

Business Awards

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Institution, Enterprise of the Year, Outstanding Woman in Business, and Business Person of the Year.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith is expected to hand over the trophies to the winners.

DHL Express, the world's leading logistics company, and The Daily Star, the leading English newspaper of Bangladesh, initiated the awards in 2000.

The awards were created to recognise and generate public recognition of the achievements and positive contributions of businesses and individuals, who have not only grown but have expanded the economy with them.

The awards also aim to create an environment of excellence and competitiveness that would drive the members of the business community to achieve greater heights of productivity, efficiency, financial discipline and modern management.

Over the years, the awards shaped up into the most prestigious event in Bangladesh's business community. Past winners include business leaders Samson H Chowdhury of Square Group, Amjad Khan Chowdhury of Pran-RFL Group, Muhammed Aziz Khan of Summit Group, and Kutubuddin Ahmed, chairman of Envoy Group.

Enterprises such as ACI, BSRM, MM Ispahani, Bengal Plastic Industries, and Meghna Group of Industries, as well as financial institutions like EBL, Mutual Trust Bank, Pubali Bank, Brac Bank, City Bank and IDLC were also awarded.

Lifetime achievement awards were also bestowed on those who have made a difference through their service. The previous winners in the category include the country's first finance secretary M Matuli Islam, late MA Samad of Bangladesh General Insurance Company, and Laila Rahman Kabir of Kedarpur Tea Company.

Ensure proper

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government has been able to contain the twin demons with an iron hand.

"Now our fight against the narcotics is underway."

She directed the government employees to create mass awareness against these social menaces.

Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam and BASA President and Information Secretary Abdul Malek also spoke at the function.

Later, the PM witnessed a cultural function performed by renowned artists of the country.

'SERVE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE'

Earlier in the day, the PM at another programme urged the elected public representatives to serve the country and its people to make Bangladesh a developed and prosperous country.

Hasina was addressing a programme after newly elected Gazipur Mayor Jahangir Alam took oath of office. The premier administered the oath at the Shapla Hall of her office, reports UNB.

Seventy newly elected councillors of general wards and female councillors of the reserved seats of Gazipur City Corporation were also sworn in at the same venue.

LGRD Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain administered the oath to the councillors.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, also the Awami League general secretary, was present.

AL candidate Jahangir was elected mayor in the GCC polls held on June 26.

Court rejects

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in jail for over two years without trial. So, his client should be granted bail in the case.

Meanwhile, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saifuzzaman Hiru yesterday transferred the case against eight militants to the Anti-Terrorism Tribunal for its trial, said Sheikh Rokibur Rahman, general recording officer at the CMM Court.

On July 23, Humayun Kabir, an inspector of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit and also the investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate Nurunnahar Yasmin, accusing the eight.

The accused are: Jahangir Alam alias Rajib Gandhi, recruiter of the café attackers; Rashed alias Rash, one of the planners; Sohel Mahfuz, grenade supplier; arms suppliers Mizanur Rahman alias Boro Mizan and Hadisur Rahman Sagor, and Rakibul Islam, so-called religious trainer, Shahriful Islam Khaled and Mamunur Rashid Ripon.

Of them, the first six are now in jail while the two others are on the run. The IO appealed to the court to issue arrest warrants for the two and an order to attach their properties.

The investigators, however, didn't name Hasnat in the charge sheet as they found no evidence against him after analysing accounts from witnesses and arrested militants.

So, the IO appealed to the court to relieve him from the charges.

On July 1, 2016, seventeen foreigners were among the 20 hostages massacred in the café attack -- nine Italians, seven Japanese, one Indian. Two police officers also lost their lives as they responded immediately.

Road crash, then what?

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Analysing the police data on road accidents in around the last 15 years, the Buet's Accident Research Institute found that 47 percent accidents took place due to careless driving; 37 percent for over-speeding and 16 percent for other reasons.

According to a police report, 2,513 people were killed and 1,898 injured in 2,562 road accidents last year.

However, road safety campaigners and experts put the number higher because police count the deaths only when cases are filed.

According to Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, 7,397 people were killed and 16,193 injured in 4,979 road accidents last year.

NARAYANGANJ ACCIDENT
Following an order of the Road Transport and Highways Division, a four-member probe committee, led by the BRTA director (road safety), was formed on April 27.

The committee visited the spot, talked to witnesses and passengers and came to know that the bus, MD Yasin (Dhaka Metro-Ba-14-0826), hit a rickshaw near Madanpur Chowrasta on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway and started driving recklessly.

Driver Shipon engaged into an altercation with some passengers as he was talking over phone while driving. He hit a parked lorry after overtaking a microbus in Tipurdi area. The fitness and tax documents of the lorry (Dhaka Metro-Ta-81-0279) had expired too.

