

US envoy for unity among political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Political parties in Bangladesh must unite to strengthen parliamentary democracy, said Dan W Mozena, the US ambassador to Bangladesh, at a discussion here yesterday.

Termining Bangladesh's democracy "new", the ambassador said, despite being a tough and messy process, Bangladesh is working to engage its citizens in building democracy and refine its democratic institutions.

The discussion, "Strengthening democracy in Chittagong area: The role and responsibilities of women and youths", was organised by USAID at Theatre Institute, Chittagong.

Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Manjur Alam, BNP city unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Jatiya Party Presidium member Sulaiman Alam Seth and Democracy International Chief of Party Dr Owen Lippert also spoke at the discussion.

Dividers can cut 70pc road accidents

Says truck owners assoc BSS, Dhaka

Road accidents will come down by 70 percent if road dividers can be set up on all roads and highways across the country, says Bangladesh Truck-Covered van Malik Samity (BTCMS).

Accidents on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway up to Daudkandi, and on Gazipur road and Savar-Nabinagar road have declined manifold because of setting up of dividers, the association President Tofazzal Hossain Majumder and Secretary Rustam Ali Khan said yesterday in a statement.

They demanded immediate installation of dividers on all roads across the country to cut road accidents.



Remains of tin, wood and bamboo structures in Anandanagar slum in the city's Mirpur 14 yesterday after National Housing Authority carried out an eviction drive.

PHOTO: STAR

20 hurt in slum eviction clash

BLAST lawyers picked up, later freed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 people were injured after dwellers of Anandanagar slum in the city's Mirpur 14 clashed with police and National Housing Authority (NHA) employees, carrying out an eviction drive yesterday.

NHA demolished over 300 makeshift structures while police detained two lawyers of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), a human rights organisation, charged baton and fired teargas canisters to disperse the crowd.

The lawyers, advocates Sheikh Rashed and Shihab Siraji, were released in the afternoon after a High Court directive.

Those evicted said they started throwing brickbats when their valuables were being looted. Rahima Begum, 50, one of the dwellers, said they could not change their 20-year-old residence due to the high rate of rent charged elsewhere.

The HC in December 2011 halted

the eviction till January 31, 2012. But the dwellers did not comply with NHA's request to shift residence during this time, said NHA Magistrate AKM Tipu Sultan.

He claimed to have directed police to take the lawyers away from the spot during the clashes for their own safety.

Barrister Sara Hossain of BLAST said the lawyers went there to show the authorities a lawyer's certificate on their appeal scheduled for a Supreme Court hearing on February 23.

The appeal is against an HC order telling the dwellers to leave after January 31, she said.

Sara Hossain yesterday told the HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim that the lawyers were detained without any arrest warrant or case.

Deputy Attorney General ABM Altaf Hossain said, after the HC informed him in this regard, he informed police, who released the duo.

16 killed in road accidents

12 people, including six of a family, die only in Mymensingh, Habiganj crashes

METRO DESK

Sixteen people, including six of a family, were killed and 26 others injured in road accidents in Dhaka, Habiganj, Mymensingh and Chittagong on Tuesday night and yesterday.

A vegetable trader was killed and two others were injured in a road accident at Basila road in the city's Mohammadpur yesterday.

The deceased is Kajol Bepari, 40, a resident of Mohammadpur Beribadh area, while the injured are Abdul Jalil and Saju Bapari.

Kajol's relative, Mohammad Sagar, said the CNG-run three-wheeler the trio was in started flipping sideways while trying to overtake a truck at Basila Notun Rasta area around 5:30am.

However, Sub Inspector of Mohammadpur Police Station Kamruzzaman Biswas said the vehicle hit a truck parked by the roadside.

They were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where Kajol was declared dead. Jalil was given first aid while Saju was shifted to National Institute of Trauma and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation.

In Habiganj, seven people were killed and 20 others injured when a bus hit a microbus on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway at Sataihal in Nabiganj upazila around 9:25pm on Tuesday.

Vehicular movement on the highway remained suspended for about four hours from around 10:00pm as agitating locals put up barricades.

The deceased are MA Matin, 65, of Joypur village in Bahubal upazila

of Habiganj; his wife Amena Begum, 55; their daughters Parvin Akhtar, 35, and Yasmin Akhtar, 18; Parvin's husband Mohammad Alauddin; Matin's cousin Firoze Ali; and the microbus owner and driver Abul Kalam.

Our Mymensingh correspondent adds: Five people were killed and another injured as a bus hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Shoilmari area on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in sadar upazila yesterday around 3:00pm.

The deceased are Motaleb Munshi, 45; Zia, 32, of Gauripur upazila of Mymensingh; and Sonar Miah, 75, and his son Mofazzol Hossain, 35, of Purbadhala upazila in Netrakona district. The remaining body could not be immediately identified.

Injured Parveen, 35, wife of Mofazzol, was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) in critical condition.

Meanwhile, a schoolboy was killed and his classmate critically injured as a truck ran them over while they were crossing the road at Amuakanda in Phulpur upazila yesterday morning.

Peash Chandra Sarker, 14, son of Monindra Chandra Sarker of Amuakanda and a student of class nine at Phulpur Pilot High School, died on the spot. Injured Rana, 13, was rushed to MMCH in critical condition.

The locals barricaded the road for over an hour. Police seized the truck.

Out Chittagong correspondent reports: Two people were killed and two others injured in separate

road accidents in Chittagong city yesterday.

The deceased are Ajoy Dey, 27, of Bhujpur of Fatikchhari; and Faruk, 25, of Kadam Rasul in Sitakunda. The injured are Apollo Dey and Javed.

The first accident took place when a truck hit the motorcycle Ajoy was riding at Bhujpur area around 9:00am, killing him on the spot. Ajoy's nephew Apollo, riding behind him, was sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The second accident occurred when a pick-up ran over Faruk, who was on the roadside, after colliding with another truck at Madambibir Hat around 10:00am, killing Faruk on the spot. Javed, helper of the pick-up's driver, was admitted to a local hospital.

Krishna's visit put on hold

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The proposed visit to Dhaka by India's External Affairs Minister S M Krishna on February 15-16 has been put on hold, Indian foreign ministry sources said yesterday.

The minister would be too busy with India's diplomatic efforts to discuss the sanctions imposed by the US and the EU on Iran's oil trade, which has a significant bearing on India, cited the sources.

Krishna's proposed visit was not a formal bilateral trip, but a "private" tour at the invitation of an organisation, they mentioned adding, the minister would have taken the opportunity to interact with Bangladesh leaders.



A budding talent takes part in a children's drawing competition at Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday organised by Book Club marking the 1952 Language Movement.

PHOTO: STAR

PK Joshi new IFPRI director in South Asia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr PK Joshi was appointed director in South Asia to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) yesterday, says an IFPRI press release.

IFPRI is one of the 15 agro-research centres supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

IFPRI has also an office in Dhaka.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the sixth death anniversary of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, former prime minister, noted politician and an organiser of the Liberation War, says a press release.

Also, the third death anniversary of his eldest son Abdullah Mizan will be observed the same day, it added.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and doa mahfil will be held at his residence in Chandpur after Asr prayers today and at his Gulshan's residence in the city after Asr prayers on February 4.

Dr AKM Abu Zafar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 37th death anniversary of prominent eye specialist Dr AKM Abu Zafar, says a press release.

He was an organiser of the Language Movement and the Liberation War.

He was also an organiser of the National Association for the Blind alongside numerous educational and socio-cultural organisations in Chittagong.

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