



Vehicles stuck in a 40-kilometre tailback in Mirzapur on Dhaka-Tangail highway yesterday. Police said increased traffic due to an extended weekend holiday and a broken down truck was to blame.

PHOTO: STAR

## Jane Austen

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display to mark the bicentenary of her death, the Hampshire Archives announced.

The documents were found in the marriage register in the parish of Steventon, in Hampshire in southeast England, where Austen grew up.

They announce the banns -- a public announcement by the church of imminent nuptials -- between Austen and Henry Fitzwilliam of London and then Edmund Mortimer of Liverpool.

Austen, believed to have been a teenager at the time, was able to access the register because her father was the rector of the parish.

"This unique document uncovers another side to Jane Austen's character," Andrew Gibson, Hampshire's culture spokesman explained on the county's website.

"Jane would have been in her teens when she wrote these fake marriage entries, and some could say it reveals a mischievous side during her younger years," Gibson added.

Austen's six major novels, realistically depicting the life of the British gentry in the Georgian era, have become classics of English literature.

They are taught in schools and are also regularly adapted on screen, especially "Pride and Prejudice" and "Sense and Sensibility."

Born in Steventon, Austen spent her life in Hampshire, where she died in July 1817 at the age of 41.

Events to commemorate the anniversary of her death will take place across Britain this year.

## Blast kills 1

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Briefing reporters at the scene, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia said, "It seems the man with a trolley bag was taking the bomb somewhere. But seeing policemen, he must have become too cautious and ended up causing an explosion."

The identity of the man, aged between 30 and 32, could not be known yet. The man was wearing jeans and a full-sleeve shirt, he added.

He added that there was a checkpoint at the spot and the man was trying to avoid it and became "too cautious".

What exactly happened could be known once a "full-fledged investigation is done", Asaduzzaman said.

"The man's intention was not to attack any policemen. Some 8-10 cops were only about 20 steps away from where the bomb exploded. He could have reached them if he wanted. But he didn't. So it was an accident in which he died."

The police commissioner, however, asked journalists not to draw any connection between yesterday's incident and the one inside the Rab barrack.

Talking to this newspaper immediately after the incident, a police officer said the incident occurred around 7:15pm. "It can be a suicide attack. We will be able to tell for sure after investigation."

Commissioner Asaduzzaman said the man was walking on a pavement opposite the street leading to the airport.

About three hours after the incident, law enforcers blocked traffic movement on the Airport Road. Later, police destroyed three other bombs that they said were in the trolley bag

the man was carrying.

They also said one of the bombs, weighing over 10kgs, was powerful. As police destroyed it, its splinters reached as far as 300 metres, injuring three bystanders and shattering glass windows of several vehicles of law enforcers and those of the police box.

Splinters the size of marble balls were strewn on the Airport Road.

The body of the man was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for an autopsy.

Addition policemen were deployed in and around the area.

## Cairo blast kills Egyptian man

AFP, Cairo

An explosion killed an Egyptian man on Friday in Cairo, the interior ministry said.

The blast in the Maadi district, caused by a "strange metal device", killed a 35-year-old doorman as he cleaned a garden, the ministry said in a statement. His wife and two sons were injured in the explosion.

Islamist militants have set off bombs in Cairo, usually targeting policemen, since the 2013 overthrow of president Mohamed Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood politician.

His overthrow led to a deadly police crackdown that killed hundreds of Islamist protesters, and an insurgency centred in the Sinai Peninsula that killed hundreds of soldiers and policemen.



Zainul Abedin Mahbob Uddin

## BNP-backed

FROM PAGE 16

Begum Rekha and pro-AL lawyer Mohammad Ozi Ullah.

Rafiqul Islam Hiru has become the treasurer, while two assistant secretaries are pro-BNP lawyer Shamima Sultana Dipti and pro-AL lawyer Shafiqul Islam.

The elected pro-BNP executive members are SK Tahsin Ali, Ayesha Akter, Hasibur Rahman and Mausumi Akter and the pro-AL lawyers are Habibur Rahman Habib, ABM Noor A Alam Uzzal and Cumar Debul Dey.

In last year's SCBA election, pro-AL lawyers won eight posts, including that of president, out of 14 posts and pro-BNP lawyers secured six posts, including that of secretary.

## Ex-husband

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victim's elder brother Abdullah Al Amin told The Daily Star.

Arifa had also lodged a general diary with Kalabagan police, expressing concern over her safety soon after the divorce.

A day before the murder, Robin went to meet her at the private bank where she worked and offered to give back her belongings that he had with him, said Baten, quoting Robin.

The next day around 8:45am, he went near Arifa's house with the belongings and met her. There, he again expressed his desire to get back together but Arifa again turned the offer down.

Footage of a CCTV installed near the apartment showed Robin running out of the building exactly at 8:51am.