After the accident, the driver managed to flee the scene. He has been on the run since then.

As per the registration certificate of the bus, its wheelbase (the distance between the centres of the front and rear wheels) was supposed to be 8,500 millimetre long and it should have 41 seats. But the probe committee found the wheelbase was 8,960 millimetre long and it had 48 seats.

Chassis of the bus was widened by around four feet. Its fitness certificate had expired on May 10, 2015 and the tax token on June 26 that year. The probe committee did not find any document about the vehicle's route permit.

The probe identified reckless driv-

ing and illegal overtaking of the bus driver as the main cause of the accident.

It also found plying of rickshaws on the highway, driving vehicles without updated documents, illegal parking of the lorry and changes to the bus' body and chassis as circumstantial causes of the accident.

A day after the accident, a case was filed against the bus driver with Sonargaon Police Station. Later, the case was transferred to Kanchpur Highway Police Station as the accident spot falls under its purview. The BRTA suspended registrations of both the vehicles as they didn't have updated documents.

The probe committee on March 7 sent its report to the road transport ministry with several recommendations, including taking legal actions against the bus driver and owner, said Mahbub-E-Rabbani, director (road safety) of BRTA and also the head of the probe body.

The ministry on April 3 asked the BRTA to take tough actions against the bus driver and owner, said Kamrul Ahsan, joint secretary of the ministry.

He said they asked the BRTA to cancel the registration of the bus, file a case against the bus owner and the workshop concerned for widening the chassis and initiate criminal proceedings against the driver for driving the bus without a valid fitness certificate.

Talking to The Daily Star, Kayum Ali Sarder, officer-in-charge of Kanchpur Highway Police Station, said they verified the ownership of the bus with the BRTA. Police were investigating to find the original owner of the bus as its ownership changed, he added.

The BRTA probe committee said as per the registration certificate, Uttara Finance and Investment Limited is the owner of the bus.

The current owner of the bus is one Parvin Begum of Narayanganj's Siddhirganj. She paid all the installments of money as per the lease agreement with Uttara Finance, said the probe report.

However, Parvin didn't complete the procedure to change the ownership of the bus, it added.

Road accidents

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while the three wheeler was going to Taltali from Amtali, said Nurul Islam Badal, officer-in-charge of Amtali Police Station.

The deceased were identified as Salma Akhter Popi, 30, assistant teacher of Tarikata Government Primary School in Amtali, Sanu Mridha, 70, and Chan Mia, 48, both from Borobogi village, Rustam Ali, 36, of Chaula village, Abul Hossain Fakir, 65, of Botipara, four-month-old Oli Ullah and driver of the three-wheeler Abu Hanif, 45.

Hanif died at Patauakhal General Hospital, said Sankar Prasad Odhikari, the health officer in Amtali.

Two of the injured, Fahima Akhter, 30, mother of Oli Ullah, and Jasim Uddin, were admitted to the hospital as their condition was stated to be critical, he added.

Fire fighters brought the bodies to Amtali Health Complex from the spot.

OC Badal said they also visited the spot which is prone to accidents amid rain due to poor visibility.

"We have seized the bus but its drive

and the helper managed to flee," he said.

In Sylhet, five people, including a child and a woman, were killed and three others injured in a head-on collision between a truck and a microbus on Dhaka-Sylhet highway's Ilaspur area of Osmaninagar upazila.

Four of the victims died on the spot while the other at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, reports our Sylhet correspondent. Of the deceased, only the name of the driver of the microbus could be known immediately. He was Amir Ali, 40.

Ali Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Osmaninagar Police Station, said the accident took place around 3:50pm apparently due to poor visibility amid heavy rain.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College for autopsies, he said.

In Chapainawabganj, a biker was killed after a truck hit his motorcycle on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid Land Port highway in Shantibag area around 8:45am.

BNP voices concern

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The HC issued a similar order a few days ago for Sylhet City Corporation.

Nasim Hossain, president of Sylhet city BNP, said, "In Sylhet, we do not have any problem with any political parties as we live in harmony, but we are worried about police filing cases against us, arresting our men and intimidating our leaders and activists."

"We talked to the Sylhet Metropolitan Police commissioner and returning officer about the issue but they did not take any steps."

This view was echoed by the BNP camps in Rajshahi and Barisal city corporations.

RAJSHAHI
Shahriar Khondoker Nayan, a Rajshahi city Jubo Dal activist, was set to be a polling agent for BNP mayoral nominee Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul.

A resident of Rajshahi's Pathanpara, he was trained by the party for the purpose.

His brother Abul Bashar told The Daily Star that he was not accused in any case.

But a group of plainclothes men, claiming to police, picked him up from Fire Brigade intersection in the city on Monday night, Bashar added.

