

# MEMORY STILL BURNS

9 Italians, 7 Japanese, 1 Indian and 5 Bangladeshis who lost their lives in July 1, 2016 attack



**THE 7 JAPANESE VICTIMS :** Ogasawara, Tanaka Hiroshi, Shakai Yuku, Kurusaki Nubuhiri, Okamura Makato, Shimudhuira Rui and Hashimoto Hideiko.

# Trial 'to be completed' by year end

**FROM PAGE 1**  
A case was filed with Gulshan police under the Anti-Terrorism Act following the terror attack accusing a faction of the local JMB outfit.  
After over two years of investigation, the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CITC) unit of DMP submitted a charge sheet to a Dhaka court on July 23 last year, accusing eight militants.  
The accused are Jahangir Alam alias Rajib Gandhi, recruiter of the café attackers; Rashed alias Rash, one of the planners; Sohel Mahfuz, supplier of grenades; Mizanur Rahman alias Boro Mizan and Hadisur Rahman Sagor, suppliers of arms; and Rakibul Islam, a so-called religious trainer, Shariful Islam Khaled and Mamunur Rashid Ripon.  
All the accused are behind bars.  
Some 211 people were named as prosecution witnesses. The tribunal framed charges against the accused on November 26 the same year.  
So far, 60 prosecution witnesses including several eyewitnesses gave their statements before the tribunal where the trial of the case began on December 3 last year with a deposition

of the complainant of the case.  
Chief of CITC Monirul Islam at a briefing in the city yesterday said the attackers had planned a few more attacks, but the threats were neutralized through different successful operations against the terrorists.  
Asked whether the attack was carried out due to intelligence failure, Monirul said, "It is not right to say it happened due to intelligence failure."  
He said they had some information, but those were not specific.  
During the trial, owner of the café Sadat Mehdi, a former North South University teacher Hasnat Reza Karim and his wife Sharmina Parvin recounted their traumatic experiences before the tribunal.  
According to the charge sheet, "Neo JMB" militants had planned the attack for six months. Their intention was to create "unrest" in Bangladesh and turn it into a "terrorist state".  
Five of 21 militants involved were killed inside the bakery in a commando operation launched to end the siege.  
The five gunmen directly involved in the attack were Nibrash Islam, Mir Sabeh Mubashir and Rohan Imtiaz,

Khairul Islam Payel and Shafiqul Islam Uzzal.  
Eight others, including the attack mastermind Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury, were killed later in different anti-militancy drives.  
The seven others killed in other operations are Sarwar Jahan, a top operative of mainstream JMB and its financier; Nurul Islam Marzan, a Chittagong University student and café attack coordinator; Jahidul Islam, a retired major and trainer, Basharuazzaman Chocolate, a software engineer; Abu Raihan Tarik, a top operative; Tanvir Kaderi, a banker and financier and Mizanur Rahman alias Chhoto Mizan, grenade supplier.  
Describing the gory scene of the attack, Sharmina Parvin, who went to the café along with her husband and children on that fateful night, told the case tribunal how she saw innocent people being killed by the militants.  
Parvin was arrested after the attack but was exonerated later.  
Sadat Mehdi, the café owner and also an eyewitness, told the court that it was a war-like situation on that night.

# ATTACK ON HASINA'S TRAIN 30 BNP-led alliance leaders land in jail

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna**  
Thirty leaders and activists of BNP-led alliance landed in jail yesterday for allegedly carrying out an attack on Sheikh Hasina in Pabna 25 years ago.  
Additional District and Sessions Judge Rustom Ali passed the order after rejecting bail pleas of the accused, said Obaidul Haque, additional public prosecutor of the case.  
In 1994, then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina was travelling from Khulna to Rajshahi via train and holding rallies at different railway stations. As her train reached Pakshey Railway Station in Pabna's Ishwardi upazila, it was attacked with crude bombs and gunshots.  
Nazrul Islam, then officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station, filed a case accusing 52 persons of BNP and its ally parties. Police  
**SEE PAGE 8 COL 2**

