



The mangled sport utility vehicle and the rickshaw, left, at Khilgaon Police Station after a train rammed them at Khilgaon level crossing yesterday. A woman with a school-going child runs across the rail lines yards from the accident spot ignoring the train rushing in.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

# Trapped by rickshaws

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Witnesses said SUV driver Mohammad Kalam, who was heading towards Shahjahanpur from Khilgaon, was trying to cross the rail track, ignoring the red signal.  
Kalam was wounded critically, while a rickshaw-puller suffered minor injuries in the accident that happened around 10:30am.  
This is just one of many such accidents in recent times. Impatience and recklessness of drivers, commuters and pedestrians have turned level crossings in the capital and elsewhere virtual

death traps.  
Barely two weeks back, four people were killed in a makeshift fish market set up illegally on rail lines at Karwan Bazar, as they jumped on to the path of an express train to avoid being run over by another train. Five others were seriously injured.  
After the incident, the railway authorities demolished around 2,500 illegal structures there and tried to create awareness among people. But it failed to yield much result.  
In a span of less than three hours on

April 8, three persons, including a minor boy, were killed in separate incidents after they were hit by trains on rail track at Malibagh and Karwan Bazar.  
Only about an hour after yesterday's accident a mother and son risked their lives to cross the same rail track with a speeding train just yards away. This reflects the lack of awareness among people about traffic rules and the extent of recklessness that might even cost them their lives.  
Gatemen are responsible for controlling traffic near level crossings but

people hardly listen to them, said a high-official of the railway police, wishing anonymity.  
Nurunnabi Kabir, divisional estate officer of the railway, said of the 18 level crossings in the capital, 11 are controlled by the railway authorities.  
"Tailbacks can be seen at almost all crossings in the city," he told The Daily Star over the phone.  
The official urged people to be cautious and follow the signal while crossing a rail line.  
Locals said rickshaw-pullers and

drivers of human haulers often stop vehicles abruptly near the Khilgaon crossing to pick up and drop passengers, blocking other vehicles' movement.  
On condition of anonymity, one of the gatemen at the crossing said drivers and pedestrians frequently ignore traffic signal and try to cross the rail line at the last moment when a train approaches. "Locals often help clear the rail line."  
Fifteen gatemen work at the level crossing in three shifts a day, he added.  
Vendor Ahad said scores of vehicles

get stuck in long gridlock almost every day at Khilgaon level crossing. It occurs more during busy hours in the morning and afternoon.  
The train, Chittagong Mail, which hit the SUV, was heading for the port city from Kamalapur station, nearly a kilometre from the scene.  
Police said the SUV is owned by a member of the national football team.  
Abdul Majid, officer-in-charge of Dhaka Railway Police Station, said SUV driver Kalam was admitted to a clinic.

# BNP loses so-called allies

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alliance, will be the secretary general of it.  
The alliance is composed of 10 political parties and eight of them are not registered with the Election Commission, meaning those political parties will not be able to participate in the election. Only two parties, Nilu-led NPP and Zubeida Quader Chowdhury-led Bangladesh Muslim League (BML), have registration with the EC.  
On August 24, Nilu announced quitting the BNP-led 20-party alliance, saying the alliance chief Khaleda Zia

was running the combine unilaterally and that she had taken the wrong decision of boycotting the January 5 elections.  
Bringing the same allegations against Khaleda, Mazumder, on September 21, made it clear that he was going to quit the alliance.  
The new political coalition was initiated mainly by Nilu, and Mazumder.  
Earlier in the last few months, Bangladesh National Awami League (Nap-Bhashani), Bangladesh Islamic Party and Bangladesh Labour Party also announced to quit the BNP-led

alliance.  
However, rival factions of five political parties -- NPP, Bangladesh National Awami League (Nap-Bhashani), Bangladesh Islamic Party, Bangladesh Labour Party and National Democratic Party are remaining with the BNP-led 20-party alliance, while the other faction with the new alliance.  
BNP later acknowledged the rival faction of NPP, NDP, Nap-Bhashani, Islamic Party and Labour party as the components in the BNP-led 20-party alliance.  
The four other components in the coalition are: Jatiyatabadi Ganotantrik

