

NEWS IN

brief

Old woman dies in city road crash

UNB, Dhaka

An old woman was crushed under the wheels of a speedy jeep in city's Khilgaon area yesterday.

The victim was identified as Kohinur Begum, 55, resident of a tin-shed colony in Khilgaon Railgate area.

Police said a speedy jeep hit Kohinur while she was crossing the road under Khilgaon flyover, leaving her injured about 1:15pm.

The jeep driver himself rushed her to a nearby clinic in a critical condition. Later, she was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the attending doctor declared her dead.

Police arrested jeep driver Suruj Mia and seized his jeep.

Schoolboy drowns in river Kirtankhola

UNB, Barisal

Body of a schoolboy, who drowned in the river Kirtankhola, was recovered in Bhatarkhal area in Sadar upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Ovi, 10, a Class III student of a local primary school and son of Lalchan, a resident of Bhatarkhal slum.

Family sources said Ovi went missing when he was bathing in the river at 11:30am. The body was recovered from under the Launch Ghat pontoon about 2:30pm.

JMB activist arrested

UNB, Barisal

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested an activist of banned Islamist outfit Jam`atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Sharai village in Nalchhiti upazila in Jhalakathi district early yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Shohag Talukdar, alias Asif, 22, son of Abdur Rob Talukdar and a member of Majlis-e-Shura of JMB.

He was a resident of Khilgaon in Dhaka.

Rab-8 commanding officer Lt Col Manirul Haque said Sohag was arrested as he came to his village home to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr with his family members.

4 killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

Four people were killed and 16 others injured in separate road accidents in Satkhira, Jessore and Khulna yesterday.

Our correspondent from Satkhira reports: A forest department staff was killed and eight others were injured in a road accident near Khalilnagar village in Tala upazila here yesterday.

The deceased is Sohel Rana, 32, son of Abu Bakkar of Manirampur upazila in Jessore. The injured were admitted to Tala upazila health complex.

Police said a bus skidded off the Khulna-Pailgachha road and fell into a ditch, leaving the passenger Sohel dead and eight other passengers injured.


UNB reports: In Jessore, two leather businessmen Ajit Das, 50, and Iqbal Hossain, 35, of Chaulia village of sadar upazila, died on the spot as a pick-up van hit a nasimon, an improvised engine-run vehicle, from behind in sadar upazila.

Eight people were also hurt in the accident which took place at Chaulia around 11:30am.

Police recovered and sent the bodies to the local hospital morgue for autopsy.

In Khulna, Bikash Sarker, 45, headmaster of Sachibunia Swarashati Secondary School, was seriously wounded as a bus hit his bicycle at Sachibunia crossing in Batiaghata upazila at noon.

He was taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital and died on way to Khulna Surgical Clinic around 2:30pm.



WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country,

The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:41am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 23.5 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.6	25.2	73	66
Chittagong	32.8	25.0	76	80
Rajshahi	33.6	25.8	75	71
Rangpur	34.0	26.0	75	70
Khulna	32.7	25.0	76	71
Barisal	32.5	24.5	92	80

MANMOHAN'S VISIT

Former diplomats see some issues in shadow

UNB, Dhaka

Former diplomats of Bangladesh have expressed guarded optimism about the outcome of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka on September 6-7.

Some of them prefer to wait to see the nature of the agreements and MoUs (memorandum of understanding) to be signed during the visit and came up with divergent views on issues including border demarcation, sharing of Teesta-Feni waters, transit, and trade.

Farooque Sobhan, a former foreign secretary now in London, told the news agency over phone that on the whole, this is going to be a good and positive visit.

About the debates over allowing transit to India, he said, "I don't see any major problem regarding the transit. It's a non-issue. The issue is connectivity."

Connectivity is of integrating Bangladesh's overall transport system with ASEAN countries, north-east India, China, Nepal and Bhutan, he said.

Farooque Sobhan, who also served as Bangladesh High Commissioner to India, said it is crucial to develop Bangladesh's road and rail communications system.

Priority should be given to modernise railways and highways, as

improved roads, railways, and power situation are the pre-requisites to attract foreign investment in Bangladesh.

He also laid emphasis on unhindered duty-free access of Bangladesh products to Indian markets. Another key issue, the diplomat said, is Bangladesh's access to hydropower of Bhutan and northeast India to meet the power deficit.

The former ambassador hopes that Manmohan's visit would pave the way for a major step forward in the bilateral relations and open the avenues for Bangladesh's cooperation with Bhutan, Nepal, China, and ASEAN.

