

**Biker killed in city**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed when a speeding bus ran over his motorcycle in the capital's Sabujbagh area yesterday.

The deceased, Moazzem Hossain Shwadhin, 42, from Agailjhara in Barisal was a resident of Narayanganj.

Kalindra Golder, sub-inspector of Sabujbagh Police Station, said the accident took place around 11:30am on an Atish Dipankar Road.

A Khilgaon bound bus belonging to Labbayek Paribahan hit Moazzem's bike from behind killing him on the spot, he said.

Police seized the bus but the driver managed to flee.

Mehedi Hasan, a nephew of the victim, told The Daily Star that Moazzem was on his way to Hasan's Gulshan residence when the accident happened.

"He had often come to our house on his motorcycle before," he said.

Moazzem is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

**EC lags**

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The EC took around a month to hold talks with the civil society personalities and journalists seeking their opinion on redrawing the boundaries. It sat with the civil society personalities on September 13 and with senior journalists on October 10. During the talks, the EC did not provide them any draft proposals for redrawing the boundaries.

On top of this, it is yet to decide when it will sit with the political parties seeking their views on it, although Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad on several occasions said the EC would do it.

Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz said the political parties could give their opinion after the draft list was published.

Officials of the EC secretariat said they had prepared a draft policy on redrawing the boundaries and submitted it to the EC long ago for approval.

"Now the commission will approve the policy which will determine whether the number of seats in the capital will be decreased and how the boundaries of other constituencies will be redrawn," a senior EC official told The Daily Star wishing anonymity.

On finalisation of the policy, the official said they would soon start working on the preparation of the draft for redrawing the boundaries. "It is true we could not complete the necessary works within the stipulated timeframe, but we will start working in full swing once the policy is finalised," added the official.

**A diamond**

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of Cancer and is moving so fast that a year there lasts a mere 18 hours.

Discovered by a US-Franco research team, its radius is twice that of Earth's with a mass eight times greater. That would give it the same density as Earth, although previously observed diamond planets are reckoned to be a lot more dense.

It is also incredibly hot, with temperatures on its surface reaching 3,900 degrees Fahrenheit (1,648 Celsius).

"The surface of this planet is likely covered in graphite and diamond rather than water and granite," said Nikku Madhusudan, the Yale researcher whose findings are due to be published in the journal *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

The study -- with Olivier Mousis at the Institut de Recherche en Astrophysique et Planétologie in Toulouse, France -- estimates that at least a third of the planet's mass, the equivalent of about three Earth masses, could be diamond.

Diamond planets have been spotted before but this is the first time one has been seen orbiting a sun-like star and studied in such detail.

"This is our first glimpse of a rocky world with a fundamentally different chemistry from Earth," Madhusudan said.

The discovery of the carbon-rich planet meant distant rocky planets could no longer be assumed to have chemical constituents, interiors, atmospheres, or biology similar to Earth, he added.

**Beware! Easy**

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authorities "revised" his salary, reducing it to Tk 3,300, just a third of what it was.

As Bazlur refused to do the job with the reduced salary, they threatened him and told him to leave the hostel. He had no choice but to leave the following day.

Bazlur shared his experience with The Daily Star recently. He is just one of many job seekers who are being duped by dodgy organisations everywhere.

Such fraudulent companies take advantage of the unemployment problem of the country.

Bazlur and a few other victims claimed that there were many such companies in the capital that were "doing this business" and keeping the police silent by paying them a monthly amount.

Md Abdul Ahad, assistant commissioner of Detective Branch of police, said, "We know there are many organisations in the city that are cheating people. We take legal action against such a company if we get specific allegations."

Hasikul Islam from Dinajpur and Rajib from Shariatpur also fell victim to Daily Ajker Bashundhara.

They said fraudulent companies publish ads for

jobs using different names, including Best-Tech Buying, Padma Group, Beximco Buying and Basudha Buying. When people apply for the jobs, the companies take money from them for "training fees", "hostel fees", and fees for "identity cards".

Hasikul said, "They [Daily Ajker Bashundhara] charged me Tk 4,500 as training fee. In the five-day training programme, they just gave me a small book and showed some pictures of pants, shirts and different equipment of a garment factory."

