



PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

The driver of this bus lost control over the vehicle and it ploughed through several parked three-wheelers, inset, and people at a roadside market at Ichhladi in Wazirpur of Barisal yesterday evening.



11 killed as bus ploughs

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Agitated locals blocked the highway from 6:00pm to 10:30pm. They threw brick chunks at some vehicles when the vehicles tried to evade the blockade. Police had to charge truncheons on the agitating crowd to disperse them.

Several vehicles had their windows smashed.

It could not be ascertained why the bus, heading for Barisal from Dhaka, lost control but police and locals speculated that brake failure could be the reason.

In Dhaka, Jannati Hossain, a private university student, was driving a car to go to Dhanmondi with her friend from

Uttara around 1:00am. Coming down the ramp of Mohakhali flyover, the car slammed into a parked police van, leaving her friend KM Mustamsir Ashraf, 27, seriously injured, police said.

Law student Mustamsir, who owns the car, was whisked off to nearby Ayesha Memorial Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Jannati suffered minor injuries and had primary treatment at the hospital, police added.

Quoting Jannati, Sub-Inspector of Tejgaon Police Station Mahabubur Rahman said she lost control over the steering wheel and hit the police van. She was driving the car recklessly, the

SI claimed.

The Daily Star could not speak to Jannati or her family.

Police constable Abul Hossain, and Ansar members Forkan Uddin and Abdur Razzak who were inside the van suffered injuries, said Mazharul Islam, officer-in-charge of Tejgaon Police Station.

Police seized the car and arrested Jannati. She was produced before a Dhaka court yesterday where she made a confessional statement.

The court sent her to jail and set tomorrow for a hearing, he added.

Mazharul said the car hit the police van from behind and the impact rolled the van onto the pavement.

New York creates ID card for all, even for illegal immigrants

AFP, New York

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio on Thursday signed a new law creating an ID card for anyone who wants it, including illegal immigrants, amid a wider debate about immigrant rights.

De Blasio said it would help illegal immigrants -- there are 500,000 in New York, he estimated -- get better access to a range of services in the city such as opening a bank account or getting a lease on a property.

"This is about normalizing and improving people's lives," the Democratic mayor said, describing New York as "a beacon of hope and inclusion."

People applying for the municipal ID card "will not be asked about their immigrant status," he emphasized.

The new card will be available starting January 2015 and will be free for the first year.

To get it, applicants must furnish proof of their identity and their residency in

New York.

The city counts 8.4 million residents, more than a third of whom were born overseas, according to the US Census Bureau.

Often in the United States, driver's licenses are used as identity documents, but in New York, 46 percent of the residents are unlicensed, the mayor has said.

The new card will also be useful for homeless people, those just getting out of prison, as well as for transsexuals who will be allowed to choose which sex is marked, de Blasio said.

However, some have emphasized the new card could be dangerous for those of questionable legal status.

The New York branch of the ACLU, a civil rights group, said the new law would permit city authorities to keep for two years the documents used in the application -- and to turn them over to police.

Local and federal law enforcement agencies "can request these documents without having to show probable cause.

And if they are requested, the city has no obligation to even notify the person so they might be able to defend their own privacy."

Despite the benefits for some, the group said, with these new cards "the city is inviting New Yorkers to gamble with the stakes as high as prosecution or even deportation."

The mayor announced his plan in February -- a few weeks after he took office -- to create the municipal ID cards.

The city council voted to approve the plan on June 26.

Municipal ID cards already exist in several big US cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington.

There are an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the United States.

Efforts at the federal level, championed by President Barack Obama, to reform the immigration system -- and give a chance for these undocumented residents to get legal papers -- have been bogged down in Congress.

Kerry to bang heads together in Iran talks

AFP, Vienna

Britain and Germany's foreign ministers will join US Secretary of State John Kerry in Vienna this weekend to seek to bridge what Washington called "significant gaps" in ongoing nuclear talks with Iran, London and Berlin said yesterday.

The negotiations between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, which last week entered the final straight, are aimed at forging a lasting deal with Iran meant to ease fears that the Islamic state might develop nuclear weapons.

The deadline to get a deal is July 20, when an interim deal struck by foreign ministers in Geneva last November expires, although this can be extended if both sides agree.

Kerry "will gauge the extent of Iran's willingness to commit to credible and verifiable steps that would back up its public statements about the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme," spokeswoman Marie Harf said in an emailed statement late Thursday.

He "will see if progress can be made on the issues where significant gaps remain and assess Iran's willingness to make a set of critical choices at the negotiating table" and then "make recommendations" to President Barack Obama on the next steps.

