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14 die in Barisal launch capsizes

At least 13 others missing after the small vessel sinks in Sandhya

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 14 people, including seven women and a child, died and 13 others went missing as a passenger launch sank in the Sandhya river in Barisal yesterday, officials said.

The launch, ML Oishi, went down around 11:45am near Dasherhaat village under Banaripara upazila when it tried to anchor on the bank amid strong currents.

About 60 people were on board when the launch capsized, but most of them managed to swim ashore, said SM Aktaruzzaman, superintendent of police.

Barisal Port Officer Mustafizur Rahman said the watercraft had no licence to carry passengers or to ply that route.

"It is not even a proper launch; it's in fact a trawler and it used to ply different waterways in the area illegally," he added.

Before the Eid, the port authorities wrote to the police and the local administration to take action against illegal plying of launches and other watercrafts, he said.

Most of the victims were from Swarupkathi and Banaripara areas and they were returning home after visiting their relatives on the occasion of Eid, Mustafizur added.

Eight people were rescued alive.

The launch was on its way to Uzirpur from Banaripara. It was trying to anchor at Masjidbari point, which is not designated for anchorage, in the midway for picking up and dropping off passengers.

"The current was very strong. As the launch was about to anchor, a large chunk of the bank collapsed on its front part. It turned upside down instantly," said Pintu Halder, who was on the spot at the time.

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Fire service personnel and police carry the body of a passenger killed in a launch capsizing in the Sandhya river in Barisal yesterday. Inset, relatives of the missing passengers crying on the bank of the river.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

210 accidents 265 deaths in 12 days

Says report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 265 people were killed and 1,153 others injured in 210 accidents on roads, waterways and railways across the country in 12 days from September 7, including the Eid-ul-Azha holidays, according to a report.

The number of road crashes and deaths on highways during this year's Eid holidays is the highest in last three years, it said.

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, a passengers' welfare association, made public the report at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. The report titled "Eid Journey Accident Report-2016" was prepared on the basis of media reports.

Between September 7 and September 18, a total of 248 people were killed and 1,056 others injured in 193 road accidents across the country, the report said.

According to the report, 186 people were killed and

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Father, set on fire by son, dies

A CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The father who was set on fire allegedly by his teenage son six days ago for refusing to buy him a new motorcycle died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

ATM Rafikul Huda, 48, of Kamalapur DIB Bottola of Faridpur town, was declared dead around 4:00pm, said his brother ATM Sirajul Huda.

Police said they were trying to arrest the alleged killer, Fardin, a first-year student of Government Rajendra College in Faridpur.

Akram Uddin Ahamad, the victim's brother-in-law, filed a murder case against Fardin, 17, with Faridpur Kotwali Police Station yesterday.

Quoting the case statement, Akram said Fardin had demanded a new motorcycle from his father, a businessman, a few days ago, but a refusal left him furious.

On Thursday afternoon, he allegedly splashed petrol on Rafikul who was

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Govt revives new int'l airport plan

Japanese firm to conduct feasibility study

RASHIDUL HASAN

The government has taken a fresh initiative for a large international airport and dethrone Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport from being the hub aerodrome.

It has preliminarily selected three possible sites, two of which are in districts close to Dhaka and the other inside Dhaka district, said reliable sources requesting not to be named.

The government has signed a Tk-120-crore deal with a Japanese firm to

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Rampal would harm aquatic resources of Sundarbans

Says Unesco report; environment minister dismisses concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hot water and chemicals to be discharged into water bodies from Rampal power plant would cause significant damage to aquatic life in the river and canal networks in the Sundarbans, said a Unesco report.

Expressing concern about the potential damage to the World Heritage site, the Unesco sent the report to the government last month and asked for explanations about its specific measures in this regard, Environment and Forest Minister Anwar Hossain Manju told The Daily Star yesterday.

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PM for lasting solution to refugee issue

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Bangladesh looks forward to working with the new Myanmar leadership to find a lasting solution to the refugee issue.

"I'm already in touch with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi," she told the Leaders' Summit on Refugees, organised by US President Barack Obama, at the UN headquarters on Tuesday.

The PM called upon other international partners to remain engaged in the refugee issue.

"As part of our commitment to leave no one behind, we must promote orderly, safe, regular and responsible mobility of people," Hasina said.

For nearly three decades, Bangladesh has been hosting a large number of refugees and displaced people from Myanmar, she told the Summit.

"With our limited resources, we continue to bear our responsibilities for these people... our local communities create space for their protection and assistance," the premier

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"Investment in fictional companies is nothing new in Bangladesh. People get cheated but again go after them."

FINANCE MINISTER
AMA MUHITH
AFTER A MEETING ON THE JUBOK SCAM, WHICH HAS BEEN LEFT UNRESOLVED SINCE 2006.



Two buses stop on the Mayor Mohammad Hanif Flyover to pick up and drop off passengers even though it is illegal to stop on the flyover. Vehicles have made it their unofficial bus stop and three-wheelers often stop there to get passengers. The photo was taken on Saturday.

Local cattle meet 80pc Eid demand

Farmers supply over 42 lakh cattle during the festival, cutting dependency on those from India

SOHEL PARVEZ

The country has met around 80 percent of its demand for sacrificial animals this Eid-ul-Azha with locally reared cattle, reducing its dependence on cattle from India, say traders, farmers and livestock officials.

No official estimate is available on how many cattle were sacrificed during this Eid.

However, Bangladesh Meat Merchants' Association (BMMA) Secretary General Robiul Alam said 55 to 57 lakh cattle were slaughtered this Eid, compared to about 55 lakh in the previous year's Eid.

The supply of locally grown cattle was over 42 lakh this time, around two lakh higher than that of last year, he said.

Mohammad Shah Emran, convener of the newly formed Bangladesh Meat and Milk Producers' Association, said the supply of locally farmed cattle was sufficient this year.

More than 80 percent of the demand for sacrificial animals was met with locally reared cattle this year, said Emran, who runs a farm named Shopno Dairy and Fisheries.

According to the BMMA, cattle from India used to meet around 40 percent of the need for sacrificial animals during the Eid before the neighbouring country put restrictions on cattle flow to Bangladesh.

But dependence on cattle from India has been on the decline for the last two years, he said, adding that around eight to nine lakh cattle were brought from India in the month before this Eid.

Last year, locally farmed cattle met around 70 percent of the demand for sacrificial animals, said the BMMA secretary general.

Before this Eid, the Department of Livestock Services had projected that the supply of locally grown cattle would be 44 lakh.

It said farmers this time fattened around 33 lakh cattle against 30 lakh last year.

The DLS is yet to estimate how animals were sacrificed during this Eid.

According to it, 96 lakh animals, including goats, were slaughtered during last year's Eid.

DLS Director General Ajay Kumar Roy said, "The supply of locally grown cattle was adequate. I think locally farmed cattle entirely met the demand for sacrificial animals this Eid."

The share of cattle brought from India was insignificant. The number of locally reared animals, including goats, ready for slaughter rose to 1.14 crore this year from 1.09 crore last year, he said.

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN