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BANGABANDHU BRIDGE

Poor visibility causes another pile-up

1 killed; witnesses say bridge lights were off during fog; authorities claim they were on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A five-vehicle pile-up on Bangabandhu Bridge in poor visibility early yesterday left one person dead and five others injured.

On January 9 last year, at least six people, including the son of Land Minister Shamsur Rahman, were killed during a 16-vehicle pile-up on the bridge amid dense fog.

Yesterday, a bamboo-laden truck hit the median on the bridge about 200 metres away from east end toll plaza around 6:45am.

Unable to see the stationary truck in the dense fog, four other trucks, a few of which were carrying logs, rammied it, said police, drivers and bridge officials.

The pile-up left Shafiqul Islam, helper of a log-laden truck and an inhabitant of Joypurhat, dead on the spot, said

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A tow truck trying to clear the pile-up on Bangabandhu Bridge yesterday morning after four trucks in dense fog rammied another truck that had spun. Inset, a long queue of vehicles at a toll plaza after the bridge was closed for two hours.

PHOTO: STAR

IS claims Istanbul nightclub attack

Police detain eight suspects

AFP, Istanbul

The Islamic State jihadist group yesterday claimed the shooting rampage inside a glamorous Istanbul nightclub on New Year's night that killed 39 people, as police hunted the attacker who remains on the run.

Anti-terror police made their first arrests over the attack, which unleashed scenes of panic among party-goers at one of Istanbul's swankiest venues and killed mostly foreign tourists.

The shooting took place just 75 minutes into 2017 after a bloody year in Turkey in which hundreds of people were killed in violence blamed on both IS jihadists and Kurdish militants.

In a statement circulated on social media, the jihadist group said one of the "soldiers of the caliphate" had carried out the attack on the Reina nightclub.

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Headmaster beaten with hammer

Victim says Meherpur AL leader, his men attacked him

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

A high school headmaster was beaten up with hammer allegedly by a local Awami League leader and his men in Gangni upazila of Meherpur on Sunday.

The assault left his left leg broken. Victim Rafiqul Islam told The Daily Star he was attacked for "refusing to recommend the leader's appointment as the president of his school's management committee unlawfully".

According to Rafiqul, 48, and local sources, the management committee election of Devipur High School was held on December 26 in the presence of Gangni Upazila Secondary School Education Officer Mir Habibur Basher.

Following due procedures, the committee elected Abdul Baki, a freedom fighter, as its president, Habibur told The Daily Star.

Baki became the president beating the other candidate, Mamunur Rashid, who is

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'Saudi embassy lifts visa restrictions on Bangladeshi males'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Saudi embassy in Dhaka has withdrawn the restriction on visas for male migrant workers, said a leader of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) yesterday.

The embassy had imposed the restriction, saying that recruiting agencies were not sending at least 25 percent female workers simultaneously.

"Recruiting agencies are now allowed to submit applications of both male and female workers to the Saudi embassy together or separately. There is no condition now," said Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman, joint secretary general-2 of Baira.

He said recruiting agents had been facing trouble in sending workers to Saudi Arabia since November last year as the Saudi embassy had refused to accept passports for visas if 25 percent of the applicants were not females.

Baira informed the expatriates' welfare ministry of the matter. Saudi embassy officials in Dhaka then held meetings with Baira on December 15 and December 29, he said.

Shameem said Saudi embassy Consul Khaled Baksh yesterday informed Baira that the recruiting agencies seeking visas for male workers could submit applications and there was no condition of submitting applications of 25 percent females.

"This is great news for Bangladesh and those seeking to go to Saudi Arabia for work," he said.

Saudi Arabia, which is home to some 15 lakh Bangladeshis and had imposed restrictions on labour recruitment since 2008, resumed recruiting Bangladeshi female workers in early 2015.

The kingdom began recruiting male workers in the middle of 2016, but

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ROHINGYA ABUSE VIDEO Myanmar detains policemen

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar said yesterday it has detained several police officers over a video shot by a fellow policeman that shows them beating Rohingya civilians, a rare admission of abuse against the Muslim minority.

Tens of thousands of people from the persecuted ethnic group -- loathed by many of Myanmar's Buddhist majority -- have fled a military operation in Rakhine state, launched after attacks on police posts in October.

Dozens of videos have emerged apparently showing abuses against Rohingyas, but this is the first time the government has said it will take action over them.

The refugees' stories have raised global alarm and galvanised protests against Myanmar's de facto

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Selfie-seeking tourist bitten by Thai croc



AFP, Bangkok

A French tourist was bitten by a crocodile inside a Thai national park as she tried to get close to the fearsome animal to take a selfie, an official said yesterday.

The incident took place on Sunday afternoon in Khao Yai, a popular national park filled with dense jungle hiking trails and waterfalls three hours north of Bangkok.

"She wanted to take selfie with the crocodile who was lying down near a stream," a park official told AFP, asking not to be named because he did not have the authority to speak to the media.

"It was startled and bit her on the leg." The official said two crocodiles had made their home on that particular section of the park for years with warning signs laid out.

"I guess that she wanted to see it for real," he added.

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'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' with police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An alleged robber was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Mithapukur upazila of Rangpur early yesterday.

The dead is Rahat Hossain, 32, of Bujruk-Shontoshpur village in the upazila.

Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Mithapukur Police Station, said on

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SIBL Social Islami Bank Limited. PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 3. Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha. AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:30 7:00. JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:30. SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION.



Slow rickshaw vans ply the Dhaka-Chittagong highway with heavy and oversized loads of iron bars at Shanir Akhra in Narayanganj while CNG-run auto-rickshaws and other vehicles make U-turns from and on to the fast lane there. Such practices often cause accidents as vehicles are at speed on the highway.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AL, 10 more parties invited to talks on EC

JP-Manju meets president, requests steps for free polls

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jatiya Party (Manju) yesterday called upon President Abdul Hamid to take effective measures to remove obstacles to future polls being free, fair and credible.

It also suggested appointing the next chief election commissioner from the former CECs or election commissioners as they have experience of administering polls.

The proposal was put forward by the party during talks with the president on reconstitution of the Election Commission.

Party Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju, also the minister for environment and forest, led a 16-member delegation to the meeting at the Bangabhaban.

Meanwhile, the Bangabhaban yesterday invited 11 more political parties, including the ruling

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ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা-২০১৭ উদ্বোধন. জাতীয় রপ্তানি ট্রফি বিতরণ. Heartiest Felicitations to Mr. Mir Nasir Hossain Managing Director, Mir Telecom Ltd., Former President, FBCCI for achieving The National Export Trophy In Gold Category for two consecutive years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. THE mir GROUP.