



The busy Kuril Bishwa road area has been an accident hotspot but does not seem to deter people from jaywalking. They ignore their own safety even when a footbridge is only a few feet away. In July last year, a youth was run over by a bus there while the death of two students on the airport road sparked a nationwide road safety protest. But the situation remains unchanged. Clockwise from top left, A woman along with two children hurries across the road to avoid being hit. Some others signal to stop oncoming vehicles so that they can safely get on the other side. At the same place, two men have a close shave with a bus. The photos were taken near Nikunja-1 yesterday.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SHAHI'S COMMENT ON GIRLS' EDUCATION Criticism continues to pour in

STAR REPORT

Political parties and rights organisations continued to criticise Hefajat-e-Islam chief Shah Ahmed Shafi for his comment on girls' education.

Addressing a rally in Chattogram on Friday, Shafi made parents promise that they won't send their daughters to school.

"At most, you can allow them to study up to class IV or V, so that they can maintain their husbands' accounts and can write letters to them," he further said, igniting a firestorm of protests from various quarters.

Such type of call is unwanted, unwelcome and regrettable, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said in a press statement yesterday. "I was stunned and surprised by his [Shafi's] comment."

The BNP leader said such remarks in the 21st century will only embarrass Bangladeshis in front of the international community.

Mentioning that there is no conflict between girls' education and religion, Fakhrul said BNP thinks development will not be possible without educating and empowering country's girls and women.

He also underscored the need for women education and said the role of mothers as a child's first teacher in shaping their perspective is crucial.

In a press release, Left Democratic Alliance (LDA) said Shafi's statement has astounded the nation. It might create a security crisis for female students, who are pursuing higher education, LDA said, demanding steps against the Hefajat chief.

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Quader wastes no time

Calls high-level meeting of road transport ministry today; expected to issue important directives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader is expected to give some vital directives to his top officials today, aiming to bring discipline in road transport sector and expedite ongoing projects.

Quader called a high-profile meeting to divulge his directives and messages, within a week of taking helm of the ministry for a third term, two officials said.

He called all chiefs of departments or agencies under his ministry, all directors of ongoing projects and zone chiefs of Roads and Highways Department today.

The meeting will start at 11am and is expected to have more than 40 high officials in attendance, they said.

The minister will inquire about current conditions of different important projects, and is expected to give necessary directives on the basis of priority he has already set, an official said.

Road safety issue will also be an important agenda of the meeting, the official said.

Another official said this is the peak season for construction work, and the minister is expected to ask project directors to expedite project works.

He said the minister already held a meeting with a limited number of ministry officials on Thursday, and vowed to adopt a zero-tolerance policy against corruption.

He may give the similar message at today's meeting, he added.

Talking to journalists on Thursday, Quader said bringing back discipline in the road and transport sector will be his first priority.

Quader, also general secretary of ruling Awami League, has been at the helm of the ministry for more than seven years. At a programme on October 22 last year, he admitted to his failure in bringing discipline to the road transport sector.

Blatant indiscipline in the road transport sector made national headlines when tens of thousands of students took to the street across the country demanding road safety, following deaths of two college students in road accident in the capital on July 29 last year.

Jail food adulterators

Mayor Khokon asks authorities

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) mayor Sayeed Khokon yesterday ordered authorities concerned to hand down jail terms alongside fines to those found guilty of food adulteration.

"If anyone is found guilty of food adulteration, they will be sentenced to various jail terms alongside fines," he said while talking to reporters after inaugurating an anti-adulteration special crash programme in the city's Dhanmondi area.

"In anti-adulteration drives, we had fined offenders, but failed to prevent it. So, we've taken a strict decision to award jail terms to those who are found guilty," he said.

DSCC chief executive officer Mostafizur Rahman, chief health officer Brigadier General Sheikh Mohammad Salauddin and high officials were present.

A mobile court fined Star Kabab Tk 39,500 and Sultan's Dine Tk 1 lakh in Satmasjid Road area for selling unhealthy food items.

MAN LYNCHED IN CTG

Former BCL leaders demand immediate arrest of Sohel's killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday demanded immediate arrest and punishment of those involved in the killing of former BCL central leader and Chattogram Commerce College unit's general secretary Md Mohiuddin Sohel.

The demand was made at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium in the capital. At least 30 former leaders of BCL were present at the event.

Reading out a written statement, BCL's former president Mahmud Hasan Ripon alleged that BCL central committee leader Sohel was brutally murdered through an orchestrated conspiracy.

"The killers are also spreading propaganda. We strongly condemn this, and

demand immediate arrest of and exemplary punishment for Sohel's killers," he said.

Responding to journalists, Awami Juba League's Publication Secretary Iqbal Mahmud Bablu claimed that some locals involved in criminal activities, including land grabbing and drug trade, had targeted Sohel due to his positive role in society.

