

## Road accidents shatter their dreams



Injured Noor Alam, driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler, at the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation in the city. He sustained serious injuries in the both legs when a bus hit his vehicle at Moghbazar in the city.

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Just three months ago Noor Alam was a driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler and was living happily with his wife and two little children. But now a bleak future awaits him as an accident caused severe injury to his legs and shattered all his dreams.

"At 30 I am struggling hard to live with dignity. I have no property in my village and no relatives except my aged mother. I never asked anyone for money. Will I have to do that now?" he asked.

Alam is living in Sweeper Colony for the last couple of years. He had been a tea seller and a rickshawpuller. He began driving an autorickshaw considering the future and education of his children.

But within a few months an accident left him bed-ridden with both his legs fractured.

Just a week before the Eid-ul-Fitr a speeding bus hit his CNG near Moghbazar level-crossing. He was admitted to the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) with severe leg injuries.

Within two months all his savings were spent on treatment purpose and he had to return home without completing the treatment.

During a recent visit to his house, The Daily Star correspondent found Alam lying on a stinky bed in a six-foot-by-six-foot tin-shed room. Old newspapers were pasted on the tin walls to fill up cracks and breaches in a failed attempt to prevent rainwater from entering the room.

"The rent is Tk 1,500 per month. My wife Kamala now works as a domestic help and earns Tk 2,200 a month. The rent, food and my treatment costs are too high to manage with this small amount," said Alam who still needs medicine worth Tk 33 per day.

Asked whether he is getting medicine properly, Alam produced a faint smile. "Often it becomes irregular. There's little left for medicine after meeting other needs," he said.

"I do not know when and how I will be able to return to a normal life. I do not know what will happen to my wife, children and elderly mother," Alam had told this correspondent when she first met him at NITOR.

Asked why he didn't call her for help, Alam said he had to sell his cellphone to bear the treatment costs.

Alam nowadays doesn't bother much about his future. All his worries and anxieties are over the future of his family. His six-year old physically challenged son will not be able to get the expensive physiotherapy and his four-year old son is still immature to understand everything.

Doctors say if he gets proper treatment, it would take one month for his recovery.

"We don't know whether this poor man will be able to continue his treatment. He needs long-term treatment and physiotherapy to walk again," says Prof MASamad, an orthopaedic surgeon.

The NITOR doctors say 90 percent of the patients who come with severe injuries are road accident victims. Of them, 50 percent return to normal life but the rest usually lose their limbs and live a crippled life.

At NITOR, Jahidul, a 27-year-old young garment worker, was receiving treatment for the injuries to both his hands after a road accident. His condition has much improved and doctors have asked him to try to walk slowly.

"I cannot go outside. Whenever I see buses, trucks and other vehicles I get frightened. Please take me to a place where there is no such vehicles," said Jahid, who has yet to recover from the shock.

He came to Dhaka with a dream to support his family, as his poor father did not earn enough money by cultivating land. But the road accident shattered his dreams of a better future.

"I need Tk 3,000 every day for buying injections. My father has already sold his cattle to manage my treatment cost," lamented Jahidul.

Like Alam and Jahidul, many of the road accident victims have lost their last resort and suddenly find themselves pauperised, thanks to the callous and careless driving by some unskilled people.

Hospital sources say 10 to 20 percent of the patients who come to NITOR die.

"Those who come with severe haemorrhage, vascular, chest and brain injuries more than one hour after the accident usually die. But most of the patients get well after long-term treatment, while many of the patients' limbs have to be amputated," said Dr Samad.

There are even some unfortunate families that lost two to three members in road accidents and could not come out of that trauma. But very few people actually know about them, he added.

### 50,000 ROK blackboards for primary schools soon

MoU with Korean company to be signed today

UNB, Dhaka

The government will soon receive 50,000 modern blackboards and 5,000 pianos from South Korea, which will be provided for the primary schools.

South Korean company Bowang Company Ltd will provide the blackboards and pianos.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be inked between the Primary and Mass Education Ministry and the South Korean company today in this regard, says a PID handout.

Bowang Company President Eui Ki Kim and DG of Primary Education Directorate Shyamol Kanti Ghosh will sign the MoU on behalf of their respective sides.

### CANTONMENT RESIDENCE

## Khaleda's counsels aimed to make CJ controversial: AG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said Khaleda Zia's counsels intentionally did not moved the leave-to-appeal and contempt of court petitions regarding the cantonment residence in the Supreme Court on Monday to make the chief justice (CJ) controversial.

Barrister Mahbub Uddin Khokon, one of the counsels for the BNP chairperson, on Monday told the media that they would not accept Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque, if he would be made the chief adviser to any caretaker government in future, as he has become controversial.

Countering Khokon's statement, the attorney general yesterday told reporters at his office that Khaleda's lawyers intention was to make the chief justice controversial, so that they can make questions if

any chance is created for his (CJ) appointment as the chief adviser.

Mahbubey Alam said Khaleda's lawyer did not attend the apex court to move the contempt petition on Monday and even on Tuesday (yesterday) although the matter was on the cause lists of the days for hearing with a view to making the cantonment residence a political issue.

He said the SC on Monday requested Khaleda's counsels to place argument on the leave-to-appeal petition filed by her challenging the High Court verdict that had declared valid the government notice asking her to vacate the Shaheed Mainul Road residence.

But they defied the apex court order to politicise the matter, said the chief state lawyer.

Photo: Karnaphuli Fertiliser Project (KAFCO) Bangladesh

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### WORLD AIDS DAY TODAY

## 'AIDS threat to whole mankind'

BSS, Dhaka

The World AIDS Day will be observed today across the country as elsewhere in the world.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has chalked out an elaborate programme to observe the day in a befitting manner. Different socio-cultural organisations have also taken separate programmes alongside the government to mark the day.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haque will address a seminar on "Universal Access and Human Rights" at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) at Sher-e-

Bangla Nagar at 10.30am today.

To create mass awareness about the deadly disease, a colourful rally will be brought out from Manik Miah Avenue in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban at 8.30am. The rally will end at BICC after parading different important city streets.

President Md Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the eve of the day.

In his message, Zillur termed AIDS as a serious threat to the whole mankind and said there is no alternative to create mass awareness to check its spreading.

"I do believe that if we could maintain

religious vales and norms as well as strengthen our family bondage that will help check its spreading," he said.

Hasina, in her message, said the rate of AIDS infection in Bangladesh is comparatively less than that of other countries.

She said the present government is pledge-bound to reduce the burden and has taken a number of steps to check the deadly disease.

Hasina asked leaders of all sections of the people including donors and development partners to play an effective role in checking HIV/AIDS side by side with the government initiatives.

### A grip on the present

### An eye on the future

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