

The newly-opened Jatrabari flyover in the capital lies nearly empty while the road under it is choked with traffic yesterday. Transport workers say they avoid the flyover due to excessive amount of tolls. For this, the perennial gridlock remains as it was before.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Arrested BNP leader dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An arrested BNP leader died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital early yesterday after he was taken there from Dhaka Central Jail for medical treatment.

Mohammad Shahabuddin, 62, was the vice president of Ward no-26 and also secretary general of a faction of Palashi kitchen market's traders' association.

He was detained and sent to jail on November 6 in a case filed against him for vandalism and arson during hartal on October 27, said Nurul Muttakim, officer-in-charge of Lalbagh Police Station.

Sub-Inspector of Chawkbazar Police station Rezaul Karim Khan, who was present during writing of the inquest report, said Shahabuddin was taken to DMCH when he felt ill around 11:30pm on Monday and he died 40 minutes later.

"He died of acute myocardial infarction (heart attack), doctors wrote," Khan said.

Shahabuddin's younger brother Bodiul Alam told The Daily Star that though his brother suffered from heart problems he was physically well at the time of the arrest.

Countrywide transport strike tomorrow

Today's strike on Dhaka-Ctg highway called off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation will observe a countrywide transport strike tomorrow, demanding release of the organisation's joint secretary and BNP chief Khaleda Zia's special assistant Shimul Biswas.

Shimul was arrested on November 9 on charges of "attempted murder of cops" and "creating violence" in the capital and subsequently placed on remand.

The federation, however, called off today's strike on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway after the authorities assured them of taking measures to ensure security of their vehicles.

Over four hundred different vehicles like buses, trucks, covered vans and prime movers came under arson attacks and vandalism during political violence on the highway mainly at Sitakunda and Mirsarai upazilas in the last few months, said owners.

The decision of the postponement came following a one and a half hours' meeting between the local administration and leaders of several transport owners and workers' associations at the Chittagong Deputy Commissioner's (DC's) office.

Rights activists visit burnt Hindu locality in Barisal

Demand rehabilitation of victims, punishment for youth's killers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

An eight-member team of rights activists yesterday visited the burnt Hindu locality, Nomopara, in Barisal, demanding rehabilitation of the arson victims and punishment of the killers of a youth that led to the arson on Friday.

The team visited the house of the murdered college student, Parvez Gazi, 20, and talked to his family members. Later, they visited Nomopara, a locality in Char Kawa village about six kilometres east of Barisal city, and talked to the arson victims.

Nomopara was burnt on Friday morning by more than a thousand people from neighbouring Char Aicha village where Parvez lived. The youth was killed and three others injured in a clash over a badminton

game at Nomopara the previous evening.

After their visits, the activists exchanged views with locals at Barisal Reporters Unity in Barisal city and placed several recommendations.

These include exemplary punishment for the killers of Parvez, proper treatments of the injured, compensation and rehabilitation of the arson victims, and a fair investigation to reveal the real cause, masterminds, leaders, and executors of the arson.

At least 16 houses and two temples of Hindus at Nomopara were gutted fully and seven other houses partly in the attack. Both Muslims and Hindus fled the area fearing fresh attack and violence and harassment by police.

Over the killing of the youth and the other for the arson, 1,613 people were sued

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DEATH OF CID OFFICER'S DOMESTIC HELP Old bruises found

Say morgue sources

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Old bruises and evidence of torture were found on the body of a CID officer's domestic help who died on Monday after falling from the roof of her employer's building, said morgue sources yesterday.

However, they said they were not sure if the domestic help, Rita, 20, was murdered.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday sent the CID officer's wife Sania Akhter Munni and her brother Sabbir Hossain to jail in this connection.

Kazi Wazed Ali, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, said in primary investigation both the accused claimed that it was a suicide.

"We are trying to find out if the victim was murdered," he added.

Rita's family has not claimed her body till yesterday evening, said morgue sources.

On Monday night, police recovered Rita's body from in front of the residence of Kutub Uddin, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) additional superintendent of police, in the capital's Purbo Shewrapara. Kutub Uddin is in Sudan serving in a UN peacekeeping mission.