Critical in his appreciation, former foreign secretary Shamsar Mobin Chowdhury said the government is not earning public confidence about what it is going to be signed with India.

"It seems the government is hiding something (in dealing with India)...there is no transparency, and a lot of questions and concerns are being raised by the people".

Referring to transit issue, Shamsher Mobin, now adviser to the BNP chairperson, said so long the government had been telling that a framework agreement would be signed on transit, but now the government is saying no new agreement is required since the Bangladesh-

India bilateral trade agreement of 1972 is in place.

Under the cover of bilateral trade agreement of 1972, the government is trying to give the transit facilities by signing some protocols and MoUs, he said. "This is a shift of the government from its earlier position. Why is this shift?"

On transit fee, he said it is not yet fixed while an adviser to the prime minister says asking fees for transit is an uncivilised thing. "Where is the clarity of the government?"

Shamer Mobin also mentioned some reports about the protests in Assam over the border demarcation while India's BJP opposes the sharing of the Teesta river water.

Referring to the Indian vice-president and the foreign minister's meetings with opposition leader Khaleda Zia in Dhaka recently, he said the Indian leaders also agreed with Khaleda Zia's views that whatever agreements be signed should be made public.

About transfer of enclaves and adversely possessed lands, the former foreign secretary said the Indo-Bangladesh joint survey team face resistance from the local people at Baralekha in Moulvibazar district and Goainghat in Sylhet as they do not know what is going to happen to their fate in the name of joint survey.

However, terming the Indian

Prime Minister's visit as important, he preferred to wait to see the outcome of the visit.

Ambassador Mohammad Zamir said Manmohan's visit is opening a window of opportunity and that must not be closed through unnecessary controversy.

"What one needs to understand is that the intention is pious, and there is need for political will". He said what is important, however, is that the stakeholders will include not only politicians but also bureaucrats".

About transit, Zamir said transit and connectivity are inter-related and will require cooperation from all countries including Nepal and Bhutan. He said it should also address issues which cast their own shadows on areas like financial gain arising out of geo-strategic location. This shall be pursued cautiously and carefully, he suggested.

Ambassador Sirajul Islam Sabuj appeared a bit apprehensive about the positive outcome of the visit for the benefit of Bangladesh. He questioned the sincerity of India over the last 40 years in resolving the bilateral issues like sharing of the waters of 54 common rivers, trade deficit, border killing, and delimitation of the maritime boundary.

He, however, said Bangladesh needs good and friendly relation with India for its future development.

Father slaps 3-month-old boy dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-month-old baby boy died after his father allegedly slapped him in Tejgaon industrial area in the city yesterday afternoon.

Police arrested Nurul Huda Hawlader, father of the boy. Hailing from Gopalganj, he works as a cleaner of a private company in Dhaka.

Nurul and his wife Sheuli Begum live in a rented house at Kunipara Mominer Bari. Three-month-old Jobaer Hossain was the couple's only child.

Tejgaon Industrial Area Police Station Sub-inspector Monir Hossain said Nurul slapped the baby on the chest after he had a quarrel with his wife.

The baby was crying loudly non-stop and stopped screaming and any movement after Nurul slapped him. The baby was declared dead by a doctor at a local pharmacy.

Nurul told police that he did not slap the baby with the intention of killing him.

Hearing on Sayedee's war crimes resumes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal resumes today the hearing on the charge framing against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee in connection with crimes against humanity in 1971.

Jail authorities are supposed to produce him before the tribunal as per its earlier order, Tribunal Registrar Shahinur Islam told The Daily Star.

Sayedee's counsels may pray to the tribunal to defer the hearing on the ground that they could not meet him for consultation.

Tajul Islam, one of the counsels for Sayedee, yesterday said they will seek a month's time from the tribunal for hearing the charge framing.

"It is up to the tribunal whether it will grant our time prayer or not. We could not meet Sayedee to consult about the charges against him in jail due to Eid," he said.

The tribunal adjourned the hearing on August 24.

5 members of 'malam party' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested five members of a "malam party" gang just as they were about to flee on a bus after snatching two mobile sets and cash from a police constable by rubbing a toxic substance in his eyes at city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area early yesterday.

Police seized the bus and a mobile set from their possession.

The arrested are -- the leader Shahidul Islam, 35, Jakir Hossain, 26, Babul, 30, Moksedul alias Mafidul, 32 and Nuruzzaman, 30.