Kerry will also hold talks in Vienna with

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Harf said.

London on Friday confirmed British Foreign Secretary William Hague's attendance, as did Germany for Frank-Walter Steinmeier. In Paris a diplomatic source told AFP that Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius would also be there.

However Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will not be present, with Moscow represented by Vladimir Voronkov, Russia's ambassador to international organisations in the Austrian capital, ITAR-TASS cited Voronkov as saying.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang said he had "no specific information about which Chinese official will go, but we will send an official of some level to the meeting".

On Thursday the lead negotiator, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, invited all foreign ministers from the six powers to Vienna to "take stock of where we are", her spokesman said.

The negotiations have, as expected, proved tough going.

France has described them as "difficult" and on Tuesday said no major issues had been resolved, although Russia said Thursday there were "clear signs of progress".

The main sticking point is uranium enrichment, a process which can produce

nuclear fuel -- Iran's stated aim -- but also in highly purified form the core of an atomic weapon.

On Tuesday Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, gave a speech indicating that Tehran intends to greatly increase its enrichment capacities.

The six powers want a sharp reduction, however, with a senior US official saying last week that Iran's activities in this area should be a "fraction" of what they are now.

This, coupled with other measures, would extend the so-called "breakout time" -- the time Iran would need to make enough highly-enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon, should it choose to do so.

Iran says it wants to enrich uranium to fuel planned nuclear power plants around Iran, but these facilities are years, if not decades, away from being in operation, the West says.

Kelsey Davenport, analyst at the Arms Control Association, told AFP that the attendance of foreign ministers was a "positive sign" and that their presence could "spur movement on some of the largest remaining hurdles".

Their presence would also facilitate discussing extending the deadline, although for now this remains "premature," Davenport said, with "a lot of time left on the clock for diplomacy before July 20."

Fifa unveils

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players nominated from Joachim Low's side.

Colombia's James Rodriguez, Brazil's Neymar and Arjen Robben of Netherlands complete the 10-man shortlist.

Fifa has also announced the nominees for the Golden Glove competition, awarded to the best goalkeeper at the World Cup.

Costa Rica's Keylor Navas, Germany's Manuel Neuer and Argentina's Sergio Romero will compete for the prize.

Meanwhile, Netherlands' Memphis Depay and Paul Pogba and Raphael Varane of France have been nominated for the best young player at the tournament.

The winners of each competition are to be announced after the final.

PM to attend

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of girls, prevent violence against women, deliver their babies safely, get jobs, have education and supporting legal reforms to land and inheritance rights.

The Bangladesh PM will be touring the UK at the invitation of British Prime Minister David Cameron to join the summit in London scheduled for July 22, said official sources.

The invitation is considered important as the United Kingdom and other Western countries were critical of the January 5 general election, which was boycotted by major opposition parties and 153 candidates got elected uncontested.

Foreign ministry officials and Bangladesh High Commission in London are working out the details of the visit and trying to arrange meetings with British political leadership.

This would be the PM's fourth foreign trip since taking office for a second consecutive term. Hasina has already visited Myanmar, Japan and China.

The premier would arrive in London on July 21 and depart for Dhaka on July 23, said sources at Bangladesh High Commission in London.

The Girl Summit will aim to secure new commitments from the private sector, faith leaders, other civil society organisations and governments.

It will also share success stories and spread good practice in tackling the issues of early and forced marriage.

Dhaka 11th

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The report projected that Dhaka would become the 6th most crowded city by 2030 with a population of over 2.7 crore.

More than half of humanity now lives in cities, and even more will soon. The world will have to confront how to make cities more fit for human habitation, reports The New York Times.

Those are the conclusions of a report released Thursday by the UN, raising new challenges including cholera, classrooms and food production.

If China urbanised most rapidly in recent decades, it is now India's turn, thanks to a large bulge of young people in its population. Between now and 2050, India is projected to add 404 million people to its cities.

The Indian capital, Delhi, became the world's second most populous city in 2014, more than doubling its population since 1990 to nearly 25 million. Mumbai is the other Indian megapolopolis among the world's 10 most populous cities, with 20.7 million people.

Over all, India, China and Nigeria will account for 37 percent of the projected growth of the urban population between now and 2050, according to the report, World Urbanization Prospects.

Tokyo tops the report's list of megacities, with a population of more than 37.8 million. Two cities in China are among the top 10: Shanghai (23 million) and Beijing (almost 20 million). Only one is in the United States: Taken together, New York and Newark, with a population of more than 18 million, rank ninth. None of the top 10 is in Europe. The others are Mexico City, São Paulo, Osaka and Cairo.