College student commits suicide in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college student allegedly committed suicide over his performance in the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exam qualifying test in the capital's Mirpur on Monday evening.

Debojit Das Joy, 19, was a student of Saint Joseph Higher Secondary School.

Jitendranath Das, the victim's father, said, "Joy had closed the door of his study room where his younger brother Jyoti was sleeping. As Joy did not open the door for a long time, his mother knocked on the door."

"Not getting any response, she opened the door," he said.

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Road crashes kill three

CITY DESK

Road accidents killed three persons and injured another in the country yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports, vegetable trader Nurul Haque was killed and another injured when a pick-up carrying them overturned after hitting an island under the Mohakhali Flyover in the capital.

Injured Asgar Ali was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Our Chittagong correspondent adds, Baten Chowdhury, a CNG-run passenger vehicle driver, died when the vehicle fell into a pothole and overturned in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Allowing PhD, MPhil students in Jucusu polls protested

JU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers and student organisations have protested the decision of allowing MPhil and PhD students to contest and cast votes in Jahangirnagar University Central Student Union (Jucusu) elections.

JU administration Sunday took the decision in line with article no. 1 of Jucusu constitution saying that according to the rule every residential student deserves the right, said a press release signed by Jucusu Chief Election Commissioner AKM Shahnewaz.

However, Bangladesh Students' Union JU unit President Zahidul Islam Zinnah said although the MPhil and PhD students were attached to the halls, they could not reside in those.

But the Jucusu press release said although they did not stay in the halls they were considered residential students nonetheless.

Jahangirnagar Sangskritik Jote yesterday brought out a procession and met Vice Chancellor Prof Anwar Hossain requesting him not to enforce the decision.

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Razia Faiz's qulkhwani held

CITY DESK

Qulkhwani of Syeda Razia Faiz was held in her Gulshan residence in the capital on Monday after Maghrib prayers.

She was the first Bangladeshi woman to be directly elected to the Jatiya Sangsad and also became women and social welfare minister. At the time of her death, she was a vice president of BNP.

Press Secretary of Opposition leader Maruf Kamal, BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam, Islamic scholar

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Qulkhwani of Syeda Razia Faiz, former women and social welfare minister, being held in her Gulshan residence in the capital on Monday after Maghrib prayers. PHOTO: COURTESY

Illegal VoIP equipment seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment and 4,000 used and 192 unused mobile SIM cards from the office of an online news site in the capital's Moghbazar wireless gate area.

Rab-3 officials in coordination of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) conducted the drive yesterday evening at the office of jamunaneews24.com.

Rab media wing director Habibur Rahman said owner of the media house Zahangir Alom Zony was detained.

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USAID launches project to protect Bengal tiger

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has launched the "Bagh Project", which will be implemented by WildTeam, to protect the Bengal tiger.

Reducing wildlife trafficking; minimising human-wildlife conflict; enhancing communications, outreach, and gender engagement and expanding the knowledge base for wildlife conservation are some of the aims of the US\$13 million Bagh Project, said a press release yesterday.

WildTeam, formerly known as the Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh, was founded in 2003 by a group of passionate Bangladeshi nature lovers. Since 2008, WildTeam has worked predominantly in the Sundarbans mangrove forest ecosystem, home to the Bengal tiger.

Along with the Bangladesh Forest Department, WildTeam developed the Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (2009-2017), providing a guideline for tiger conservation efforts in Bangladesh.

The organisation's efforts in tiger conservation include empowering more than 350 village volunteers around the forest edge to save lives of humans, livestock, and tigers through Village Tiger Response Teams (VTRTs).

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) and Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) along with WildTeam will implement the four-year project, which will begin July next year.

The Bangladesh government and multiple stakeholders, including NGOs and international organisations, will be directly involved in order to achieve the project goals.

Prof Md Anwarul Islam, CEO of WildTeam, said USAID's Bagh Project is the biggest project to date dedicated solely towards the protection of the Bengal tigers.

Since 1971, America through USAID has provided more than US\$6 billion to Bangladesh in many assistance projects.

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