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NOAKHALI HOSPITAL

# Nine injured in ceiling fall

5 of them patients; the govt health facility was declared abandoned 3yrs ago

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Nine people, including five children, were injured after a part of the ceiling broke off and fell on them in the children's ward of Noakhali General Hospital yesterday morning.

According to witnesses, a part of the ceiling suddenly collapsed with a crashing sound around 7:00am, instantly injuring the nine.

The five injured children were patients at the ward. The other four people injured were their attendees. They were taken to another ward of the hospital to receive treatment for their injuries, said Syed Mohiuddin Abdul Azim, Resident Medical Officer of the hospital.

The injured are Rafi, 2, Md Ismail, 5, Imam Uddin, 5, Sumaiya, 12, Md Rasel 16, Md Ibrahim, 50, Parul Begum, 47, Badsha, 35 and Rozina Begum, 20.

On information, fire fighters rushed to the scene and evacuated everyone else from the ward, local fire station officer Mohammad Humayun said.

After the incident, panic gripped the patients and their attendees. Many attendees were seen leaving the hospital with the children they were attending.

Constructed in 1968, the hospital, including its children's ward, was declared abandoned three years ago,

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Concrete debris lying on the floor and furniture at the paediatric ward of Noakhali General Hospital after part of the ceiling collapsed around 7:00am yesterday injuring nine people, including five children.

PHOTO: NURUL AMIN

# 64 Bangladeshis stranded in boat for 12 days

REUTERS, Tunis

A rescue boat carrying around 75 migrants, most of them from Bangladesh, has been stuck off Tunisia for 12 days after authorities refused to let them disembark, the Red Crescent said on Tuesday.

The Egyptian boat rescued the migrants in Tunisian waters, but authorities in the governorate of Medinine say its migrant centres are too overcrowded to allow them to come ashore, leaving the vessel 25km from the coastal city of Zarzis.

A government source said the migrants had refused food and medical aid and were demanding that they be allowed to cross into Europe -- their likely target, hoping to reach the chance of a better life, when they set off.

Red Crescent official Mongi Slim said doctors had reached the boat to provide some medical help, but others had repeatedly refused any aid.

"After 12 days at sea, the migrants are in a bad condition," he told Reuters.

Among the group who set off from Libya, 64 are from Bangladesh and the rest are from Morocco, Sudan and Egypt, the Red Crescent said. The details of their rescue were not immediately clear.

Neighbouring Libya's west coast is a

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# Myanmar broke its promises

Foreign minister says on Rohingya return

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Myanmar has not kept its pledge of creating conditions conducive to Rohingya repatriation, and is spreading lies about Bangladesh, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

"In recent times, the media published reports of a Myanmar minister saying that Bangladesh was responsible for the delay in Rohingya repatriation; Bangladesh is not cooperating. Such a statement is blatantly false," he told reporters after a meeting with foreign diplomats at state guest house Padma in the capital.

He referred to a statement by Kyaw Tint Swe, minister for the Office of the State Counselor, Myanmar, who during a recent visit to Japan said Bangladesh was not cooperating with Myanmar in its repatriation efforts and not providing residence cards among all refugees who had fled Myanmar's western region.

Abdul Momen yesterday referred to a report by the Emergency Response and Assessment Team from ASEAN that says only 500,000 Rohingyas had fled the violence in Myanmar.

"This figure is totally wrong. Since August 2017, more than 740,000 Rohingyas had fled to Bangladesh. In total, there are 1.1 million Rohingyas living here," the minister said.

The ASEAN team has surveyed only two out of 800 villages in Rakhine and said the situation was good and Myanmar was prepared for repatriation.

"Basically, Myanmar has not kept its pledge... They have not done anything about it.

"So, what Myanmar is saying is not true. Myanmar is our friend, our neighbour. We want a peaceful resolution, but how can we swallow [sic] such blatant falsehood [by Myanmar]?"

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# Tarique asks BNP MPs to be vocal in JS

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP lawmakers have been directed by the party's acting Chairman Tarique Rahman to be vocal during today's budget session in parliament, said party insiders.

After a six-year gap, BNP MPs will join the budget session of the parliament that started on Tuesday.

Tarique has asked the lawmakers to play a vibrant role in the session, a senior leader of the party, wishing anonymity, said.

On Monday night, Tarique gave the directive through a Skype meeting with senior party leaders at BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office.

Tarique also asked those leaders to form a "Shadow parliamentary committee" to advice the lawmakers on parliamentary affairs.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, standing

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# People eating 5gm of plastic every week!



AFP, Paris

People worldwide could be ingesting five grammes of microscopic plastic particles every week, equivalent in weight to a credit card, researchers said yesterday.

Coming mostly from tap and especially bottled water, nearly invisible bits of polymer were also found in shellfish, beer and salt, scientists and the University of Newcastle in Australia reported.

The findings, drawn from 52 peer-reviewed studies, are the first to estimate the sheer weight of plastics consumed by individual humans: about 250 grammes, or half-a-pound, over the course of a year.

Another study calculated that the average American eats and drinks in about 45,000 plastics particles smaller than 130 microns annually, while breathing in roughly the same number.

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ROAD CRASHES

# 25,526 killed in last 10 yrs

Quader tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total 25,526 people got killed while 19,763 suffered injuries in road accidents over the past decade, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

On an average, 2,500 people die every year in road accidents across the country, Quader said in a scripted answer to a query of Harunur Rashid, BNP lawmaker in Chapainawabganj-3 constituency, in parliament.

The minister noted that it was not the job of his ministry to keep records of cases filed over road accidents.

In reply to another query from the BNP lawmaker, Quader said, "There is a specific format to record road accidents. Police, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, and the Accident Research Institute under BUET are doing the job."

While detailing on the causes of road accidents,

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Protesters face off with police after they fired tear gas during a rally against a controversial extradition law proposal outside the government headquarters in Hong Kong yesterday. Violent clashes broke out in Hong Kong yesterday as police tried to stop protesters storming the city's parliament, while thousands of people blocked key arteries in a show of strength against government plans to allow extraditions to China.

# HK protests turn violent

Govt delays debate on China extradition bill as cops fire rubber bullets, tear gas at protesters

AFP, Hong Kong

Hong Kong was yesterday rocked by the worst political unrest since its handover to China, as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse protesters who tried to storm parliament and blocked roads in the financial hub.

The violent protests were the latest expression of widespread public anger over the government's controversial Beijing-backed plan to allow extraditions to China.

Clashes broke out hours after tens of thousands of people seized key arteries in the morning rush hour and surrounded the city's parliament, forcing lawmakers to postpone a debate on the proposed law.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, who is championing the law's passage, described the protests as "organised riots" and called for calm to be restored.

"The rioting actions that damage peaceful society, ignoring law and discipline is unacceptable for any civilised societies," she said in a video statement.

Police earlier used tear gas, rubber bullets and batons to battle crowds of black-clad demonstrators -- most of them young people and students -- demanding authorities scrap the Beijing-backed law.

The scenes echoed the pro-democracy "Umbrella Movement" of 2014 where protesters calling for greater democratic rights shut down swathes of the city for two months and battled police, but won no concessions from Beijing.

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