# DIG Mizan seeks bail in advance

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Mizanur Rahman, suspended deputy inspector general of police, yesterday filed a petition with the High Court seeking anticipatory bail in a corruption case.  
He submitted the petition through his lawyer Md Asaduzzaman Khan, saying that he would face the trial proceedings of the case before the lower court and he would not leave the country if he is granted bail in the case.  
Khurshid Alam Khan, the lawyer of the Anti-Corruption Commission that lodged the graft case against Mizan, told The Daily Star that he received a copy of the bail petition filed by the top police official.  
The HC is yet to fix a date for holding a hearing on the bail petition, he said.  
Khurshid said ACC lawyers would  
**SEE PAGE 8 COL 1**

# Beijing must play

**FROM PAGE 1**  
and China will ink eight memorandums of understanding and agreements on power, loan, economic and technical cooperation, investment cooperation, sharing of hydrological data, tourism and cultural exchanges.  
Hasina will also address the Annual Meeting of the New Champion of the World Economic Forum.  
Meanwhile, international relations experts said China may face image crisis and challenges in regional trade and investments unless it effectively acts to address the Rohingya crisis.  
They said China is now a big economic power, but its stance in regard to the human rights of the Rohingya remains questionable, as the country has opposed any concrete actions by the UN Security Council against Myanmar.  
Apart from this, lingering of the Rohingya crisis means regional instability that could affect trade and investments being promoted by China as a regional powerhouse, they say.  
"Therefore, it's crucial that China plays an effective role. Otherwise, it will face reputational crisis and challenges in trade and investments regionally," said Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of international relations department at Dhaka University yesterday.  
The experts said it was high time that China exerted its influence on Myanmar that would lead to the solution of the crisis. They said China, a close ally of Myanmar, was behind the signing of a deal between Bangladesh and Myanmar in November 2017 on repatriation of over 741,000 Rohingyas who fled atrocities in Rakhine.  
But repatriation has not begun as Rohingyas say Rakhine was not safe and there was no guarantee of their citizenship and basic rights. The situation got complicated with the escalation of clashes between Myanmar military and Arakan Army, an ethnic rebel group, in recent months.  
The International Criminal Court (ICC) is in the process of beginning investigation into the atrocities defined by rights bodies as crimes against humanity and genocide.

Experts here said Bangladesh, with its domestic challenges of unemployment and climate change, was facing environmental and diplomatic challenges because of the Rohingya. Human trafficking, drug trafficking, and threats of radicalisation in the refugee camps were some of the concerns.  
"Why should China take the blame for supporting Myanmar, which is doing wrong? It's a matter of global reputation of China as well," Prof Imtiaz told The Daily Star.  
China too has a lot of investments in Myanmar and Bangladesh and is going to do more in the coming years. If the problem lingers, it would create instability and that's not helpful for business, he added.  
Former ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad, chairman of Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, echoed Imtiaz.  
The issues of safety and citizenship are the two major aspects of Rohingya repatriation. Rohingyas won't volunteer to return if there is no international body to monitor the repatriation and ensure safety after their return, he said.  
Bangladesh needs to propose the formation of such a body led by China, he added.  
"China has a lot of interests in Myanmar and Bangladesh. For its own sake, China has to take immediate and strong steps to address the problem," Faiz said.  
Even businesses in Rakhine would require manpower and the Rohingyas could be turned into an asset after they return there. China should consider these aspects, he added.  
Maj Gen (ret'd) Muniruzzaman, president of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, said it was China that recommended bilateral repatriation deal between Bangladesh and Myanmar and it should help implement the deal.  
"It has been two years since the crisis began. Our economic situation is not such that we can keep and feed them for an unlimited period. They must go back to Myanmar," he said, adding, "Otherwise, it has serious security and economic consequences in the region."