"Sohel re-organised an anti-drug social platform called 'Dishari', which was originally founded at Pahartoli, Chattogram in 1996. He stopped illegal business of a former Jamaat leader and now Jatiya Party leader Osman Khan," said Bablu, also a former joint secretary of BCL.

On January 7, angry traders and locals beat former education secretary of BCL central committee Md Mohiuddin Sohel, 35, to death for alleged involvement extortion at Pahartali Railway Bazar in the port city.

Robbery attempt leaves five of a family injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five persons including a Navy official were injured in Tafari area of Turag on the outskirts of the capital early yesterday, by miscreants who were apparently attempting robbery.

Among the victims, Lieutenant Commander Abdullah Al Momin, his brother Abdullah Ul Amin and father Ali Hossain are undergoing treatment at Combined Military Hospital while his wife Hafsana Begum and his mother Firoza Begum left the hospital after primary treatment.

Some five people entered the flat on the first-floor of a four-storey building around 1:30am with weapons, said Latifa Biswas, cousin and neighbour of Abdullah and daughter of former minister of fisheries and livestock Muhammad Abdul Latif Biswas.

Hafsana said the miscreants entered the flat breaking the main gate, but faced resistance from the lieutenant commander.

They hit him and his family members with rods, but as neighbours came forward

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Truck driver confesses attempting to murder Ahona in 'self-defence'

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The truck driver responsible for injuring Ahona Rahman Lucky has confessed attempting to murder the television and film actress "in self-defence" after the accident involving her vehicle.

Sumon Mia, 27, yesterday confessed to a magistrate that he made the attempt to escape arrest or mob beating when Ahona tried to climb on his vehicle.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abu Sufian Md Noman recorded his confession after Uttara Police Station Sub-inspector Humayun Kabir, also the investigation officer, produced him at his chamber.

After recording Sumon's statement, the court ordered to send him to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj.

Sumon was arrested in Ashulia around 4:30am on Saturday, on

information from his 16-year-old helper, who was held in Uttara on Friday night, police said.

Md Rumon, the helper, gave a confessional statement before another magistrate on Saturday, and was later sent to jail.

On Wednesday, Ahona and her cousin were driving home from Old Dhaka around 4am when a sand-laden truck hit her car in Uttara sector-7.

Ahona came down from the car and charged the trucker. At one stage of the altercation, the truck driver tried to drive off and the actress tried to climb on to the vehicle.

He sped off with Ahona hanging by the door, and snaked the vehicle at high speed to throw her off for around one kilometre. She was severely injured when the truck flipped over and she fell on some stones at Uttara sector-12.



This footpath belongs to traders, or at least this is what is seen here. The photo was taken near the newly-built terminal at Sadarghat in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Schoolchildren take part in a human chain demanding the highest punishment for the killers of three girls in Dhaka. The accused attempted to rape the girls -- two five-year-olds and one two years of age -- before they murdered them recently. The protest was organised by Kendrio Khelaghar Asar in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

State law officers to resign soon

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said that all law officials of the state, except for the attorney general, will be asked to resign within a few days.

"We will ask additional and assistant attorney generals, public pleaders and assistant public pleaders, government pleaders and assistant government pleaders to resign from their respective posts in a few days," the law minister said.

"We will pick those who are qualified and dedicated for the posts, excluding the hybrid law officials," he said.

The law minister said this while addressing a programme marking Bangabandhu's homecoming day (January 10), held in the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in Dhaka.

Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad, a pro-AL lawyers' organi-

sation, organised the programme attended by railways minister Nurul Islam Sujan, housing and public works minister SM Rezaul Karim, and industries minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, among others.

In a separate programme yesterday, the minister said the government has already initiated the process to bring BNP senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman back to Bangladesh.

"The government is trying to bring back all fugitive convicts including Tarique Rahman to the country, to put them on trial," he said while talking to reporters inaugurating a training course for newly-appointed assistant judges at the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) in Dhaka.

The government is holding discussions in this regard with governments of the countries where the fugitives are staying, he said.

Teenager dies falling off 9-storey building in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenage boy died yesterday morning after he fell from the roof of a nine-storey building in the capital's Mohammadpur area.

According to police, 19-year-old Mishaal Hossain Ovi came to the building named Moyur Villa two hours before the incident. He is a resident of Mirpur DOHS area.

Mukul Ranjan, sub-inspector of Mohammadpur Police Station, said they were told that Mishaal fell off while he was taking a photograph, standing on the security railing on top of the building's roof.

However, police are investigating to ascertain whether he fell off accidentally, died by suicide, or was pushed off by someone, he said.

Police and witnesses also said Mishaal and several other youths, including a female resident of the building, were having a casual conversation on the rooftop in the morning, before Mishaal fell off and sustained critical injuries around 10:45am.

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