By 2050, the vast majority of the world's megacities will be in Asia, according to projections by the world body. New York is forecast to slip to 14th place.

The pace of urbanisation has been remarkably swift. In 1950, only 30 percent of the world's people lived in cities. That has grown to 54 percent in 2014. By 2050, a full two-thirds of humankind will live in cities.

Close to half of them now live in small cities of less than 500,000 people. Only one in eight live in cities with more than 10 million people. There are 28 of these megacities around the world.

The overall numbers of rural inhabitants are projected to decline to 3.1 billion in 2050 from 3.4 billion today.

Gaza death toll 105

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"I had a very good conversation with President Obama and other leaders," he added. "All of these leaders understand the need to act."

The UN's top human rights official has called for an investigation into Israeli air strikes on Gaza, on the grounds that the targeting of Palestinian homes -- resulting in a high death toll among civilians, particularly children -- could violate international law.

However, the Israeli prime minister said his government would not be deflected by criticism from abroad, refusing to rule out a ground offensive and vowing there would be more air strikes.

He claimed Israeli planes and drones had attacked more than 1,000 targets in Gaza so far this week, adding, "there are still more to go", reports The Guardian.

Netanyahu said Israel had already struck Gaza with twice the force used during the last offensive of its kind in 2012, and he would not rule out following the air campaign with an incursion by ground troops. "We are weighing all possibilities and preparing for all possibilities," he said.

Raising fears of an expanded conflict, at least one rocket fired from Lebanon struck an open area in northern Israel early yesterday.

But despite mounting international concerns, truce efforts were falling on deaf ears, according to Egypt, which has played a key role in mediating previous Hamas-Israel ceasefires.

"Egypt has communicated with all sides to halt violence against civilians and called on them to continue with the truce agreement signed in November 2012," the foreign ministry said.

"Unfortunately, these efforts... have met with stubbornness."

After weeks of rising rocket fire on its south, Israel appeared bent on dealing a fatal blow to the Islamist Hamas, with Netanyahu reportedly saying talk of a ceasefire was "not even on the agenda".

Ismail Haniya, Gaza's former prime minister and the most senior Hamas official in the coastal enclave, also ruled out any end to hostilities.

"(Israel) is the one that started this aggression and it must stop, because we are (simply) defending ourselves," he said.

Late last night, two Palestinians were killed in an Israeli strike, Gaza health ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said.

Qudra said the two men, one in his 40s and the other in his 80s, were killed in the Shejaiya area, east of Gaza City.

"This brings the number of martyrs since the beginning of the Israeli aggression to 105," he told AFP.

Earlier, a three-year-old child was killed when a home in northern Gaza was hit, Qudra said, shortly after an elderly man was killed in Beit Lahiya.

The body of a man killed earlier in the week was also found in Deir al-Balah, Qudra said.

Yesterday morning, six Palestinians were killed in two strikes, including one on the home of an Islamic Jihad militant in the southern city of Rafah, medical sources said.

Witnesses said the militant, Abdel Razzaq al-Ghannam, was not at home when the attack took place, but five other people, including a woman and a seven-year-old child, were killed.

Another 15 people were wounded in the attack which came an hour after another raid on Gaza City's Tel el-Hawa neighbourhood that killed 33-year-old Anas Abu al-Kass.

Qudra said 154 people were wounded in strikes across the Gaza enclave yesterday.

AIRPORT UNDER FIRE
Israel's military chief of staff, Lieutenant General Benny Gantz, warned Gaza militants the army was intending to "broaden its activity as necessary, with all necessary force".

Israel has confirmed preparations are under way for a possible ground attack, with tanks and artillery massed along the border and some 33,000 reserves mobilised out of the 40,000 approved by the cabinet.

Military officials quoted by public

radio said the political leadership was expected to take a decision on a ground operation "within 48 hours."

Meanwhile, Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, kept up a steady stream of rocket fire on central Israel, with sirens sending people fleeing for shelter in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and even the northern port city of Haifa.

On Friday morning, three Gaza rockets were shot down over Tel Aviv by the Iron Dome anti-missile system, the army said, as the Brigades claimed their militants had fired M75 missiles at Israel's main international airport near there.

Israel's Airport Authority said Ben Gurion airport had been closed for "nine minutes" but then normal operations resumed.

PASSENGER JET DIVERTED
Hamas warned "all foreign airlines" to halt flights due to "the dangers surrounding all the airports due to the ongoing war".

As a result of the fire from Lebanon, a Polish passenger jet heading to Tel Aviv was forced to make an emergency stop in Cyprus, before returning to Poland, aviation authorities said.

