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Trapped by rickshaws

2 hurt as train rams a car at rail-crossing

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and JAMIL MAHMUD

The black sport utility vehicle was stuck right in the middle of Khilgaon level crossing. A crazy mass of rickshaws blocked its way forward and back. And then the SUV driver saw the danger ahead -- a train was approaching.

The gateman rang the siren and brought down the bars on both sides of the crossing. But he then pulled up the bar on one side to allow the SUV to pass.

Several people there tried to clear the rail track. But their efforts went in vain as hundreds of rickshaws and vehicles created a long tailback making it impossible for the SUV to move.

"The speeding train hit the vehicle and mangled it along with three to four rickshaws. It all happened in a couple of minutes," said fruit vendor Abdul Ahad, who saw the incident from his makeshift shop near the crossing.

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Rickshaws, other three-wheelers, cars and pedestrians going over the level crossing at Khilgaon in a chaotic manner. This is the place where a train rammmed an SUV and a rickshaw after they got tangled on the rail lines yesterday. More photos on page 2.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Eid on Oct 6

UNB, Dhaka

The holy Eid-ul-Azha will be celebrated in the country on October 6 as the moon of lunar month Zilhajj was not sighted in the Bangladesh sky yesterday.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee at the Baitul Mukarram office of Islamic Foundation last evening after reviewing information of the sighting of moon.

Chaired by Religious Affairs Minister Motiur Rahman, the meeting was attended by Khatib of Baitul Mukarram national mosque Maulana Mohammad Salahuddin, Director General of the Islamic Foundation Shamim Mohammad Afzal and Principal Information Officer Tasir Ahmed.

At a post-meeting briefing, the minister said the Zilhajj moon was not sighted anywhere in the country.

Cops capture 2 'ISIS recruits'



Tanzil

Asif

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A UK citizen of Bangladeshi origin is now in Dhaka to recruit fighters for ISIS, detectives said yesterday after the arrest of "two of his recruits".

On Wednesday night, a DB team arrested Asif Adnan, 26, and Fazle Elahi Tanzil, 24, who had allegedly been planning to go to Syria through Turkey with the help of the UK citizen.

Son of a former judge, Asif was detained from their Segunbagicha residence, and Fazle Elahi Tanzil, son of a senior bureaucrat, from the government quarters at Eskaton.

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Protector turning predator?

MAHFUZ ANAM

COMMENTARY

What was set up to protect the press and its freedom appears to be poised to destroy both. Recent newspaper reports have alerted us about certain changes that the Press Council is proposing to bring in its own law that we consider to be dangerously anti-free press and fundamentally contradictory to the very purpose for which the Council was set up.

Article 39 of our Constitution guarantees freedom of the press with reasonable restrictions. Basing on that the Press Council Act was promulgated in 1974. It's very first "objective" says, "The Council shall preserve the freedom of the press and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in Bangladesh." Objective 2(a) says, "Help newspapers and news agencies to maintain their freedom", objective 2(e) says, "To keep under review any development likely to restrict the supply and dissemination of information of public interest and importance".

As to its powers, it was given the right to "warn, admonish and censure."

Under the above Act, the Press Council was set up in 1979 with the same objectives of promoting press freedom and enhancing quality of the press.

Following the formation of the Council, a 22-item "Code of Conduct" for journalists was adopted in 1993, again highlighting the centrality of freedom in the operation of the press. This "code" goes into details of what should be printed and what should be avoided and the steps necessary to ensure authentication of reports.

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