"We looked for him at all the 21 police stations in Rajshahi the next day, but we could find him," he said, adding that he learnt on Wednesday that Nayan was kept at the Pabna jail.

Rushing to Pabna, about 110 km from the city, Bashar came to know

that Nayan was produced before a court in a case filed with Pabna Sadar Police Station on January 1.

Bashar also came to know that the case was filed accusing around 850 BNP men, most of whom were unnamed, of vandalism.

"My brother has never been to Pabna. He has nothing to do there."

Police did not mention the location of his arrest in the court documents. As the location of his arrest was missing, the hearing on his bail prayer at Pabna judicial Magistrate court was withheld yesterday until July 30, said Shafiqul Islam Somapto, Rajshahi district Jubo Dal general secretary, who went to Pabna to see about Nayan.

Two other Rajshahi BNP men, Jewel Rana of Kedur Mor area and Jahangir Alam of ward 15, were also arrested in the case.

At a press conference at the BNP office in Rajshahi, BNP mayoral nominee Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul yesterday said detectives and policemen were picking up BNP men from different areas of the city every night.

The picked up BNP men are later handed over to police of other upazilas of Rajshahi and other districts including Pabna, Natore and Chapainawabganj, he said.

"The BNP is a victim of biased police, administration and election commission," Bulbul said.

He provided reporters with a list of 67 BNP men, who were arrested in cases filed in other districts. He added that at least 150 BNP men had been

OC Kayum said Parvin, claiming herself to be the owner of the bus, filed a prayer with a Narayanganj court seeking custody of the vehicle and the court ordered police to verify her claim.

Parvin told police that Shipon was driving the bus when the accident took place, the police official mentioned.

As per the probe report, Shipon is from Paschim Laxmipur village in Laxmipur.

The OC said Parvin took away the bus from police last month following the court's order in this regard.

He said they would submit the report, either the charge sheet or the final report, in the accident case once the probe is completed.

BLAME GAME

A 13 kilometre stretch of Dhaka-Chittagong highway, stretching from Kanchpur to Meghna Bridge, falls under the purview of Kanchpur Highway Police Station. The unfit bus ran on the route for around three years before the accident.

Asked why the police didn't take any action against the bus, OC Kayum said they have no permanent check post in the area and the temporary ones are set up upon directives from the higher authorities.

He said it was the duty of BRTA to take action against the bus operator as it gives fitness clearance certificates.

But a BRTA official said they cancelled the registration of the bus in line with the ministry's directives and cases were filed against the driver, bus owner and workshop owner.

It was the highway police who should have taken action against the "unfit bus" because the BRTA has very little to do if any vehicle don't take annual fitness certificate, he said requesting anonymity.

The official said around 10 lakh vehicles are supposed to obtain fitness clearance certificates annually, but on average around 6.5 lakh do so.

So it is the responsibility of the highway police to trace violators of rules and take action against them, he added.

Our Narayanganj correspondent Sanad Saha contributed to this report.

Marine survey

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stock of fish and other aquatic resources which are feared to be overexploited.

It will also establish the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), the highest level at which a natural resource can be routinely used without long-term depletion, said Md Sharif Uddin, the national project director of Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Capacity Building Project (BMFCBP) under the Department of Fisheries (DoF).

The survey will assess availability of pelagic, mesopelagic and bottom fish up to 1000-metre depth, for which Bangladesh's marine research vessel Meen Shandhani is not equipped, said Sharif.

"This is also going to be a big training [opportunity] as 15 Bangladesh scientists are going to be on the voyage," he added.

On Bangladesh's own marine research vessel, Sharif said, "We can assess fish stock up to 200-metre depth using Meen Shandhani."

The Nansen vessel is coming to Bangladesh under an agreement made between the Bangladesh government and UN's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on March 28.

Housing seven different laboratories packed with high tech equipment, the vessel, owned by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, is jointly operated by the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research and the FAO.

"The work of the research vessel Dr Fridtjof Nansen is an important part of the FAO's support to member countries. It provides vital information for the management of marine resources in FAO member countries. In many countries, the Nansen surveys offer the only credible source of fishery-independent data for assessment," the

FAO said in a statement.

The Dr Fridtjof Nansen vessel is the only marine research ship in the world that flies the UN flag, said the FAO in a statement, after signing the agreement with Economic Relations Division (ERD) this year.

The UN agency said the objective of the surveys were to assist developing countries in assembling scientific data critical to sustainable fisheries management and study how a changing climate is affecting our oceans.

A Nansen research vessel last came to Bangladeshi waters in 1979-80 to survey marine resources.

Sharif said the ship will leave Bangladesh on August 19 for Myanmar after completing the survey in Bangladesh.

