Bus plunges into river

3 killed, 33 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

At least three people were killed and 33 others injured when a passenger bus fell into a river breaking the railings of a bridge at Kalihati upazila

Kamruzzaman Raj, sub-inspector of Highway Police in Elenga, said the accident took place around 1:00pm when the driver of a Dhaka-bound passenger bus of RK Paribahan lost control over the steering.

The bus then hit the railings of a dilapidated bridge on the road connecting to Bangabandhu Bridge and plunged into the Pungli river, leaving two passengers dead on the spot and 35 others injured.

On information, police and Fire Service and Civil Defence men from Tangail rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation immediately with the help of locals.

The injured passengers were whisked off to Tangail Medical College Hospital where one more passenger succumbed to his injuries.

One of the deceased was identified

as Mohammad Alamgir Hossain, 35, of Bogra. Identities of the rest two dead could not be known immedi-

Total 33 injured passengers were admitted to the hospital. Of them, conditions of seven were critical, hospital sources said.

Aminul Islam of Bogra, one of the injured at the hospital, told The Daily Star that around 40 passengers were in the bus and it fell into the river when the reckless driver tried to overtake a truck on the bridge, he

Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Abdul Latif Siddique along with other officials visited the spot just after the accident and asked for giving Tk 25,000 to each of the dead passengers through the deputy commissioner of Tangail. He also assured the injured of taking all responsibilities of their

The divers from the fire service were trying to recover bodies if any from the bus as of filing this report at 5:30pm yesterday.



city

Tangail yesterday.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Vacation

FROM PAGE 1 during the Ramadan.

At the meeting on June 16, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid had proposed to the premier to keep the institutions open for the first 10 days of Ramadan.

Hasina, however, turned down Nahid's proposal and suggested that the ministries concerned make an adjustment of the 10 days to the yearly summer vacation in all institu-

The vacation for primary schools across the country will begin on June 29 and continue till August 6, the primary and mass education ministry said in its order vesterday.

The schools will remain closed on the occasions of Ramadan, Jumatul Wida, Shab-e-Qadr and Eid-ul-Fitr, according to the order.

The vacation for primary schools was scheduled to start on July 10 and continue till July 31 as per the academic calendar, it said.

The education ministry also issued a similar order announcing holidays in all government and non-

government secondary schools, technical institutes, madrasas and equivalent institutions for the same period.

Contacted, Education Secretary Muhammad Sadique told The Daily Star that the order of vacation on the occasions of Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr would also be applicable to all English medium schools across the

Earlier, the education ministry decided that all schools and colleges would go on vacation from July 6 in line with this year's academic calen-

An order on declaring holidays for public and private colleges from the first day of Ramadan will be issued soon, a ministry official told The

Party for all, power for one

FROMPAGE 1

committee member said as one of the largest political party in the country, BNP continuously speaking about establishing democracy in the country since its birth in 1978, but there is lack of democratic practices within it.

"It's true that we do not follow our own charter," he said. "It's easy to write good things in a charter or book but hard to implement.

Khaleda's power was consolidated further through the last national council

held on December 8, 2009.

To meet the criteria for registration with the Election Commission, the BNP earlier had added some new provisions in its charter, empowering the national council to elect chairperson and other office bearers for the national standing and executive committees.

But things were totally opposite at the council. She became the chairperson and her son Tarique Rahman senior vicechairman. Both were unopposed.

Instead of proposing ways to establish

intra-party democracy, the council also authorised Khaleda to pick the remaining members and office bearers of the standing and executive committees. Without asking anyone, Khaleda can

dissolve the national executive and standing committees anytime. Another senior BNP leader said the provision for holding of national council

once in every three years was also ignored when the last and fifth council was held 1 6 years after the previous one.

According to the constitution,

executive committees at city, district, upazila and union levels were supposed to sit every three months but the BNP central office does not have any record

And, many BNP leaders have forgotten when the last meeting of BNP chairperson's advisory council washeld.

However, four meetings of the national standing committee, the highest It has been tested on gestures and decision-making body of the party, took place since February. The latest changes in the BNP charter say the standing

Iraqi town sees heavy fighting

The militant onslaught has displaced hundreds of thousands, alarmed world leaders, and put Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki under pressure at home and

After wilting in the face of the initial militant attack two weeks ago, Iraqi forces appear to be performing better, holding off major assaults at the Baiji oil

The overnight attack on the refinery -the scene of heavy fighting in recent days was repulsed by security forces, officials Assaults on the complex, which once

filled some 50 percent of Iraq's demand for refined petroleum products, have caused jitters on world markets. And concerns about the latest violence

in Iraq saw Brent crude for August delivery add two cents to \$114.14 a barrel in London yesterday. Elsewhere, security forces and allied tribal fighters saw off a militant attack on

Haditha in Anbar province, after Iraqi forces recaptured a border crossing with

Syria on Monday. They also carried out air strikes on

Baiji town and the western border area of lenge is the central challenge that we Husseibah. State television said 19 'terrorists'

were killed in Baiji, but officials and witnesses said the casualties were civilians, and of 13 people killed in Husseibah, six were civilians. Iraqi forces have struggled against the

insurgent advance, with Maliki's security spokesman saying "hundreds" of and a new Iraq". soldiers have been killed since the offensive began late on June 9 -- the most specific official information so far on government losses.