Dal, Bangladesh Insaf Party, Trinomool Nap-Bhashani and Bhashani Front.  
BNP and some political analysts have been blaming the government for the splitting of components in the alliance. They said the government was doing this to weaken the coalition ahead of its preparations for waging anti-government movement to press for a fresh election under a non-party administration.  
BNP-led alliance and most other political parties had boycotted the January 5 national elections as it had taken place under the Sheikh Hasina

administration.  
Nilu and other leaders of the new coalition, who had earlier waged movement in favour of a non-party administration during elections, yesterday said they have no objection if the election was held under the Sheikh Hasina administration.  
Speaking at a meeting at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, BNP spokesperson Fakhru Islam Alamgir blamed the government for trying to split the BNP-led alliance. He also claimed that the ties between the BNP and its components in the alliance still remain solid.

# BSF kills Bangladeshi cattle trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah  
Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi cattle trader along Samanta border in the district's Moheshpur upazila on Wednesday night.  
The dead, Ziarul Islam, 25, was son of Zaker Hossain of Dhankhola village in Chuadanga's Jibonnagar upazila.  
Saiful Islam, company commander of Kushampur Border Guard Bangladesh  
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# Not in arms, invest in education

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gender parity. "In the post-2015 era, our priority must be quality education," she observed.  
Bangladesh will have more than 120 million young and active workforce by 2031, added the premier.  
"My government is determined to unlock their talents and transform them into skilled human capital."  
Pointing out that quality education needs quality teachers, she said her government has trained nearly a million secondary teachers in quality teaching and evaluation methods.  
The government, mentioned Hasina, has reserved 60 percent teaching positions in primary schools for qualified women.  
In a low-income-country, quality education must ensure access to free textbooks and contemporary curricula, she noted. "Only in 2014, we distributed 318 million free textbooks among primary and secondary students."  
She said a new national curriculum

and a creative assessment system have been developed, while the madrasa education has been reformed.  
Quality education must include ICT knowledge based aspects, and in Bangladesh, ICT knowledge is compulsory for secondary and higher secondary students, said the premier.  
She added: "The government is implementing a rigorous ICT master plan for education to materialise its vision for building a technology-driven society through Digital Bangladesh."  
A well-rounded early learning is the key to quality education and that is why Bangladesh has introduced free pre-primary classes in all primary schools, said the PM, adding that the government is providing students with free midday meals to check drop-outs.  
"Just in 2013, we gave stipends to nearly 12.8 million meritorious secondary-to-bachelor's students to ensure continued learning. Girls received 75 percent of the stipends,"

mentioned Hasina.  
She said the aim of her government is also to create skilled youths for job markets at home and abroad. "Over the last five years, we have increased number of graduates in technical and vocational education training by seven-fold," added the PM.  
Quality education must ensure inclusion of the excluded, she observed. "Bangladesh is developing a law towards a uniform education system covering nearly 70 million young learners, from mainstream, madrasas and minorities," said the premier.  
Girls' and women's education, she said, must remain a pillar of quality education. "We need resources for quality education, and this fiscal, Bangladesh allocated 11.6 percent of its budget for education."  
Health Minister Mohammad Nasim, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Engineer Khandaker Mosharraf

Hossain and international autism expert and PM's daughter Saima Hossain Putul were present, among others.  
United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had launched the GEFI in September 2012 to spur renewed efforts to reach global education goals.  
By rallying a broad spectrum of world leaders and advocates, GEFI aims to raise the political profile of education, inspire new partnerships and mobilise additional funding to deliver on the promise of Education for All. The initiative focuses on three priority areas -- putting every child in school, improving the quality of learning and fostering global citizenship.  
C'WEALTH SECY MEETS PM  
The Commonwealth is going to undertake a new agenda for the development of education of girl children and women.  
Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalash Sharma said this when he paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite in New York on Wednesday afternoon.  
Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's Press Secretary AKM Shamim Chowdhury said Kamalash apprised the PM of the policy and programmes of the Commonwealth.  
Kamalash also informed the PM about today's CHOGM meeting at the UN headquarters.  
Highlighting her government's steps for the development of education, the PM said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, soon after the country's independence, had nationalised the primary education and the services of teachers. The government has made girls' education free up to the higher secondary level, she added.  
Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, PM's Principal Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar and PMO Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present.  
The Commonwealth official is scheduled to visit Bangladesh in December.

