

Search for victims of building collapse continues

A five-storey building toppled onto three tin-shed houses in the city's Begunbari area on Tuesday night, killing 22 people. Rescue operation which started soon after the disaster continued throughout the day yesterday.

1. A woman looks at the debris.
2. Fire service men recover the body of a man trapped under rubble.
3. Army men use a crane to remove debris.
4. Kulsum Begum, who lost her son and daughter, wails.
5. Army men recover the body of a child.
6. The body of a man under rubble.

Photo: SK ENAMUL HAQ, ANISUR RAHMAN



President, PM condole loss of lives in bldg collapse, road accident

BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammad Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of 36 men, women and children in Begunbari building collapse in the capital city Tuesday night and the Bagerhat road crash yesterday morning.

In a condolence message, the president prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

He also wished early recovery of the injured in the incident.

In a separate condolence message, the premier conveyed her profound sympathy to the bereaved family members and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

She also prayed for early recovery of the injured persons in the two accidents.

At least 16 people were killed and 28 others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a truck on Khulna-Mawa highway in Mollahat upazila of Bagerhat early yesterday morning.

The death toll from the building collapse in Begunbari area of the capital city so far rose to 20 as rescuers are struggling to remove the debris. A five-storey building fell on three tin-shed houses Tuesday night.

18 AUDIT REPORTS SUBMITTED

Help govt maintain transparency: PM

UNB, Dhaka

A total of 18 audit reports for 2005-06 and 2006-07 fiscals were submitted to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday.

Bangladesh Comptroller and Auditor General Ahmed Ataul Hakim handed over the audit reports to the PM at her Cabinet Division office at the secretariat.

The prime minister after receiving the reports directed the authorities concerned to continue to submit audit reports in time to help

the government maintain transparency and accountability.

She reiterated her government's strong stance for maintaining transparency in all activities saying that she and her government will not tolerate any negligence or irregularity in any sector.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister M A Karim, Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office Molla Waheeduzzaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present on the occasion.

Replace private cars with buses to ease gridlock

Urban planners tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a roundtable yesterday said there is no alternative to reducing the number of private cars from Dhaka city replacing it with public buses to improve the insufferable traffic congestion that is making life of city dwellers indescribably miserable.

Urban planners told the roundtable at National Press Club that only five percent of the commuters in the city is transported by private cars while one single trip of a private car carries only four persons. On the other hand, a single trip of a bus carries over 100 commuters, which is equal to 40 private cars.

About 19 lakh people use public buses in the city everyday. Efficiency of a bus is 150 times more than a private car. All this calls for introducing a better bus service in the city, they said.

Speakers said import of private cars must be controlled with increased tax as more than 100 private cars are being introduced in the city streets everyday that largely contribute to the traffic congestions.

Save Environment Movement (POBA), Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust (WBB) and Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP), Buet jointly organised the roundtable.

Maruf Rahman, project officer of WBB in the keynote paper, said attracting the commuters to public transport from the comfort of private car is a challenge because the current service provided by bus companies is appalling.

He stressed increasing the number of buses, creating better atmosphere for commuters, construction of bus bay, bus counters, passenger shed and proper route design to improve bus services in the city.

Prof Sarwar Jahan, chairman of DURP, stressed introducing multimode transport system synchronising other modes with bus service. He also underscored the need for controlling population from the city.

FFs' Election at dist, UZ: HC verdict stayed for seven days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed for seven days a High Court (HC) verdict that restricted holding elections to district and upazila units of Muktijoddha Sangsad Command Council (MSCC) on June 26.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Muzammel Hossain also asked the government to file a regular leave-to-appeal petition with the SC against the HC verdict within seven days.

The judge passed the order upon a petition filed by the government seeking stay on the HC verdict.

Following a writ petition filed by Yusuf Ali and M Shahabuddin, two freedom fighters, the HC on May 26 delivered a verdict cancelling the schedule for holding elections to district and upazila units on June 26.

The government on Tuesday filed a petition with the SC to stay the HC verdict.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and Deputy Attorney General Motahar Hossain Sazu appeared for the government while Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru argued for MSCC and Barrister Masood R Sobhan stood for the writ petitioners.

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