# Household gas Tk 175 pricier

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Gas price was last hiked in June 2017. This time, gas tariff for power plants has been increased by 40.82 percent, for fertiliser factories 64.21 percent, for Compressed Natural Gas users 7.5 percent, for captive power plants 43.97 percent, for industries 37.89 percent, for tea estates 44.20 percent, for commercial users 34.98 percent, and for households using burners on metres 38.46 percent.  
The weighted average gas tariff for all users, including households, industries and businesses, will rise by 32.8 percent.  
Monowar Islam, chairman of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC), announced the price hike at his office in the capital yesterday.  
He said the move would help the government bear the expenses of LNG import.  
The government is spending about Tk 35 for each cubic metre of imported LNG, while the cost of locally produced gas is only about Tk 5, the BERC chairman said.  
Bangladesh started importing LNG from August last year to alleviate energy shortage, largely caused by the depletion of domestic reserves, no new discoveries and rising demand.  
Consumer rights groups and several political parties slammed the hike, saying the general public would suffer due to the increase in gas prices.  
M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser to Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), said the price hike would push up costs of electricity and fertiliser production.  
The hike comes several months after state-run Petrobangla and its distribution companies demanded that the BERC raise the gas prices to Tk 12.19 per cubic metre.  
In January, all six gas distribution companies -- Titas, Bakhrabad, Jalalabad, Pashchimanchal, Karnaphuli, and Sundarban -- had proposed the hike, saying their

production costs increased following the blending of LNG with locally produced gas. The price of blended gas stands at Tk 12.60 per cubic metre.  
The BERC yesterday said the revenue requirement for the distributors will be Tk 43,840 crore in fiscal 2019-20. If the price was unchanged, they would be able to earn only Tk 25,110 crore, leaving a deficit of Tk 18,730 crore.  
Of the amount, the government will provide Tk 7,690 crore and the BERC's Energy Security Fund Tk 2,420 crore.  
BERC Member Mizanur Rahman said the tariff was fixed assuming that 850 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas would come from LNG and 2,500 mmcf from local sources every day.  
At present, two floating storage and re-gasification units, respectively owned by Summit LNG of Bangladesh and Excelerate Energy of the USA, are supplying 650 mmcf a day.  
The supply will rise to 850 mmcf from this month, according to the BERC chairman.  
The commission withdrew the existing minimum charge and kept unchanged the tariff rate for micro and cottage industries under commercial user categories.  
**BURDEN ON PEOPLE**  
At a public hearing in March, experts, consumer right groups, industrialists, trade bodies and left-leaning politicians also slammed the proposal from the distribution companies.  
Shamsul Alam yesterday said electricity and fertiliser used to be affordable because the gas used by power plants and fertiliser factories was not expensive.  
But now, their production cost will rise, which will hit farmers, he added.  
Despite the LNG import, the actual demand of industries would not be met fully and they will continue to face gas shortage. The increase in gas prices for captive power plants will deal another blow to industries. As a

result, their production cost will rise, noted the energy adviser to CAAB.  
"The new hike will only intensify the crisis in the energy sector."  
In a statement, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir termed the government decision illogical and anti-people, and said it would destroy livelihood of people.  
Several left-leaning political parties also criticised the government for the move.  
The Workers Party of Bangladesh described the gas price hike as illegal, and said it would be a burden on people.  
"Gas prices have been hiked to put the government's burden of corruption on the general public," the Left Democratic Alliance said in a statement.  
The Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) said the tariff was hiked overlooking the consumers' interest.  
The Communist Party of Bangladesh and the BSD will stage demonstrations in front of the Jatiya Press Club today, protesting the price hike.