"Robin claims the murder wasn't preplanned. They had a scuffle and he stabbed her all of a sudden," said the police official, adding, "We are investigating the matter."

Meanwhile, a milad mahfil was held at Arifa's parent's home in Jamalpur yesterday. Some of her colleagues and friends from Dhaka joined it.

Talking to The Daily Star, one of her friends, Zinnat, said, "We hope the trial would be over soon and Robin would be given exemplary punishment."

After being stabbed, Arifa, a former student of Eden College, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she died. Before her death, she was able to tell police that her attacker was Robin.

Later, her family, friends and colleagues demonstrated near the Jatiya Press Club, demanding Robin's arrest and punishment.

## Ten killed

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Dhaka tipped over on the road after hitting a shallow trench on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway around 4:00am.

Police said the truck was carrying 350 bags of cement weighing over 17 tonnes. The vehicle was seized by cops, but its driver managed to flee.

According to locals, the truck tipped over on the highway after hitting the trench dug in the road to repair it. They blamed the authorities for not putting any barrier across the trench.

The dead are Azizul, his wife Rezia, sons Mehedi Hasan, 11, Nayon, 9, and Sizan, 7; Jyosna Begum, 55, and her son Shirajul Islam, 18; Sajahan Hossain, 40, Sukur Ali, 65, and Khorshed Ali, 25.

They were from Mymensingh's Sadar and Tarakanda upazilas and Sherpur's Nakla and Nalitabari upazilas, police said.

Of the victims, nine died on the spot and Sukur Ali passed away at Bhaluka Upazila Health Complex.

The bodies were handed over to the victims' families. The injured received treatment at the health complex, said Mamun-or-Rashid, officer-in-charge of Bhaluka Police Station.

The road was dug from morning till Thursday afternoon. But no warning sign was put up at the site, said Hanif Khan, a businessman from Meherabari area and also the vice-president of Sramik League's Bhaluka unit.

Local grocery shop owner Rubel Miah said, "Hearing a big sound, I rushed to the spot and started screaming for help."

People from nearby areas went to the spot and started the rescue operation, Rubel told this correspondent.

Sher Mahbob Murad, upazila nirbahi officer of Tarakandi, said they gave Tk 10,000 to Azizul's relatives to meet burial expenses. Financial assistance would be given to Azizul's mother, he added.

## Jubo League

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the same village over establishing supremacy, the police official said.

The attackers were men of Nobin, said the OC, adding that police were trying to detain them.

Additional police were deployed in the area to avoid any further untoward incident, he added.

## Around 250

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nearly 22,000, a significant rise on the same period in previous years.

Aid groups say the accelerating exodus is being driven by worsening living conditions for migrants in Libya and by fears the sea route to Europe could soon be closed to traffickers.

Prior to the latest fatal incident, the UN had estimated that at least 440 migrants had died trying to make the crossing from Libya to Italy since the start of 2017. Its refugee agency estimates total deaths crossing the Mediterranean at nearly 600.

Those figures, which are also sharply up on previous years, are based on a combination of bodies recovered and testimonies from survivors of shipwrecks: what no one knows is how many people die without any trace, as in the case of the latest apparent tragedy.

Despite the growing risks, migrants trying to reach Europe still stand a good chance of making it by getting on a trafficker's boat.

More than half a million got to Italy

in that fashion between late 2013 and the end of last year.

And if the trend of the opening weeks of 2017 continues, another 250,000 will have to be accommodated this year by Italy's over-stretched facilities for asylum seekers, according to Italian interior ministry projections.

Against that backdrop, Italy has stepped up cooperation with Libya by the aim of deterring boat departures by ensuring the north African country's own coastguard turns boats back to port before they reach international waters.

The plans involve equipping and training the Libyan coastguard and helping the former Italian colony to upgrade holding camps for migrants in Libya pending their deportation to their countries of origin.

But the moves have caused concern among human rights bodies because of the squalid, dangerous conditions in the detention camps, and the inherently unstable state of the conflict-scared country.

## Indian govt rejects

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briefing in New Delhi in reply to a pointed question.

Baglay was asked to respond to Mamata's remarks made during an interview with ABP Ananda on Thursday night that it was heard that the Teesta treaty might be signed on May 25 "but she had not been consulted so far".

"I don't have any clue about the discussions. I cannot put a seal of approval on the treaty at the cost of my state's interests," Mamata was quoted as saying.

The spokesman also wanted to know if the Indian government was consulting all the state governments concerned in resolving the unresolved issues with Bangladesh and if they would be invited to the highest-level

talks between India and Bangladesh during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to Delhi from April 7 to 10. The talks are scheduled for April 8.

Baglay said the federal Indian government's "approach had always been to consult and take on board stakeholders, including the state governments", and added that the landmark Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh could not have been passed in parliament and then implemented without the cooperation of all the stakeholders.