In Gaza, another 11 Palestinians, including a woman and seven-year-old child, were killed in separate Israeli air strikes on Friday, hiking the overall death toll to 103, medics said.

More than 500 people in Gaza have been injured.

So far, no one in Israel has been killed, and less than a dozen people hurt, two of them seriously, medics said.

In northern Israel, at least one rocket fired from Lebanon struck an open area near Metula, prompting troops to hit back with artillery fire, the army said.

Military officials said they believed a Palestinian group had fired in solidarity with Hamas, public radio reported, as fears grew the violence in Gaza could spread to other fronts.

Over the past 24 hours, the army confirmed hitting 21 Hamas-owned structures, prompting a warning from the UN's human rights office over the number of civilian casualties from strikes on homes.

"Buildings that are ordinarily used for civilian purposes, such as homes, are presumed not to be legitimate military targets," said spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani.

"Even when a home is identified as being used for military purposes, any attack must be proportionate... and precautions must be taken to protect civilians."

A group of 34 charities and NGOs also called for an end to the fighting.

"Military actions by all parties must stop," said a statement signed by groups including ActionAid, CARE, Oxfam and Save the Children.

Since the start of Israel's operation Tuesday, 460 rockets have struck the Jewish state, and Iron Dome has shot down 121.

Another 53 crashed into Israel since midnight Thursday, while 18 more were intercepted, the army said.

Spanish bull run sends 7 to hospital

AFP, Pamplona

Half-tonne fighting bulls trampled and knocked over daredevils on a break-neck run through the rain-moistened streets of Spain's northern city of Pamplona yesterday that sent seven people to hospital.

No one was gored but three people suffered head injuries, including a 19-year-old woman from Valencia in Spain -- a rare incident since most of the runners are men.

The other injured runners included a 48-year-old man from New York and a 46-year-old man from Paisley in Scotland, the regional government of Navarra said.

A 33-year-old Spanish man dislocated his right shoulder and another three Spaniards suffered bruises and cuts to the face or knee.

Buses beyond traffic laws

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Like the buses, rickshaws and jaywalkers care little about traffic rules.

Even though rickshaws are not allowed to go beyond the Public Library, in reality, they cross the intersection when the signal turns green.

After rush hours during Ramadan, the traffic team also tends to overlook vehicles using wrong side of the road.

University buses, cars, government staff buses often create congestion by blocking the left turn near the flower shops.

Asked why he was on the wrong side of the road, driver Md Zahid of a student bus said, "Everyone is doing this." Another motorist and a driver of a government official also gave the same reason for breaking the rule.

However, neither the rule-abiding vehicles nor the rule-breaking ones could avoid the long wait at the intersection to get through.

It is not only vehicles that break the

rules. Pedestrians are often seen crossing the intersection under the footbridge built for their convenience.

Sania Nur was jaywalking from Birdem towards the flower shops in Shahbagh Wednesday afternoon.

When asked, she said, "The footbridge is somewhat far from the intersection and beggars and hawkers occupy it. I feel insecure using it."

She was of the opinion that the location of the footbridge was not convenient.

The wait to cross the intersection in rush hours is a long one.

"It took me an hour to reach the first gate of BSMMU [Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University] from TSC," said Abul Kalam Azad, a CNG auto-rickshaw driver.

He picked up a passenger from Nawabpur at 2:00pm and was still stuck in front of BSMMU at 4:00pm. "Only the Almighty knows if I can make it to Gabtoli before iftar," he said.

Oman deports

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"Oman police recently arrested and put me in jail as my work visa had expired two years ago," he said, adding that he was released from jail last week.

Many Bangladeshi workers alleged that they had been deported illegally by their Kafuels (sponsors or employers) even though they had all the documents.

Md Elias, who hails from Brahmanbaria, had gone to Oman last year. He claimed that his employer

used to beat him up whenever he demanded his salary.

"I had spent Tk 2 lakh to get the work permit in Oman but hardly got a Tk 10,000 salary a month," Elias said as tears rolled down his cheeks.

Shohab Hossain of Kishoreganj made similar allegation against his employer.

"Though I was working legally, my Kafael deported me for not paying him toll," said the worker.

"I went to Oman with a driving visa

[visa for working as a driver] in 2012 but my sponsor engaged me in a construction firm and demanded toll every month," said Shorab.

Many of the workers alleged that they did not receive any assistance from the Bangladesh embassy in Oman.

Denying the allegation, Khondaker Showkat Hossain, secretary of expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry, said that no legal workers were forced to leave Oman.