The DoF began to carry out its own survey in the Bay of Bengal through the research vessel Meen Sandhani from November 2016, nearly three decades after the last research vessel went out of order in 1989.

Apart from thousands of mechanised and non-mechanised fishing boats in Bangladesh's marine waters, nearly 250 other industrial fishing trawlers also ply the 40-metre deep sea.

The government also recently gave permission for vessels to catch tuna and pelagic fish beyond the 200-metre depth.

Meanwhile, Sharif said a preliminary assessment report by Meen Sandhani would be done by December this year.

Through 16 trips, the Meen Sandhani has detected presence of 349 species of fish, including 23 types of shrimp, 16 types of crabs and 12 types of mollusk in the Bay of Bengal.

Marine catches accounted for 15 percent of the total fish production at 41.34 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2016-17, according to DoF.

Stop 'copying'

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Among the few distinguishing features is that Australia's stars are white, rather than red and the flag also features an extra star with seven points representing the Australian states and territories.

New Zealand's flag was adopted in 1902, five decades before Australia's current flag was officially recognised in 1954. Though various versions of the Australian flag have been used since 1901.

Peters' comments come at a delicate time in trans-Tasman relations, after the detention of a 17-year-old New Zealander in an adult detention facility

in Melbourne, Australia, earlier this month that sparked outrage in New Zealand's capital, Wellington.

Australia has deported hundreds of New Zealanders in recent years, but the incident involving the 17-year-old boy marked a low point in relations between firm allies, according to some analysts.

It's not the first time New Zealand has wrestled with its flag design -- in 2016 the country held a referendum over whether to ditch the Union Jack and switch to a silver fern design.

New Zealand voted to stick with the current version -- but only after spending \$17.6 million on the referendum.

Coal mining

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the ACC office in the district yesterday sent the documents and evidence it collected from Barapukuria coalmine to its Dhaka headquarters, reports our correspondent there.

A team from the ACC Dinajpur office visited the mine on Monday, the day the ACC formed a probe committee to investigate coal going missing from the Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) yard.

On Tuesday night, the BCMCL filed a case against its 19 officials over the alleged disappearance of 144,644 tonnes of coal worth Tk 230 crore from the BCMCL, said ACC's Deputy Director Benzir Ahmed.

The ACC is yet to appoint an investigation officer for the case, said an ACC top official preferring to be unnamed.

According to the case statement, some coal was explored during road development for the mine before 2005. Some of it was sold, while the rest was stockpiled.

Since September 10, 2005, the mine began commercial exploration and maintained the stock by adding to the previous stock.

Between 2001 and July 19 this year, 1,01,66,042.33 tonnes were extracted. Of that, about 66,87,029 tonnes were supplied to the Barapukuria power plant while 33,19,280.37 tonnes were sold to various private companies. Another 12,088.27 tonnes were used by the mine's boiler.

On July 19 this year, there should have been a stock of 1,47,644 tonnes, but there were only 3,000 tonnes, said the case statement.

This means, there was a deficit of 1,44,644 tonnes worth about Tk 230 crore, it added.

It appears that some of the accused in the case might have long been involved in the theft of the coal in connivance with previous manage-

PCJSS man

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PCJSS-MN Larma's internal conflict.

Amir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Baghaichhari Police Station, said police recovered the body from the spot and sent it to hospital for an autopsy.

In the last eight months, about 28 people from four groups were shot dead.

ments, the case statement read.

After the alleged disappearance of the coal surfaced, Petrobangla formed a three-member enquiry committee led by its director (operation and mine) Engr Md Kamruzzaman.

In the initial probe, Petrobangla found negligence by some key officials. It removed four officials last week.

The 525MW Barapukuria coal-fired power plant was shut down on Sunday due to lack of coal, a direct fallout of the coal going missing from the mine yard.

Quader holds

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general elections scheduled for late this year.

"Talks over the matter [expansion of the alliance] were being held and more talks will be held," the sources said without giving further details.

Contacted, Kader Siddique declined to make any comment on his meeting with Quader.

Sources said the BNA would hold a programme marking the National Mourning Day on August 15, the day when Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members was brutally assassinated by some disgruntled army officers in 1975.

Huda requested Quader to attend the programme as the chief guest, the sources added.

On Tuesday, during a brief conversation, the CPB president told Quader that they launched a platform of eight left leaning parties to strengthen the "alternative political force against bad politics".

On July 22, eight parties -- Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Bangladesher Biplobi Workers Party, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist), Gana Sanghati Andolon, Bangladesher United Communist League, Ganatantrik Biplobi Party and Bangladesher Samajtantrik Andolon -- launched a new platform under the banner of "Left Democratic Alliance (LDA)".

The ruling AL and its archrival BNP are now engaged in making efforts to include the newly formed platform in their respective camps to gain victory in the next general election.