He said, "Hasina's forthcoming visit to India is going to be really a very important visit and we hope it will further consolidate mutually beneficial ties with Bangladesh."

## Upbeat Tigers

FROM PAGE 16

just three matches at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium, and all three were played in June 2010 during the Asia Cup. They lost those matches by six wickets to India, 126 runs to Pakistan and 139 runs to the home team and their opponents today, Sri Lanka. In the Pakistan match they conceded their second-highest ODI total -- 385 for seven.

"We played in the Asia Cup here, but it was a really bad performance. We want to give our best, and be up to the mark from the first ball," Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza said at the pre-match press conference yesterday. "If we can't do this, we must fight till the last ball. We have to keep the spirit, which I feel is present in the team. Those players who were in the Test team should be quite confident. I feel we can play well."

This being a day-night game, it will be interesting to see how the pitch behaves under lights and whether dew is a factor. Neither captain has had a lot of experience playing here, but thought that the pitch would be a good one for batting.

"We haven't played a lot of games here," Sri Lanka skipper Upul Tharanga said. "The last time we played was against Australia. Normally the Dambulla wicket is good for batting, but the ball tends to move a bit in the evening."

That may mean that winning the

toss and batting first will be the way to go, but with both teams traditionally reliant on spin, the evening dew may make it difficult. In other words, today's match may be a bit of a feeler for both sides in terms of tactics ahead of the second game here on Tuesday.

Although Bangladesh have included uncapped off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz in the squad at the eleventh hour, it is unlikely that he will get a look-in tomorrow. Instead, Sanjamul Islam is in line for a debut to form a two-man spin attack with Shakil Al Hasan. Subashis Roy, who bowled well in the Test series, is likely to come in, in place of Taskin Ahmed, to form a three-pronged pace attack with Mashrafe and Mustafizur Rahman.

Bangladesh have also lost 24 of their 27 matches in Sri Lanka, winning two and one being a no-result. The two matches they won were against Hong Kong in 2004, and more encouragingly they won their last game in Sri Lanka against the home side -- their only victory over the hosts in 16 attempts -- in March 2013 in Pallekelle. However, they lost the sides' last match in the 2015 World Cup. But as they have shown recently, past results are a poor indicator and today, both sides will look to hit the pitch running to gain the early edge in the three-match series.

## Police make

FROM PAGE 16

Masood ran over dozens of pedestrians and tourists on Westminster Bridge on Wednesday afternoon before crashing his car into parliament, where he managed to stab a police officer before being shot dead.

Lawmakers returned to work as normal on Thursday morning, even as forensic officers worked at the scene, but a review of parliamentary security is now underway.

Hundreds of people gathered in nearby Trafalgar Square late Thursday for a vigil led by Mayor Sadiq Khan who vowed that "Londoners will never be cowed by terrorism."

The death toll rose late Thursday after life support was withdrawn from a 75-year-old man injured in the attack, whom police named as Leslie Rhodes from south London.

The other victims were 48-year-old policeman Keith Palmer and, on the bridge, a 43-year-old British woman, Aysha Frade, who was on her way to pick up her two daughters, and an American citizen in his 50s, Kurt Cochran.

Police earlier said that five men and three women aged between 21 and 58 were arrested "on suspicion of preparation of terrorist acts". One woman was later released on bail.

Rowley gave no details of the new arrests, only to say that they took place in the West Midlands -- the area of the country that includes Birmingham -- and the north-west of England.

Born in Kent in southeast England, Masood was a British citizen with convictions for assault and possession of offensive weapons dating from 1983 to 2003.

According to The Sun tabloid, he married a Muslim woman in 2004 and moved the following year to Saudi Arabia to teach, returning in 2009.

Police said he went by numerous aliases, including, reportedly, Adrian Elms, while reports suggest he lived all over England, including in Luton and east London.

He was described as "a nice guy" by

## 'My name could have been on list of dead'

FROM PAGE 1

heard that people, particularly university students, started setting up barricades with trees, bricks and whatever else they could get.

Anxious, Rabindra Mohan Das, Ram's youngest son, was preparing to go to bed after dinner. Suddenly, some distant sounds of gunshots broke the stillness of the night.

"My elder brother told me: 'It might be coming from the Rajarbagh police station'. It was around 11:00pm," said Rabindra, now 60.

A little later, they heard more gunshots, this time from Pilkhana area. For the rest of the night, Rabindra experienced firsthand the horror unleashed by the Pakistan army on the hall students and staff.

"My name could have been on the list of the dead," he said pointing to the martyrs' memorial inside the hall, "It was sheer luck that I survived."

Rabindra, who went on LPR from the Provost's Office of Jagannath Hall last month, shared the memories of the fateful night with The Daily Star recently.