# Ershad

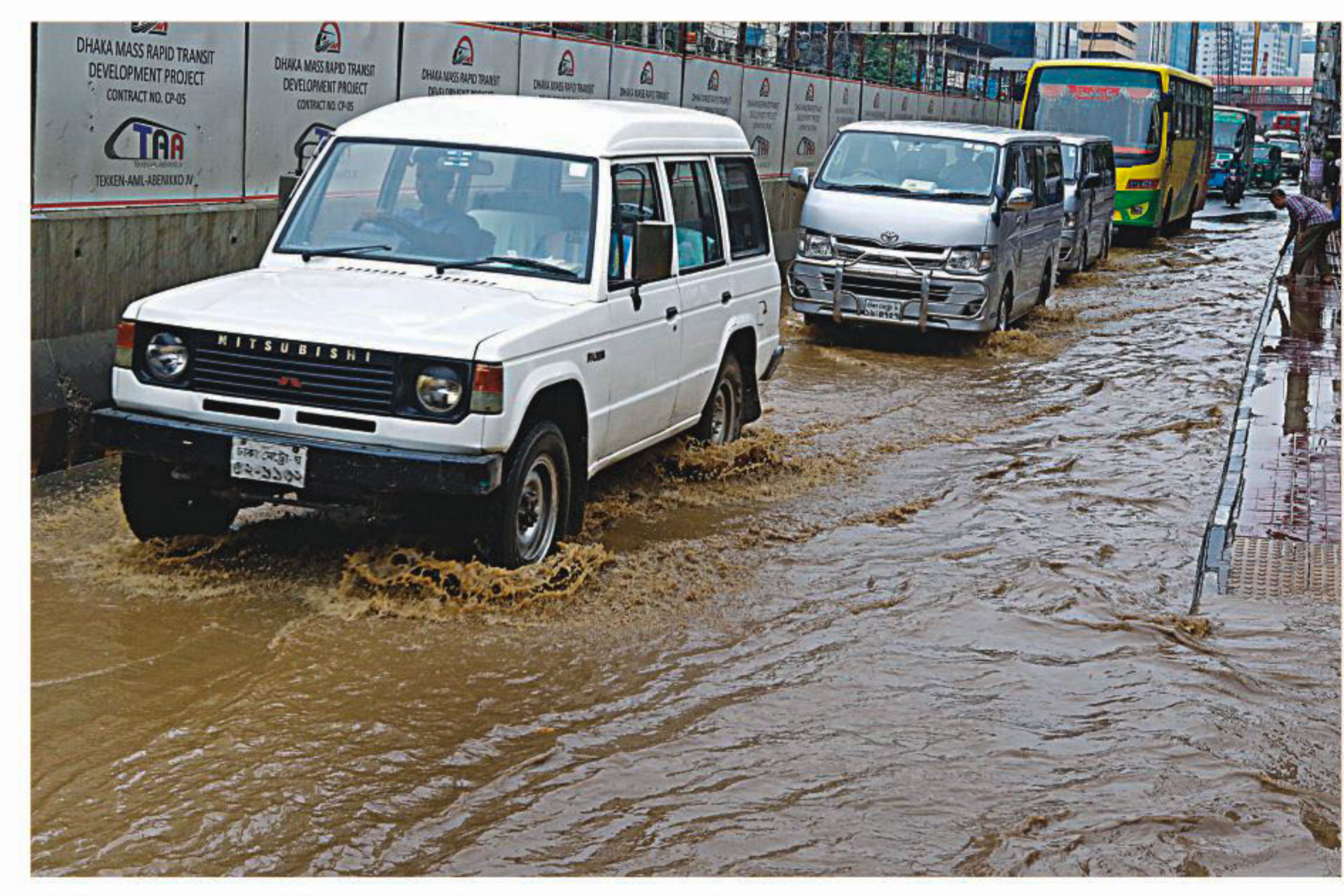
**FROM PAGE 1**  
in Dhaka. He was being treated there for several infections.  
Yesterday, his lung infection worsened, Quader said.  
He said the JP chief could be treated at the CMH but they were ready to take him anywhere for better treatment if the doctors recommend.  
Over the last nine months, the 89-year-old has been suffering from various health-related issues.  
Several JP leaders visited him at the hospital last night.  
Talking to The Daily Star, at least four JP leaders, including Fakhrul Imam, said Ershad was on "life support" and his condition was "critical".  
Inter-Services Public Relations Director Lt Col Alamgir Kabir told this paper around 11:00pm yesterday, "Ershad has died" is just a rumour. He is alive."

