

Guilty yet get off scot-free

Road accidents rise as reckless drivers slip thru' legal loopholes

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

Almost all drivers responsible for road accidents across the country escape punishment through legal loopholes and continue to commit such offences, resulting in heavy casualties.

According to police records, on average 3,300 people were killed every year in road accidents in the last one decade. People of all categories -- from high profile ones to the common men -- are falling victims to reckless driving and lax enforcement of traffic laws.

In one of the latest incidents, Mahbub Alam, the gold medalist sprinter in 1995 SAF Games in Delhi, died in an accident on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Narayanganj yesterday.

As reckless driving goes on unabated, more and more people are killed and injured in road crashes every day. But no government agencies maintain the record of how many offending drivers are prosecuted or brought to book.

Lawmaker Tarana Halim said, "As far as I know, no driver has ever been jailed on charge of killing people on the road."

Records show at least one driver was handed down punishment

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Drivers' reckless driving, lack of respect for traffic rules, speeding, racing and traffic rules violators going unpunished have turned the highways and roads of Bangladesh into death traps. The photo was taken at Sitakunda on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Police to probe boy's death in their custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A one-member probe committee will be formed by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) authorities to investigate the death of teenager Sagor who died in police custody on November 30.

DMP Commissioner Benazir Ahmed said so to journalists at an Eid reunion at the Telecom Auditorium in city's Rajarbagh.

An officer of joint commissioner level will investigate the incident, said Additional Deputy Commissioner of DMP Masudur Rahman. However, he did not mention any date.

Lutfu Begum, mother of the deceased 17-year-old boy demanded exemplary punishment of the police officials

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Nothing wrong in Grameen Bank's funds transfer

Says Muhith

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said there was nothing wrong in transfer of funds from Grameen Bank to Grameen Kalyan and vice versa.

The minister said the Grameen Bank has already given a statement and cleared the issue. There was an understanding between them and the donors, and they put the matter to rest through a compromise.

"Now it seems to me there was nothing wrong," he added, replying to a query from a journalist after a meeting at the National Museum auditorium in the capital.

Muhith's comments came four days after a Norwegian television documentary alleged that Grameen Bank

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Dhaka may get 2-4 mayors

Polls after legal process done; decision comes as PM sits with city lawmakers

RASHIDUL HASAN and PANKAJ KARMAKAR

Dhaka City Corporation may be split into two or four parts, and polls to those are likely after that, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday.

The plan, however, will be finalised in consultation with the experts, she added.

Hasina, also president of Awami League, said this at a meeting with the city lawmakers--all from the AL-led grand alliance.

She called on the lawmakers to take up more welfare activities in their constituencies so that people vote for the alliance-backed candidates in the DCC polls.

The two-hour long meeting began at 6:00pm at the prime minister's Ganobhaban residence.

Coming out of the meeting, Rashed Khan Menon, president of the Workers Party, a component of the grand alliance, told The Daily Star that the prime minister is dissatisfied with poor

civic service under the present DCC mayor.

Menon, MP from Dhaka-8, said the number of mayors will depend on how many parts the city corporation will be divided into.

"A bill to split the DCC will be placed in parliament after examining all relevant aspects," he added.

AKM Rahmatullah, lawmaker from Dhaka-10, told The Daily Star that some MPs proposed that DCC be split into four (east, west, north and south). "But the prime minister said the decision in this regard will be taken after discussions with the experts."

Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, MP from Dhaka-7, said the population in the capital is growing fast and so the city needs to be divided into several parts for better administration and development.

"The prime minister has asked us to think more about the issue," he told the correspondents.

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BNP sticks to boycott guns

JS goes into session today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The seventh session of the Jatiya Sangsad begins today amidst the main opposition's boycott of parliament.

The Business Advisory Committee of parliament will hold a meeting today at 3:00pm to outline the programme of the sitting and fix its duration. Parliament will sit at 4:00pm.

Meanwhile, Speaker Abdul Hamid yesterday invited Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque to his office to discuss BNP's demand for joining the session.

After a one-and-a-half hours' meeting with the speaker,

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Mob kills 3 'robbers'

One of locals dies of bullet-injury

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

A mob beat dead three alleged members of a robber gang who had opened fire on locals killing one at Muradnagar upazila in Comilla yesterday.

Police said some 10 to 12 people on a microbus had intercepted another microbus carrying a group of businessmen near Elliotganj Bazar in the morning and robbed them of Tk 16 lakh.

While hurrying to free, the gang's vehicle plunged into a

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Mobile operators' protest against defamatory articles by Jugantor

It has been observed with grave concern that the Daily Jugantor has been deliberately defaming the cellular mobile industry through a series of baseless reports. The newspaper has never bothered to obtain the industry's comments while publishing these reports.

We have promptly raised our concern with them. But the Daily Jugantor has not published our statement as a rejoinder. Rather it has launched a smear campaign against the cellular mobile operators. Such practice of the Daily Jugantor grossly misrepresents the media of Bangladesh and their valuable role in developing the country.

The way these reports have maligned the industry regarding non compliance, tax evasion and money laundering is absolutely baseless and untrue. The telecom industry rather maintains a compliant business relationship with all the stakeholders including government in order to render best services to its valued customers.

Besides the largest contributor to the exchequer, we have been the biggest foreign investor as well. Bringing nearly 100% of the population under our networks' coverage, we have become the strategic partner in the development of Bangladesh. For the very first time Bangladesh winning the council Membership of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Mexico on October 11, 2010 is one of the results of our contribution.

The world's highest reputed investors compose the cellular mobile industry of Bangladesh. We have been strictly in compliance with the law and regulations of the country. We have been voluntarily and regularly disclosing the financial and other indicators, because, we believe and practice transparency in our day-to-day businesses.

We are also the firm believers of press freedom in Bangladesh. However objectivity and transparency of the intent of news in the media can only drive the true strength of media. We cherish outstanding relationship with the media and the journalists of Bangladesh. Mutual respect is the only basis of our bond with the press.

We urge the Daily Jugantor to refrain from defaming the cellular mobile industry for the sake of its vital contribution to the national development of Bangladesh.

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Association of Mobile Telecom Operators of Bangladesh



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Fire burns 5 'factories' in Old Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fire gutted five makeshift plastic factories and several shops at East Islambagh at Chawkbazar in Old Dhaka early yesterday.

The fire originated from a light bulb factory on the first floor of a three-storey building around 4:20am, spreading to an adjacent two-storey makeshift house and a grocery shop, suspected Sub-inspector (SI) Kala Chand of Chawkbazar Police Station.

At least 20 families were housed in the two makeshift buildings as well as the five makeshift plastic product factories, electric light bulb factory and an automobile

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PILKHANA TRIAL Sepoy Baset says sorry after conviction of contempt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sepoy Abdul Baset, the mutineer who received a six-month penalty for contempt of court, apologised verbally to the court for his offence yesterday.

"I was hurt by the witness's remarks on that day. I'm really very sorry for my misconduct," said Baset.

However, the court at Darbar Hall in Bangladesh Rifles' (BDR) headquarters led by Maj Gen Md Rafiqul Islam, director general of BDR, ordered Baset to place his apology before it formally on December 7.

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MANAGING DIRECTOR
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