at Modhumita rail gate in Tongi yesterday afternoon.

Police and witnesses said Dhaka-bound 'Joyantika Express' train from Sylhet hit the man aged about 35 when he was crossing the rail track about 3:30pm, killing him on the spot.

On information railway police recovered his body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Prof Habibur Buet pro-VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Md Habibur Rahman has been appointed pro-vice chancellor of the Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology (BUET), says a press release.

Male seeks Dhaka's support for higher edn

BSS, New York

The Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her leadership in arranging funds for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), including his country, to face the challenges of the global climate change.

"Sheikh Hasina not only in Bangladesh but also made the whole world aware of the adverse impact of the global warming," he said during a meeting with Hasina at the UN headquarters on the sidelines of the 64th UN General Assembly session.

Referring to Hasina's address to the last World Climate Conference-3 in Geneva, the Maldives president appreciated her for playing a prudent role in the conference to tackle global climate change due to excessive carbon emission by the devel-

oped countries. Nasheed mentioned his government's plan for expansion of higher education and sought further cooperation of Bangladesh for opening a university in his country.

Hasina assured Nasheed of providing every necessary support in expansion of higher education in the Maldives, said Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad while briefing newsmen after the meeting.

Lauding the role of the government led by Hasina, Nasheed said Bangladesh can help the Maldives in further strengthening democracy in his island country.

State Minister for Forest and Environment Dr Hasan Mahmud, Ambassador M Ziauddin and Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes were present on the occasion.

Hasina invites US investment

FROM PAGE 1

seven years. Assuming FDI worth \$7 billion in 2008, this suggests that Bangladesh should aim to attract such substantial FDI by 2015.

On the current economic crisis, Hasina said it has caused many economists and bankers to redefine what they perceive as risky.

It has encouraged them to be more open-minded about new investment opportunities that offer attractive returns without extreme volatility that characterises the complex financial instruments fuelling the current crisis.

The PM said "frontier" emerging markets such as Bangladesh might have appeared as 'high risk' relative to developed markets in past years.

"However, our economy has proved, as a matter of fact, to be one of the most resilient in the world with GDP forecast to decline by less than one percent from 6.5 percent in 2008 to 5.8 percent in 2009," she told the US investors.

Painting a rosy picture of Bangladesh economy, Hasina said the country's stock

market proved to be one of the most resilient ones last year, and in 2009, remained essentially uncorrelated with the majority of developed and emerging markets that are in jitters.

"Nor is it the case that we are cut off from the rest of the world," she said, adding that Bangladesh's export-GDP ratio has risen steadily over the past 15 years and now stands at around 15 percent.

The premier mentioned that the two pillars of Bangladesh economy are textiles and ready-made garments (RMG), along with remittances, each contributing almost \$10 billion to an economy whose GDP is now worth around \$90 billion.

Hasina said the RMG sector has benefited from the so-called 'Walmart effect,' just as Walmart has outperformed other US retailers in the downturn by offering better-value products.

Bangladesh, being one of the lowest cost manufacturing hubs in the world, has similarly seen increased market share and a greater ability to persuade compa-

nies to relocate from other higher cost countries in Asia, she said.

She noted that the remittance flows have continued to grow despite the extreme swings in oil prices that ought to have had a bigger shock to the oil-rich Middle East.

Hasina said what one might call 'Bangladesh paradox' can be seen as surprising economic resilience in the face of natural disaster, overpopulation and infrastructure challenges.

"Even if growth has lagged in a number of other economies in Asia, the volatility of Bangladesh's growth has been lower," she said.

The PM said potential that Bangladesh offers, particularly in the light of favourable demographics, has been recognised by some of the world's leading investment banks, a number of whose representatives were present at the seminar.

Foreseeing a steady growth at seven percent plus on a consistent basis over the next 10 years, she said it should take Bangladesh towards its goal of becoming a middle-income country.

Appoint school psychologists for proper dev of children

Experts tell international seminar

UNB, New York

School psychologists should be appointed to ensure proper development of children, experts at an international seminar said.

They said a child might have behavioral or emotional problems, but with timely and appropriate intervention, they can be highly productive and play effective role in building a prosperous and modern future.

Autism Speaks, a US-based non-government organisation, held the seminar at the Manhattan Ball Room of Hotel Grand Hyatt on Tuesday.

Autism Speaks was founded in February 2005 by Bob and Wright, grandparents of a child with autism. Since then, Autism Speaks has grown into the nation's largest autism science and advocacy organisation dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatment

and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

First ladies and first spouses of various UN member countries attended the seminar as special guests with wife of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in the chair.

Saima Wazed Hossain, a school child psychologist and daughter of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, attended the seminar as an expert on child psychology.

Talking to UNB, Saima said that in the developed world, school child psychologists are appointed at the educational institutions and they play significant role in ensuring that children with autism have a positive school experience.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) require significant support from teachers, parents and society as a whole, she said.

"Unfortunately, the needs of children with autism are not always effectively met. These children can be highly productive and effective members of society," she said.

"It is our duty as a society to support these children and their families. One thing we should understand that autism is caused by genetic and environmental factors and occurs across all socio-economic levels. Although there is no cure, effective intervention provided early can make a big difference," she added.

Referring to programmes in Albania, Philippines and Qatar on autistic children, Saima Hossain said in these countries children are screened from birth in order to diagnose for developmental delays and are provided early interventions.

About the state of autistic children in Bangladesh, she said it is unfortunate that even

many educated parents in the country have difficulty providing proper education due to limited services available in the country.

She suggested that the government should chalk out a programme to appoint school psychologists at every educational institution in order to help all children reach their full potential.

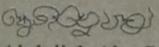
"You have to make sure that all children of the country grow up happy and healthy. Otherwise, how can we expect to build up a prosperous nation in the future?" Saima Hossain posed a question to the policymakers of Bangladesh.

"I am very serious about assisting children and families in my beloved motherland. I will request the international organisations to come forward and help my country in offering children with autism a life of creativity and production," she added.

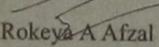
Rekindle ray of hope in the heart of cancer patients

Much more fund is needed to fully commission this massive hospital

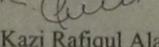
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