# Tigers back to business

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the bus from Southampton on June 25, but he has been walking since and yesterday batted in the nets in full batting gear, raising hopes that he will play the crucial tie against India.  
The pitch that will be used for

the game against India will also be crucial. Pakistan beat New Zealand here on June 26 in a low-scoring encounter on a slowish wicket, which will suit Bangladesh. However, the India-England match yesterday was played on a belter where England

ran up 337 for seven. That sort of wicket will surely favour India's strong batting lineup against Bangladesh's oft-misfiring bowling unit. The Tigers will know today which of the pitches will be used, and that may well dictate the strategy for tomorrow.



**Vehicles crawl on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue as yesterday afternoon's brief shower inundates the street narrowed down by the construction work of metro rail in Karwan Bazar.**

**PHOTO: PALASH KHAN**

# 4,200km of roads in bad condition

**FROM PAGE 1**  
if the work is done in time. And that ultimately increases the cost," he added.  
Prof Mizanur Rahman, director of Accident Research Institute at Buet, said poor road condition is related to road crashes.  
Poor road often slows down traffic. So when drivers find good roads, they often gear up the speed, causing accidents, he said.  
Road accidents are a major cause of death in Bangladesh. Diffident road safety organisations estimate 4,500-7,000 deaths in road accidents per year.  
Asked why such a high percentage of roads are in poor condition, Prof Mizanur said, "Mega projects often get importance while maintenance work doesn't. This may be a reason for the situation."  
Ashis Kumar Dey, general secretary of the National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways, said often repair was not done properly as a result of fund misuse.  
There are 21,576 kms of national and regional highways and district roads in the country. The RHD surveyed 17,452kms of that and found some 4,247kms (24.34 percent) of them are in poor, bad or very bad condition. The rest are in good or "fair" condition.  
Those in fair condition (4,482kms) will also need repair if they are part of national highways that carry heavy

traffic, said an official.  
The survey was done between November 2018 and March this year and its report was released on the RHD's website yesterday.  
The previous survey report in May last year found 4,731kms (26.32 percent) of roads and highways in poor or very bad condition.  
In the 10 zones of the RHD, highest 570kms of poor to very bad roads are in Chattogram zone. Cumilla comes second, with 530kms of such roads, according to the report.  
Dhaka has 303kms of poor to very bad roads, the lowest. Sylhet zone has the second lowest share of bad roads.  
In the last fiscal year, the RHD got Tk 2,350 crore for maintenance of roads and bridges, up slightly from Tk 2,334 crore in the previous fiscal year.  
This year, it needs Tk 314 crore for routine maintenance, Tk 3,638 crore for periodic maintenance, Tk 2,534 crore for partial reconstruction and Tk 4,193 crore for full reconstruction, according to the Maintenance and Rehabilitation Needs Report.  
Ongoing projects were not considered under the survey.  
The report gave five recommendations for proper maintenance work, including field visits and design verification by the authorities.  
"Routine maintenance has to be

done properly and should be the first budget priority," it said, adding that small contracts (up to Tk 30 million) should be avoided to ensure quality work.  
The RHD has been using the Highway Development and Management Model (HDM-4 Software), an economic tool, since 1999-2000 for optimisation of the fund disbursement. Since then, it has been publishing the survey report every year.  
**Saudi Arabia intercepts two Yemen rebel drones: coalition**  
**AFP, Riyadh**  
Two Yemeni rebel drones targeting southern Saudi Arabia were intercepted on Saturday, a Riyadh-led military coalition said, the latest in a series of assaults on the kingdom.  
The first drone targeted the province of Jizan and the second was aimed at a residential area in Asir province, the coalition said in a statement released by the official Saudi Press Agency.  
The coalition did not report any damage or casualties.