"Nobody can stay in the hostel for more than one or two days," said Mahbub Alam, from Narsingdi, describing how horrible the living condition was at the hostel The Daily Ajker Bashundhara put him in.

Visiting its office at Fakirerpool, The Daily Star spoke to some people working there. They said none of them were newsmen.

Bithi, owner of the hostel at Malibagh, said, "The company gives me Tk 100-200 a day for each job seeker."

Hayat-uz Zaman, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station, said, "I didn't hear about the 'newspaper'. Please, send any of the victims to us and we will take action."

**Long wait**

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Thursday. It damaged scores of thatched houses, uprooted trees and snapped power connection and road communications in many areas.

Meanwhile, some 100 fishermen of Borguna, Patuakhali and other districts returned home yesterday. A few hundred more are yet to come back, said fishermen's families and district authorities.

The people of the affected areas said they were unaware of the storm. This raises questions about the role of the Met Office before any natural disaster.

However, Disaster Management and Relief Minister AH Mahmood Ali yesterday said the fishermen had been instructed to go to safe shelters from the sea but they did not pay heed to it. "Had they returned abiding by the Met Office instructions, the death toll from the storm could have been less," he added.

Mahmood was speaking at a press briefing on "International Day for Disaster Reduction", scheduled to be observed today.

The minister said the government had already sent 700 tonnes of rice and Tk 20 lakh in cash as relief for the affected people in Bhola, Noakhali, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

Director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department Arjumand Habib, who also attended the press briefing, said the storm was caused by a depression; it was not a cyclone.

Meanwhile, three more bodies of storm victims were recovered in Noakhali -- two in Hatia and one in Subarnachar -- yesterday morning. This raised the death toll in the district to 15, adds our Noakhali correspondent.

Fifty fishermen of the district were rescued yesterday.

day while around 50 more on 12 trawlers are still missing.

At least 65 fishermen of Patuakhali and 30 of Charfassion and Monpura in Bhola are missing, report our correspondents from those districts.

Golam Mostafa Chowdhury, president of Borguna Trawler Owners' Association, said they had sent several trawlers in the Bay to search for the missing fishermen.

**Narrow escape**

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below 10 reside in houses which are only around 15 yards off the hill.

Farid Chowdhury, senior station officer of Agrabad fire service station, said they reached the spot around 12:40pm. "Locals had rescued the three boys before we reached there."

But as Mizan Munshi, a local resident, told them that a boy might have been left under the mud, the fire brigade men searched in the soil till 2:30pm.

Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Joydul Bari said none was missing in the incident.

Visiting the spot, The Daily Star found marks of hill-cutting.

Local lawmaker (Chittagong-10) MA Latif paid a visit to the spot in the afternoon. He demanded exemplary punishment to those involved in cutting hills, which ultimately causes mudslides.

**Japan should apologise for war past: N Korea**

AFP, Tokyo

North Korea's ceremonial head of state Friday urged Japan to apologise for its wartime aggression, dismissing Tokyo's request for the release of Japanese nationals kidnapped by the North, a news report said.

"It is vital for Japan to settle its past if it wishes to improve relations with (North) Korea," Kim Young-Nam said in an interview with Kyodo News in Pyongyang.

Japan occupied the Korean peninsula from 1910 until 1945.

The issue of the North's abduction of Japanese nationals "has already been settled", he added.

"Without apologising for its past crimes, Japanese leaders have misled public opinions with the abduction issue and used it as a card to remain in power."

Secretive North Korea admitted in 2002 its agents kidnapped Japanese people in the 1970s and 1980s to help train spies by teaching Japanese language and culture, and later allowed five of them and their families to return home.

**Construction worker dies falling from building**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A construction worker died after his scaffolding collapsed while he was working on the fourth floor of a building in city's Rampura yesterday.

The victim, identified as Chan Miah, 35 from Kalkini in Madaripur was a resident of Jamtala in East Rampura.

Mohammad Mohsin, co-worker of the victim, said they had been working on the six-storey old building at West Rampura for three days.

"Chan was working on the fourth floor on a bamboo scaffold. At around 4:00 pm the scaffold collapsed and he fell down. He was critically injured," Mohsin said.

Co-workers along with a son of the building's owner rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead at 5:10pm.

The building owner's son fled after this, Mohsin added.

Moazzem Haque, police camp in-charge at DMCH, said the body was sent for an autopsy.

**AL, BNP**

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Reporters Unity in the capital, the members of the organisation also blamed the Rohingyas and Jamaat men for the violence.

After a two-day visit to Ramu of a 15-member team of the body, its coordinator Rubayet Ferdous revealed their findings before the reporters.

Referring to media reports, Ferdous, also a Dhaka University teacher, said the presence of some attackers at the prime minister's rally in Ramu had raised questions about the sincerity of the government in finding out the real culprits.

Columnist Syed Abul Moksud said it was as an acid test for the government to unearth the truth behind the incident to ensure communal harmony among the minorities.

Convener of Gono Oikya Committee Pankaj Bhattacharya, who was present at the briefing, questioned the roles of police, local administration, and intelligence agencies during the attack.

At the press conference, they placed some demands including formation of a judicial probe committee led by a retired Supreme Court judge to investigate the incident.

A 14-member team of Sammilito Ainjibi Samonny Parishad led by its president barrister M Amir-UI Islam visited Ramu yesterday.

Barrister Islam told reporters that the attacks on the Buddhist community were tantamount to an attack on the country's constitution, reports our Chittagong correspondent.

Meanwhile, police yesterday arrested two more people at Ramu for their alleged involvement in the violence.

The arrestees are Manjur Alam, 25, of Sreekul, and Hafez Ahmed, 35, of Ukhier Ghona in the upazila.

**FOOD AID PROGRAMME**

**US, others pledge up to \$535m**

AFP, Tokyo

**Corals in peril**

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and appear white, which is called coral bleaching.

This phenomenon cannot be controlled locally, he said, but the government can still play a role to save corals as coastal development and human activities causing pollution and sedimentation exacerbate the effects of climate change.

The Saint Martin issue should be given attention soon since 25 percent of all marine life depends on corals, Anisuzzaman added.

Corals, alive (soft) or dead (hard), provide protection and shelter for many different species of fish. Without coral reefs, fishes would have nowhere to live and spawn eggs.

Coral bleaching was first noticed at Saint Martin in 1998, Prof M Maruf Hossain of Institute of Marine Sciences and Fisheries, Chittagong University, said, "But we are yet to take any measure to save them."

Frequent tourist ships traveling to and from the island smother corals with layers of silt, biodiversity experts who lived in the water of the island said. Anchors dropped from the ships often hit the corals,

**Biden, Ryan fight**

the Medicare programme for senior citizens, which Romney and Ryan seek to partially privatize, Biden referred to a Ryan proposal to provide partial government payment for seniors in the future to buy private health care.

The lone vice-presidential debate before the November 6 election pitted Biden, 69, and his almost four decades of experience in national politics against the 42-year-old Ryan, a 14-year congressional veteran who rose to the chairmanship of the powerful House Budget Committee.

On Iran, widely backed international sanctions pushed by Obama have devastated that country's economy, Biden said. He rejected assertions that Obama failed to work closely with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and that the United States lacked commitment to a possible military strike to prevent Iran from becoming capable of developing a nuclear weapon.

**Corals in peril**

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damaging them, which restricts their further growth.

Besides, extraction of corals has increased for commercial purposes, which needs to be stopped immediately.

The coral species near the jetty at the island were almost ruined, said Anisuzzaman.

Bangladesh has around 65 species of coral, said Prof Maruf, who has been working on corals for years.

"But we do not even know of their distribution."

The government should follow other South Asian countries, like Sri Lanka, to save corals, Maruf said, adding Sri Lanka had stopped human interventions and replaced bleached or damaged corals with live ones to facilitate their growth.

As many as 94 species of fish are dependent on corals, Maruf said.

An urgent monitoring programme is required to save these precious marine resources of Saint Martin, experts say.

The temperature of the Bay of Bengal has significantly increased in the last four decades, raising acidification in the water and

**Radio Mullah**

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against us," said Sirajuddin Ahmad, a spokesman of Swat Taliban now based in Afghanistan's Kunar province.

Tuesday's shooting of Malala Yousufzai was the culmination of years of campaigning that had pitted the fearless, smiling young girl against one of Pakistan's most ruthless Taliban commanders.

Their story began in 2009, when Fazlullah, known as Radio Mullah for his fiery radio broadcasts, took over Swat Valley, and ordered the closure of girls' schools, including Yousufzai's.

Outraged, the then-11-year-old kept a blog for the BBC under a pen name and later launched a campaign for girls' education. It won her Pakistan's highest civilian honor and death threats from the Taliban.

Yousufzai was not blind to the dangers. In her hometown of Mingora, Fazlullah's Taliban fighters dumped bodies near where her family lived.

"I heard my father talking about another three bodies lying at Green Chowk," she wrote in her diary, referring to a nearby roundabout.

Yousufzai continued speaking out despite the danger. As her fame grew, Fazlullah tried everything he could to silence her. The Taliban published death threats in the newspapers and slipped them under her door. But she ignored them.

The Taliban say that's why they sent assassins, despite a tribal code forbidding the killing of women.

"We had no intentions to kill her but were forced when she would not stop (speaking

**Bangladesh**

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the worst.

The GHI report shows global hunger has declined since 1990, but remains at a level characterised as 'serious'.

It also shows that Bangladesh's GHI score has come down to 24 points from 27.8 last year, meaning that the country's hunger still remains within the 'alarming' range.

"Among the regions South Asia has the highest 2012 GHI score. Although the region reduced its GHI score by more than 6 points between 1990 and 1996 -- mainly through a large 15-percentage-point decline in under-weight in children, but this rapid progress could not be maintained," the report says.

Social inequality and the low nutritional, educational, and social status of women are major causes of child undernutrition in this region and have impeded improvements in the GHI score, according to the report.

More importantly, it adds, the proportion of undernourished people did not decline between 1995-97 and 2006-08, but rather showed a transient increase of about 2 percentage points around 2000-02.

The report raised serious concerns over the unplanned use of land, water and energy.

**WB may**

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minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi at Imperial Hotel in Tokyo yesterday.

The panel told Muhith and Rizvi at the meeting that it could give the go-ahead for a fast-track release of the \$1.2 billion fund the WB has promised if it finds the investigation was on the right track, said a Bangladesh official who was present at the meeting.

On Thursday, Isabel Guerrero, WB vice president for South Asia, gave Muhith similar assurance.

The panel, however, would continue reviewing the ACC probe, the official added.

The two other members of the panel -- Timothy Tong, former commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Peoples Republic of China, and Richard Alderman, former director of the UK Serious Fraud Office -- were present at the meeting, sources said.

Muhith is now in the Japanese capital to attend the semi-annual meetings of the WB and the International Monetary Fund.

At the meeting, Muhith assured the panel of all-out support from the government to assist the investigation.

The WB had cancelled its \$1.2 billion loan deal on June 29, saying it had proof of a "corruption conspiracy" in the project involving some government officials and executives of a Canadian firm.

The Washington-based global lender announced on September 20 to reengage in the project after the government had taken action to fulfil WB's conditions for its return to the project.

The conditions included: (i) placing all public officials suspected of involvement in the corruption scheme on leave from government employment until the investigation is completed; (ii) appointing a special inquiry and prosecution team within the Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Commission to handle the investigation; (iii) agreeing to provide full access to all investigative information to an external panel of internationally recognised experts so that they can give guidance to the bank and co-financiers on the progress, adequacy, and fairness of the investigation, and; iv) agreeing on new implementation arrangements that give the bank and co-financiers greater oversight of project procurement processes.

The government is desperate to get the fund as it tries to start the project at the earliest to fulfil one of its key election promises.

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(investigation) of Paltan Police Station Alamgir Hossain, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court.

The case was filed on October 2 under the Speedy Trial Act.

The court will decide on Sunday whether it would take into cognisance the charges brought against the accused.

"We have submitted the charge sheet after investigating into the case properly," said Alamgir.

BNP's youth wing Jubo Dal President Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal, who was arrested on October 3 in connection with the case, is now on a two-day remand.

On October 2, the pro-opposition activists clashed with law enforcers in Naya Paltan and Kakrail areas when news spread that ruling party men foiled an opposition rally in Netrakona. BNP standing committee member Mirza Abbas was scheduled to attend the rally as chief guest.

Police the same night filed three cases against over 500 pro-opposition leaders and activists with Paltan and Ramna police stations.