The UN said yesterday that at least 1,075 people were killed and 658 wounded in Iraq between June 5 and 22.

Militants were able to overrun the strategic Shiite-majority northern town of Tal Afar and its airport after days of heavy fighting, and at the weekend, insurgents swept into Rawa and Ana towns in Anbar province west of Baghdad after taking the Al-Qaim border crossing with Syria.

Kerry was in the Kurdish regional capital to urge president Massud Barzani to work to uphold Iraqi cohesion, telling him "this is a very critical time for Iraq and the government formation chalKurdish forces were "really critical in

helping to draw a line with respect to ISIL", he added. Barzani told Kerry, who has since departed, that Kurds seek 'a solution for the crisis that we have witnessed". but

warned that it had created a 'new reality

The militant offensive has cleared the way for Iraqi Kurds to take control of disputed territory they want to incorporate into their autonomous region over Baghdad's strong objections.

Speaking to CNN before yesterday's talks, Barzani called for Maliki, whom he blamed "for what has happened" in Iraq, to step down.

Pressed on whether Iraqi Kurds would seek independence, Barzani said: "The time is here for the Kurdistan people to determine their future and the decision of the people is what we are going to uphold."

In Baghdad on Monday, Kerry met Maliki and other leaders to urge the speedy formation of a government following April elections in order to face down the insurgents.

Washington's "support will be intense, sustained, and if Iraq's leaders take the necessary steps to bring the country together, it will be effective,"

"This is a critical moment for Iraq's

US leaders have stopped short of calling for Maliki to go, but there is little doubt they feel he has squandered the opportunity to rebuild Iraq since American troops withdrew in 2011.

President Barack Obama has offered to send up to 300 military advisers to Iraq, but has so far not backed air strikes as requested by Baghdad. ISIL aims to create an Islamic state

incorporating both Iraq and Syria, where it has become a major force in the rebellion against President Bashar al-

It has commandeered an enormous quantity of cash and resources because of the advance, bolstering coffers already the envy of militant groups worldwide.

In Brussels, a two-day meeting of foreign ministers from NATO countries began vesterday to discuss the situation in Iraq, as well as Ukraine.

Gestures

FROM PAGE 16

Researchers have used image recognition to translate sign language into readable language' and while itis early days, the tool could one day be used on smartphones.

Scientists from Malaysia and New Zealand came up with the Automatic Sign Language Translator (ASLT), which can capture, interpret and translate sign language.

signs representing both isolated words and continuous sentences in Malaysian sign language, with what they claim are a high degree of recognition accuracy and speed. Its creators say that it has the potential

for use in multiple languages. The tool uses image processing and pattern recognition to translate actions into

"At the heart of the ASIT are real-time image processing and computational intelligence methods," said researcher Prof Rini Akmeliawati, of Malaysia's IIUM University.

"We developed a novel approach, leadingto efficient detection and tracking of face, hands and upper body trajecto-

"By combining it with our tools for artificial intelligence-based matching between these sign trajectories and elements of a large database of images and video recordings of native signers, we have achieved a fast and flexible automatic sign language translation

"The system's potential lies in its technologically advanced algorithms and structure, which can be adapted to a

multitude of the world 'ssign languages." Everyday communication is a major challenge to a great many hearingimpaired people, as well as those unable to speak, all around the world.

The scientists believe that their creation will result in a portable, efficient and affordable ASLT for a

Verdict not given as Nizami falls 'sick'

Nizami's illness.

from the jail authorities about

About the content of the letter, tribunal's Registrar AKM Nasiruddin Mahmud told The Daily Star that Nizami was suffering from unusually high blood pressure and doctors prescribed him to take bed rest and

According to tribunal sources, the letter was received around 10:00am

Prosecutor Mohammad Ali drew the court's attention to 43 (a) of the International Crimes Tribunal Rules of Procedure where it is mentioned that if a person on bail fails to appear before the tribunal or a person in custody declined to appear before it or it becomes impossible to produce him before the tribunal for long ailment then the tribunal could carry out proceedings in the presence

of the accused person's lawyer. The tribunal apparently did not buy Ali's argument and said none of the conditions was applicable to Nizami's case "as he suddenly fell

Defence counsel Mizanul Islam argued that the whole proceedings went on in the presence of Nizami and therefore, the verdict should not be delivered in his absence.

Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arief Tipoo spoke for not delivering the judgment in the absence of the accused. Then the tribunal passed the order and also directed the jail

authorities to submit a complete Dhaka today. report on Nizami's health in the shortest possible time.

already sent the order to the jail Against the backdrop of repeated failure of the defence to appear

before the court for placing argu-

ments, the Tribunal-1 on November crimes case against Nizami and kept the verdict on CAV. The court, however, later allowed

In January this year, the then chairman of Tribunal-1 Justice ATM Fazle Kabir retired without delivering the judgment. The tribunal was reconstituted on February 23 with

the trial finally ended on November

Justice Rahim as its chief. The new chairman decided to hear the arguments again. The arguments by both prosecution and defence continued from March 10 and 24. The verdict was kept on CAV for the second time.

Nizami, facing 16 war crimes charges, was indicted on May 28, 2012 for crimes committed against humanity during the Liberation War,

Yesterday, Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah, a standing committee member of BNP, said the verdict was deferred as advised by New Delhi advice because Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj is due in condition was stable, he added.

Had the verdict been delivered, the Jamaat would have called hartals The tribunal registrar said he has in protest. This would have exposed the Hasina government's lack of public support and dented its image before the neighbouring country, Hannan said during a discussion at

the Jatiya Press Club. At Shahbagh, three platforms 13 last year concluded in the war campaigning for war crimes trial expressed frustration at the postponement of the verdict.

Through separate programmes the defence to place arguments and held within 30 yards at the Shahbagh intersection, a Gonojagoron Mancha faction led by Imran H Sarker and another led by Kamal Pasha, and Shahbagh Andolon formed by five student bodies raised different allegations over the judgement deferral.

> While the Imran-led faction views it as the government's compromising attitude towards the Jamaat, the Pasha-led group and Shahbagh Andolon leaders see a conspiracy of Jamaat and Nizami behind this.

> In a statement, acting Jamaat ameer Moqbul Ahmad called upon the government to free Nizami immediately to facilitate his treat-

> Defence counsel Tajul Islam told The Daily Star vesterday that Nizami's family members tried to visit the accused but they were not allowed. The authorities however, informed the family that Nizami's

abroad don't normally return to the country of origin. The term, "illicit financial flows", is commonly used to describe this form of capital flight.

Leakages in the balance of payments account for 83.1 percent of the over the four decades, show UNDP Such leakage occurs when there is a mismatch between inflow and out-

flow of foreign currency. The authori-

ties then put the lost money under the

heading of 'Error and Omission" in the country's balance of payments The amount of such losses was \$977 million in fiscal 2011-12, \$764 million in 2012-13 and \$676 million in the first six months of 2013-14,

Economic Review 2014. Trade misinvoicing, which includes mispricing in imports and exports, accounts for the rest 16.9 percent of the capital flight, says the

according to the government's

The actual amount of money going out of the country might be higher as updated figures are not available.

banks rose by 62 percent year-on-year The deposits, which stood at Tk

The issue came to the fore on Thursday after Switzerland's central bank disclosed that Bangladeshi citizens' deposits with different Swiss

crore in 2012, show the latest data of

country in time, said the official. Another UNDP publication, "Illicit Financial Flows from the Least Developed Countries: 1990-2008", 3,236 crore (372 million Swiss franc) ranked Bangladesh as the top at the end of 2013, were Tk 1,991

the Swiss National Bank.

Officials say Bangladesh Bank, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) try. and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) are working on a

mechanism to stop capital flight. They would soon hold a joint capital that went out of Bangladesh meeting, said an official on condition

> An ACC senior official said it would be tough to bring back the 'lost money". "We will take steps to stop any further capital flight."

> Asking not to be named, a BB official said the central bank would take measures to prevent under and over-invoicing.

As part of the initiatives, the BB will check its data on letters of credit with the customs data at the NBR.

A joint cell of the central bank and the NBR will be set up to collect data on commodity and machinery prices in overseas markets to stop under and over-invoicing.

This would help check tax evasion and capital flight, said a BB official.

The BB has started working with the Export Promotion Bureau and banks to ensure that export proceeds return to the country in time, said a senior BB official.

The move came after a state-owned commercial bank was fined for not bringing in export proceeds to the

exporter of illicit capital among all

Money flies away from Bangladesh

\$34.8 billion leaked out of the coun-For every dollar received in official development assistance, \$1.4 goes

out of the country in illicit flows. The UNDP said political and governance environment of a country influences capital flight. An unstable political environment raises the risk of losses of private wealth through expropriation or destruction of assets

Poor governance, in turn, facilitates theft, embezzlement of national resources, trade misinvoicing, and smuggling of goods and capital across borders, all of which can induce illicit financial flows, said the UN agency.

BB WRITES TO SWISS AUTHORITY Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit yesterday wrote to the Money Laundering Reporting Office Switzerland, showing an interest in signing a memorandum of understanding with it for sharing information on money laundering.

"If Switzerland agrees to sign the MoU, we will discuss whether the country will cooperate with us on the issue of Bangladeshi citizens' deposits with Swiss banks," Mahfuzur Rahman, who heads the unit at the central bank, told The Daily Star. Bangladesh has already signed

agreements with financial intelligence units of 24 countries after it became a member of the EGMONT Group, the global anti-money laundering body, last year, he said.