# SEAT SHARING ROW BJP, Shiv Sena part ways

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi  
The 25-year-old saffron alliance between right wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena in western Indian state of Maharashtra collapsed yesterday over differences on the number of seats to be contested in next month's state legislative elections.  
"We have conveyed our decision to Shiv Sena," Maharashtra BJP chief Devendra Fadnis told reporters in Mumbai. He blamed Shiv Sena for its "inflexible" approach to the seat-sharing issue.  
The last-ditch efforts to salvage the alliance came to nought after Fadnis and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Vinod Tawde left a meeting with Shiv Sena leaders in Mumbai in a huff, terming Sena's seat-sharing proposals "unaccommodative" of allies.  
"We have received several proposals  
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# Cops capture 2 'ISIS recruits'

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For their travel to Syria, they were supposed to pose as members of Tablighi Jamaat, a peaceful movement for spreading Islamic values, investigators learned during interrogation.  
The UK citizen, who recruited the two youths, came to Bangladesh in April. He held meetings with a group of militants at Azad Mosque in the capital's Gulshan and at the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal in Sylhet, officials said.  
"A foreign recruiter, who fought against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, is in Dhaka to recruit such fighters," Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) told journalists yesterday.  
Detectives believe several other foreigners might be active in Bangladesh looking for potential ISIS jihadists.  
"We can learn about others if we can arrest the UK citizen," Additional Deputy Commissioner Saiful Islam, who led the drives to arrest the duo, told The Daily Star.

Detectives went after Asif and Tanzil following information gleaned from seven Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) men arrested in Ashulia on September 19.  
Now on remand, the seven include JMB's acting chief Abdullah al-Tasneem alias Nahid and another leader Sikander Ali Noki.  
Asif introduced the UK citizen to Nahid and Noki and they started working together to recruit ISIS fighters across the country, investigators learnt after quizzing them.  
Detectives also have retrieved text messages Asif and Tanzil had exchanged, Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam said at a news briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.  
The two also sent text messages, as invitations for jihad, to different cell phone numbers.  
Monirul claimed that Asif in a text message to Tanzil wrote: "I just want to be in the land of jihad...live a life only for Allah."  
According to another message, Asif was waiting for instructions whether to leave for Syria or Myanmar.

"It depends on the directives of AQIS [al-Qaeda in Indian Sub-Continent] and Nusra [al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate, al-Nusra Front]," the message also read.  
Though investigators claim Asif was an ISIS recruit, the content of the text message provided by the officials clearly suggests that he was waiting for al-Qaeda directives.  
International media reports indicate that ISIS and al-Qaeda widely differ from one another in views and strategies.  
Al-Qaeda supremo Ayman al-Zawahiri and the core of the organisation are locked in a row with ISIS for the leadership of the global jihadist movement.  
ISIS, a militant group which has imposed its brutal rule over swathes of Syria and Iraq, was expelled from al-Qaeda in February after it rejected Zawahiri's demand that it restrict activities to Iraq.  
Investigators also claim both Asif and Tanzil are supporters of Ansarullah Bangla Team, an emerging radical militant group nurturing al-

Qaeda ideology.  
In the changed global jihadi context, Ansarullah started working with the JMB with an aspiration to join jihad under ISIS, they added.  
Asif, an economics graduate from Dhaka University, and Tanzil, who has completed A-level, disclosed during interrogations the names of some others willing to join ISIS.  
REMOTE-CONTROLLED BOMB? Another detective team led by ADC Sanwar Hossain arrested three members of the banned outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (Huji) at Rampura in the capital on Wednesday evening.  
Of the arrested, Khairul Islam, 24, is a third-year student at Islamic University of Technology in Gazipur while Shafiqul Islam, 35, and Ahsan Ullah, 24, hailed from Tangail.  
Sanwar said the trio were working to develop a device to detonate bombs from a distance of around half a kilometre.  
The DB team also recovered some electronics materials and a diagram for making such device, he added.

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