In 1971, he was a class-eight student at New Paltan High School in Azimpur. The family used to live in the staff quarter by the western side of the boundary wall of the hall. Around 20 other families lived there. Yards away, there was a tin-roofed dormitory for students.

Having heard the gunshots, Rabindra came out of the room to see what was going on.

"Soldiers were surrounding the hall," he saw, as he cringed in fear.

He went back to the room and within seconds the power went off. Soon, tanks and truckloads of soldiers broke through the boundary wall opposite the UOTC building (now BNCC).

They also entered the dormitory through the north and the south gates and fanned out.

"There was firing and explosion. Rat-a-tat-tat, boom, boom! Crack! It was deafening," said Rabindra, having goose bumps on his cheek.

Tracer fire lit up the night sky. The sharp cracks of rifles with shelling of mortars were all around. Operation Searchlight had just begun.

"Amid constant sounds of gunshot, we heard screams and voices pleading for life," Rabindra said.

His elder brother Fanindra Mohan Das, a lab assistant of East Pakistan University of Engineering and Technology (now Buet), Fanindra's wife and their little son were also at

home. His father, Ram Bihari Das, who used to work at the Provost's office of the hall, used to stay in the office room at night.

Bullets were flying overhead; some struck the tin roof. Panicked, they hid under the cot, but the CRACK and BOOM got louder and louder. This continued for a while.

He was not ready for what came next.

Around 2:30am, a group of seven to eight soldiers approached their home. They dragged night guard Shiba Pada Kuri along. He was crying and calling Rabindra's brother for help.

But before they could offer any help, the soldiers broke open their doors.

"Tum log kaun ho? (who are you people?)," one soldier asked Fanindra.

"Hum toh sweeper hai sahab; drain saaf karte hai (we're sweepers, we clean drains)," he replied.

"Idhar malaun kidhar hai... chhatra kidhar hai? (where are the Hindus and the students?)"

"Yeha par koi chhatra hai nehi. Malaun chala geya... (no student lives here. Hindus are all gone...)," was his reply.

The soldiers then beat Fanindra with rifles and took him with them to search the rooms.

Fanindra could speak Urdu and English a bit, which he learnt while working at a telephone exchange. Rabindra too understood Urdu a bit and all the conversations between the soldier and his brother took place in front of him.

Around half an hour after taking his brother, who somehow managed to flee, the soldiers returned. This time around 25 of them. They set their home on fire. The family members came out and Rabindra ran towards the cowshed to rescue their five cows.

He took some of the cows out of the cowshed and tried to take them towards the corner of the playground for safety. Then he saw a huge number of soldiers taking position.

"I couldn't believe my eyes. The soldiers were all in position with arms. I was baffled and didn't know what to do," he said.

They caught him.

"They could have shot me. Instead they caught me," Rabindra said.

Thirty other people were caught. All of them, including Rabindra, were taken to a room used as a cowshed that belonged to Dabir Uddin, the then chief engineer of Dhaka University.

It was not dawn yet. One soldier drew a line in front of the door of the room and thundered in Urdu: "Iska

bahar jaiyega to goli maar dunga (if you cross the line, we'll shoot you)."

"We were all like corpses," Rabindra said, adding that there were a few students among the captives.

As the day broke, the soldiers came to the room. Out of the 31, they sorted 15 who were relatively healthier. They forced them to carry the bodies lying inside the halls and put those in a place used for students' long-jump game, a place later marked as the killing field.

Then the Pakistan army asked the 15 to stand in front of the dead and then shot them.

"We saw it from the room," Rabindra said, recalling those moments with his eyes closed. After a brief pause, he opened his eyes and went on: "I was trembling in fear, crying."

It was now the turn for the rest 16.

Three relatively older soldiers came and counted them: one, two, three....

"I thought my time has come. Observing me intensely, one soldier hit my waist with his rifle. I was thrown a few feet away," he said.

Lying and groaning in pain, Rabindra tried to hide himself in a small hole-like place.

Then the soldiers took the 15 to the place and forced them to carry corpses from different places. This done, they lined them up and shot them down.

"It was all happening before my eyes," he said.

The soldiers waited there for 15 to 20 minutes and then left.

Rabindra came out of his hiding place and saw a man in the heap of bodies wave at him. He ran to him. The man wanted some water. Rabindra rushed to the pond, about 100 yards from the place. He cupped his hands and tried to bring some water. But by the time he reached where the man was lying, all the water dripped through his fingers.

Then he found a broken pot and carried some water to him. But the man breathed his last as he tried to pour some in his mouth.

After the soldiers left, those who survived the massacre started looking for their loved ones. But there was hardly anyone around, only bodies and scattered flesh.

"Oh! I've never seen so many corpses," said Rabindra.

But he is lucky by all counts. His father, brother, sister-in-law and nephew were all alive. In the afternoon, they left the hall fearing that the soldiers would return.

"We left the hall for an uncertain future ahead," he said.