Sub-Inspector Matiur Rahman of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station said the victim Anwarul Islam, a police constable of Mirpur, had boarded the bus from Farmgate around 2:00am.

The group applied a toxic substance in his eyes and snatched Tk 2,000 and two cellphones from him. Just as they were going to let him off near Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, his cries attracted the attention of a police team on patrol, he said.

The team stopped the bus, rescued the constable and arrested the five. Two other gang members, however, managed to flee the scene, he added.

Anwarul filed a case with the police station under Speedy Trial Act in this connection.

Matiur said the gang used to commit the crime using the guise of passengers and hired the bus of Balaka Service for Tk 5,000 for the purpose.



With the streets well clear of vehicles and crowds due to the Eid-ul-Fitr vacation, some city dwellers enjoy a rickshaw ride around Dhaka, even on streets which are off-limits to the vehicle. The photo was taken in front of Ruposhi Bangla Hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

RUHAL'S SURPRISE VISIT TO DMCH Patients' relatives allege negligence of doctors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque yesterday experienced firsthand the allegations of negligence in duty by doctors during a surprise visit to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the afternoon.

Stepping inside through the emergency gate around 4:00pm, he heard wailing and shouting in the neurosurgery ward and went there to investigate.

Relatives of a road accident victim Ismail Hossain Sumon, 27, who passed away only half an hour ago, surrounded the minister and vented their complaints.

Sumon's wife Nurjahan Akhter Jharna alleged that Sumon was brought to DMCH from Faridpur Medical College Hospital for better treatment to a head injury he suffered in Faridpur on Friday.

But he was left out in the hospital's corridor and when she tried to inform doctors and nurses of her plight, they rebuked her, she said.

After visiting the hospital for an hour, the minister told reporters that he had asked the DMCH director to form an enquiry committee and submit its report to him as early as possible.

Admitting that DMCH has a shortage of manpower, he assured Sumon's family that he would take necessary steps against anyone found responsible in the report.

Doctors and nurses of the ward said Sumon needed to be shifted to the Intensive Care Unit but there were no vacant beds.

Refuting allegations of negligence, they said they provided the treatment and medicine available there.

Later, at around 6:00pm, police and Sumon's relatives had a scuffle over the incident and police detained two persons, Ratan and Hanif, from the spot.

Earlier, the health minister visited Shaheed Suhrawardi Medical College Hospital and National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic Rehabilitation.

50 injured as villagers clash

UNB, Brahmanbaria

At least 50 people were injured, many of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups at an arbitration at Aruail Bazar in Sarail upazila yesterday.

Police said Gazi group of Dhamaura village engaged in a clash with supporters of Niazi of Shimul village at an arbitration called to settle a conflict between the two groups over a love affair between two people involving the two villages.

Shops were attacked and looted and business houses ransacked during the violence.

Police rushed to the spot and controlled the situation. Additional policemen were deployed at Aruail Bazar to prevent further violence.

Liton promises planned city

BSS, Rajshahi

Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton said the corporation is committed to implement its uplift programmes in a transparent manner.

"We will not compromise with the work standard of uplift programmes," he said while addressing an Eid reunion arranged by the city corporation at Shaheb Bazar Zero point on Friday night.

Demand for Abul's resignation iterated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Columnist and writer Syed Abul Maksud yesterday reiterated the demand for resignation of Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain for his involvement in corruption.

"The prime minister will not be able to materialise her electoral pledges keeping any corrupt person in her cabinet," Maksud said in a statement.

His statement came following a leaked cable by whistleblower site Wikileaks which said former US ambassador in Dhaka James F Moriarty branded the communications minister as a "less than honest" man in his business dealings.

Maksud said revealing such allegation against the minister is very significant.

He said, "It is the responsibility of the government's policymakers to evaluate the corruption charges against the communications minister and others concerned."

"Wikileaks certainly revealed the information on getting it through dependable sources."

"Our movement is neither against the government, nor against any individual. We are just speaking against the corrupt system. We want change."

Maksud recently led a unique protest rally under the banner "Students-Teachers-Professional Bodies" in the city's Central Shaheed Minar demanding the minister's resignation and to bring order in the country's communications network.

One dies as concrete block falls on him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A pedestrian, who was injured as a block of concrete fell on him from Green Super Market on Thursday in the city's Green Road area, succumbed to his injuries last night at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The deceased Mohammad Nayan, 22, worker of a garment factory in the city's Pallabi, fell victim around 11:00am when he along with his wife Aduri was on way to visit one of his relatives at Aambagan.