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TRANSCOM DIGITAL think electronics... think DIGITAL

# Pedestrians risk life multitasking

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

The afternoon was relatively calm because it was hot, more so because it was the weekend. No jam-packed streets in Dhanmondi with bumper-to-bumper traffic honking their horns uselessly. Only a few vehicles were whizzing by at almost regular intervals.

Sultana Rahman was walking on the street. She was not on the pavement and she was lost in the conversation she was having over the telephone.

She did not even see the saloon coming out of the alley. She only felt something hit her and the ground was getting closer and closer until she lay flat there.

The car had hit her but it managed to stop itself from running her over.

"I was lucky... the traffic was light. With another car around only the almighty knows what could have happened," she said.

While reckless driving has gained a lot of attention lately, distracted walkers have become another growing problem on Dhaka streets.

People may enter a near trance-like

state while using mobile phones, MP3 players or electronic personal organisers.

Psychologists call it "divided attention" or "inattentive blindness," and it is increasingly becoming the focus of road safety awareness campaigns around the world.

"The era of mobile gadgets is making mobility more perilous," said Hasib Mohammed Ahsan, director of Accident Research Centre (ARC) at Buet.

It is especially risky on crowded streets where a multitude of multi-taskers turn and swerve and walk to the beat of their devices, he said.

Most times, he noted, the mishaps for distracted walkers are minor, like the lightly dinged elbow and broken fingernail that Sultana suffered, and, as some fallen say, a nasty case of bruised ego and hurtpride.

However, the injuries can be serious, and they are on the rise.

On March 2, Tanjid Hossain, 23, was crushed under a train on Khilkhet level crossing in Dhaka.

According to witnesses, the private

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Chatting away on the phone, pedestrians are often seen crossing busy streets oblivious to oncoming traffic. The photo was taken from Purana Paltan yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## KARACHI VIOLENCE

# Troops ordered to shoot on sight

Death toll rises to 85

AGENCIES

Pakistani police and paramilitary troops were ordered yesterday to shoot on sight in its largest city Karachi as up to 85 people were killed in a surge in ethnic and political violence over four days.

Gunfire reverberated in several neighbourhoods and thousands of people were stranded, short of food and too frightened to go out after three consecutive nights of violence in what is Pakistan's biggest city and economic hub.

"Of the 80-85 people martyred,

most of them are innocent people," Interior Minister Rehman Malik told reporters. "Very few are politically affiliated people."

He added 89 people had been arrested since last night for involvement in violence.

Malik called for "targeted action" against the killers, but said there would be no large-scale operation in the city of 16 million.

"We know which forces are behind these killings. We have satellite records of the areas where terrorists are killing innocent people," said Malik, comparing those responsible

to Taliban insurgents in the north-west.

"These militants are no lesser evil than the Taliban. They are killing people to destabilise the democratic system".

The killings have been blamed on loyalists of former coalition partners the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Awami National Party (ANP), which represent different ethnic communities and straddle volatile political fault-lines.

"We have issued orders to the security forces to shoot anyone

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## Dogs on the loose

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 27 people received treatment at Infectious Diseases Hospital (IDH) after being bitten by dogs in different parts of the capital yesterday.

Hospital sources said they were bitten in Labagh, Doyel Chatter, Golapshah Mazar, Motijheel and Buet campus areas.

Sources at Dhaka Medical College

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# Rumana files for daughter's custody

RAKIB AHAMMED

Losing eyesight in the battering from husband, Dhaka University Assistant Professor Rumana Manzur now wants her only daughter Anushey to stay with her for the rest of life.

Rumana filed a case with a family court on June 30 to get her daughter's custody, said her lawyer and family.

On Tuesday, she left for Canada for treatment of her eyes leaving Anushey at her mother's Dhanmondi residence. The eight-year-old girl, however, wanted to travel with mom.

Also, Rumana has signed necessary papers to divorce Hasan Sayeed Sumon who pushed fingers into her eyes on June 5.

"Alongside other grounds for divorce, Rumana mentioned physical and mental torture on her," her lawyer

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## UK PHONE HACKING Ex-News of the World editor arrested

BBC ONLINE

Former News of the World editor Andy Coulson has been arrested by police yesterday in connection with phone hacking and corruption charges.

It came as Prime Minister David Cameron defended his decision to employ Coulson and announced two inquiries - one led by a judge - into

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PRAYER TIMING July 9		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Nagarik Sanghati-Surakhhya O Agragati Foundation at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday holds a discussion meeting and lights clay lamps remembering the people who died in the MV Nasrin launch disaster eight years ago.

PHOTO: STAR

## LAUNCH CAPSIZE

# Four more bodies recovered from Shitalakkhya

Death toll rises to 13

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Four more bodies were recovered from the Shitalakkhya river yesterday afternoon, raising the death toll from Wednesday's launch capsizing to 13.

Two of the four bodies were identified to be of Ratan Chandra Ghosh, 55, of Golachipa village in Narayanganj, and one-year-old Rahim of Matlab Uttar upazila in Chandpur. The rest two--an eight-year-old girl and a woman--have yet to be identified.

Officer-in-Charge Saiful Islam of Bandar Police Station said the bodies were recovered from Shantinagar area of Bandar upazila.

The launch, Madinar Alo, capsized in the Shitalakkhya between Char Moktarpur of Munshiganj and Bandar upazila of Narayanganj on Wednesday night. It was going to Narayanganj from Chandpur.

Earlier, nine bodies were recovered from the river; many others still remain missing.

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## CALCUTTA HC Judge enquires about prisoners from Bangladesh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kolkata

The Calcutta High Court yesterday directed the West Bengal government to inform the court in two weeks about the steps being taken by it to repatriate around 500 Bangladeshi prisoners who have served their sentence but are still languishing in different jails in the state.

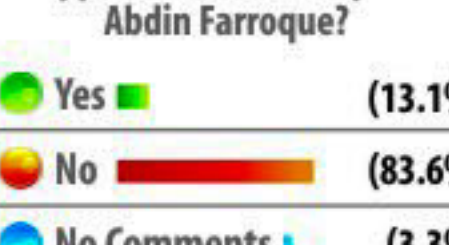
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## The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

### ONLINE POLL

Do you think action will be taken against the police officers responsible for the assault on the opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque?



### TODAY'S POLL

Do you think BNP should accept the ruling Awami League's proposal for talks regarding election issues outside the parliament?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

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জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড