

Road crashes kill 9, injure 24

METRO DESK

Nine people were killed and 24 injured in separate road accidents across the country on Monday and yesterday.

A Chuadanga correspondent reports, a man was killed as a truck ran him over on Chuadanga-Dorshona road at Joyrampur village of Damurhuda upazila yesterday.

The incident occurred when 52-year-old Ichhrafil Islam fell off his motorbike following a collision with a human hauler, Karimon.

A case was filed with Damurhuda Police Station.

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds, Aminur Rahman, 27, of Moheshpur upazila, was killed as a truck hit his bicycle on Mohespur-Bhoiroba road near Bhoiroba Bazar in the upazila on Monday night.

The body was sent to Jhenidah sadar hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Our Bogra correspondent reports, a person was killed and five others were injured when a mini truck hit the CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them on Dhunot-Sherpur road in Boalkandi area at Sherpur upazila of Bogra on Monday evening.

The deceased, Kamrul Islam, 23, the CNG driver, hailed from Shirajganj

The injured were rushed to Sherpur Health Complex. An unnatural death case was filed with Sherpur Police Station.

Our Jamalpur correspondent reports, a youth was killed and two others were injured when an oncoming microbus rammed their motorbike at Changa Mor in Melandah upazila early yesterday.

The deceased, Mutaleb Hossain alias Bishal, 28, of Islampur upazila, was a farmer.

Injured Sujan and Bishu, of the same upazila, were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Our Madaripur correspondent adds, a youth was killed and two others were injured when an oncoming three-wheeler, Nasimon, hit their motorbike in Mohisherchar area of Madaripur town on Monday night.

The deceased was Shawon, 20, hailed from College Road area of the city.

A Chandpur correspondent reports, a motorcyclist was killed while his two co-riders were injured as the motorbike veered out of control and they fell on the road near Khila Bazar in Shahrasti upazila of the district on Monday.

The deceased was Mamunur Rashid, 25, of Sengaon.

A Feni correspondent adds, four-year-old Wahidul Islam Fahim, son of Mafijul Haque, died after a motorcycle ran him over on Feni-Sonagazi road in Sonagazi upazila on Monday evening.

A Gazipur correspondent reports, two people were killed and 13 others injured when a bus hit a standing truck in Porabari area of Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead, Hafiz Uddin, 27, and Nurul Islam, 35, hailed from Mymensingh.

The injured are undergoing treatment at Gazipur sadar hospital.

The crumbled boundary wall of a building in the capital's Gendaria. The wall broke down yesterday, killing an elderly man and injuring an unidentified woman.

PHOTO: STAR



Ansar Ali breaks down in tears after he places flowers at the grave of his wife, Maksudah, at Jurain Graveyard in the capital yesterday. Maksudah died in the Tazreen Fashions fire on November 24 last year.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Man dies in wall collapse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The boundary wall of a building at Gendaria in the capital collapsed yesterday leaving a 60-year-old man killed and a woman seriously injured.

The deceased man was identified as Abdur Rashid Sheikh of Vitpur union in Bikrampur, Munshiganj. The injured woman could not be identified immediately.

Witnesses said around a 10-foot stretch of the six-foot tall boundary wall of the building near Gendaria High School crumbled on the two passers-by around 11:40am, said BM Rashed Tapan, a local who rescued the victims.

Mehedi Hasan, officer-in-charge of Gendaria Police Station, said the victims were rushed to Mitford Hospital where doctors declared Rashid dead.

Police picked up Haji Md Delwar Hossain, owner of the collapsed boundary wall, and his son Bablu.

Delwar's wife said the boundary wall became fragile due to trembles caused by the construction work of a building, named Maleka Garden, adjacent to theirs.

She said they repeatedly complained to the constructor, Venus Developers Ltd, about the trembles, which shook their house for months, but it did not pay any heed.

The authorities of Venus Developers were not available for comments.



FIRE AT TAZREEN FASHIONS

About half of victims not compensated yet

SUSHMITA S PREETHA

More than five months ago, after the worst factory fire in the country's history that killed at least 112 workers and injured countless others, the government and BGMEA made a myriad of promises to the victims of Tazreen Fashions--adequate compensation, timely identification of the charred bodies, and justice for the easily avoidable deaths.

Now here comes May 1 and till date only 62 of the 112 deceased's families have received compensation of Tk 6 lakh each, say government officials. Thirty-seven families are yet to receive anything even though their relatives' bodies have been identified. At least 13 families, despite multiple DNA tests, have not found the bodies of their loved ones.

In the meantime, the owner of Tazreen runs free, despite repeated appeals from different quarters that he be tried for criminal negligence.

"How many more trips to Dhaka do we have to make to beg for some help?" asked a frustrated Malek Forazi, a day labourer, whose wife died in the fire leaving him alone with three children.

Malek's children are studying in Class X, IV and III respectively. "Without their mother's wages to support their education, I have all but sold our home," he said.

His wife's body was among the 59 unidentified bodies of the Tazreen tragedy. Although the DNA report, published on February 28, identified her body, along with 37 others, the authorities have made no move to compensate him.

In fact, the authorities did not even inform him of the DNA results. Had it not been the social workers and the media, he would still be at a loss as to where his

wife's grave was.

Yesterday, the families of Tazreen victims whose bodies were buried at Jurain graveyard in Dhaka placed wreaths at the graves of their dear ones. The families of the missing victims, in the absence of even a grave to turn to, broke down in inconsolable tears.

They also joined a demonstration outside of the graveyard to protest the government and BGMEA's indifference to their plight. Activist-Anthropologist, a platform of academics, researchers and activists, co-organised the event to commemorate Labour Day.

"We have not even received the three months' wages we are entitled to, including the running month's wages," said Mojammel Haque, who also lost his wife in the fire.

Meanwhile, Shahana Sharmin, who provided her son's blood for DNA test, has been told that the blood sample did not match with any corpse.

"What will I tell my son, Nahid, when he grows up? That his father just vanished in smoke?" asked the widowed mother who is struggling to survive on her own.

After multiple DNA tests with blood from different blood relatives of the victims, 13 bodies still remain unidentified, according to labour ministry statistics.

However, Saydia Gulrukh, a member of Activist-Anthropologist, argued that their field research revealed that at least 25 bodies were still missing.

The victims' families demanded that the owner of Tazreen, Delowar Hossain, be arrested immediately just as Sohel Rana has been arrested.

The fire at Tazreen Fashions Ltd in Ashulia broke out on November 24 last year.

SAVAR BUILDING COLLAPSE

BDI expresses sadness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Development Initiative, an US-based NGO, expressed sadness and anger at the collapse of the nine-storey Rana Plaza in Savar.

The collapse was the result of unmitigated greed, corruption, negligence and thus was entirely avoidable, the organisation said in a press statement yesterday.

The organisation further condemned the irresponsibility and impunity with which garment factory owners have been able to operate outside the law, especially after the Tazreen factory fire incident, which killed 112 people.

Foreign buyers have to be partly blamed for looking the other way instead of insisting on higher safety standards, it said.

The NGO demanded a speedy trial so that justice was not delayed and expressed hope that those found guilty will be punished accordingly.

The organisation also expressed solidarity with RMG workers who have taken to the streets protesting the increasing industrial accidents, while urging them to protest peacefully and channel their anger towards achieving progressive change, added the statement.

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