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FATALITIES ON ROADS

# Road safety authority aims lower

Decides to reduce up to 25pc casualties by 2024 after failing to halve them in 10yrs

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

As road safety authority failed to achieve the target to halve the number of road accident fatalities by last year, it is now going to extend the deadline by another 10 years.



Star yesterday.

Like the previous one, the fresh action plan would have nine individual sectors to address the road safety issues of Bangladesh, which witnessed two major movements in the past three years for ensuring road safety, officials said.

As part of a new action plan, the authority wants to reduce 20 to 25 percent of road accident fatalities and injuries by the end of the 2024 by setting the National Road Safety Strategic Action Plan-2021-2024 into motion.

A draft of the action plan has already been prepared and is expected to be placed before today's meeting of National Road Safety Council (NRSC) for approval, said BRTA Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder while speaking to The Daily

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, also the chief of the NRSC, will preside over the meeting at the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority's (BRTA) head office in the capital.

Several ministers, secretaries, leaders of transport associations, and experts and road safety campaigners are the members of the apex body formed in 1995 to take policy decisions over road safety issues.

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Faisal Ahmed Fahad, Liberation War Affairs Secretary of Sylhet Metropolitan Volunteer League and a resident of Pirmahalla area of the city, was arrested with a weapon during a clash between transport workers and city corporation workers while removing an illegal rental car stand on the side of Chauhatta-Amberkhana road in Sylhet city.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Malaysia to take migrants after Covid improves

Says expat minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad has said Malaysia's labour market for Bangladeshi workers will reopen only after the Covid-19 situation becomes normal there.

"Opening of the market means workers making trips. This will not happen. We will have to wait until everything becomes normal," he said.

The minister was briefing the media at his ministry yesterday after a virtual meeting on labour issues between the two countries.

Malaysia suspended hiring Bangladeshi workers in September, 2018 following allegations of malpractices in the recruitment process and high recruitment costs.

Officials of the two countries held the joint

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## Luna Shamsuddoha passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Luna Shamsuddoha, a leading software entrepreneur in the country, passed away at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore yesterday.

The 53-year-old entrepreneur was receiving treatment for cancer at the hospital.

Her elder brother Zulfikar Rahman confirmed it to The Daily Star.

Luna was the chairperson of Dohatec New Media, a leading IT, and software company.

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## Transport workers attack BU pvt dorms

25 hurt; students block highway, torch bus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Several accommodations of Barishal University students in the city's Rupatli area were attacked early yesterday, leaving at least 25 students injured.

BU students said the attack was carried out by a group of transport workers in the district.

It happened after university students vandalised a BRTC bus counter and blocked the Barishal-Kuakata regional highway for two hours till 5:00pm Tuesday, protesting the stabbing of a fellow student, they said.

University sources said BU student Sajol and a female student went to the counter to go to Khulna on Tuesday afternoon. At that time, they got into an altercation with a transport worker named Rafiq. At one point, Rafiq allegedly stabbed Sajol.

The transport worker carried out the attack following the vandalism, several injured students told The Daily Star.

After the incident, agitated students demonstrated throughout the day yesterday, demanding arrest of Rafiq and the attackers.

They set fire to a bus and blocked Barisal-Kuakata highway for around 12 hours till 6:00pm.

A tripartite meeting involving students, BU authorities and police administration was held in the afternoon.

Following the assurance from the police administration that they would take steps against the culprits and ensure security of students, the demonstrators withdrew the blockade.

Meanwhile, the BU authorities suspended all exams till today.

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## COVID VACCINATION Minimum age to remain at 40

Says health minister; 15.86 lakh vaccinated so far

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The minimum age for Covid-19 vaccination will remain 40 for now, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

The minister was talking to journalists following his speech at an event in the capital's Dhaka Dental College yesterday noon.

He said some 20-25 lakh doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum Institute of India (SII) would reach the country on February 22.

About vaccination, he said, "Due to much rush at some of the vaccination centers, people who have registered there, are not getting SMS. But everyone will receive vaccine gradually."

As of yesterday afternoon, around 25.5 lakh people registered on www.surokha.gov.bd for the Covid-19 vaccine.

Besides, a total of 145,203 people received the first jab yesterday. With this, the total number of people vaccinated rose to 15,86,368.

The countrywide Covid-19 vaccination drive kicked off on February 7.

As per a tripartite deal among the

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## Comet from edge of solar system killed dinosaurs



AFP, Washington

Sixty-six million years ago, a huge celestial object struck off the coast of what is now Mexico, triggering a catastrophic "impact winter" that eventually wiped out three-quarters of life on Earth, including the dinosaurs.

A pair of astronomers at Harvard say they have now resolved long standing mysteries surrounding the nature and origin of the "Chicxulub impactor."

Their analysis suggests it was a comet that originated in a region of icy debris on the edge of the solar system, that Jupiter was responsible for it crashing into our planet, and that we can expect similar impacts every 250 million to 750 million years.

The duo's paper, published in the journal Scientific Reports this week, pushes back against an older theory that claims the object was a fragment of an asteroid that came from our solar

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## Govt fixes edible oil prices

The government yesterday fixed edible oil prices to tame the volatility in the domestic market and curb price manipulation by a section of unscrupulous traders.

The price of loose soybean oil was fixed at Tk 115 per litre at the retail level, said Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi after a meeting with major refiners, importers, traders and wholesalers at the secretariat in Dhaka.

The move came as loose soybean oil was selling at Tk 116-Tk 120 per litre at the retail level in the capital, up 3.5 per cent from Tk 112-Tk 116 a month ago.

READ MORE ON B1



### PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 18

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:20 12:45 4:30 6:03 7:30  
JAMAAT 5:55 1:15 4:45 6:07 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



The existence of Savar's Karnapara canal is now under threat due to mindless dumping of toxic industrial waste, posing health risks to locals. Large buildings and factories on both sides of the canal discard waste right into the water body. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## RAPE IN BEGUMGANJ Charges framed against two

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Noakhali court yesterday framed charges against two accused in a case filed for raping a woman in Begumganj upazila. It was the case of the incident, a video of which created widespread outrage in social media.

The accused are: "Delwar Bahini" chief Delwar and his accomplice Abul Kalam.

Judge Joyanal Abedin of the Women and Children Repression Tribunal-1 heard the case and set March 24 for the next hearing in the case.

Earlier, Public Prosecutor Mamunur Rashid read out the allegations against the accused. Both of them claimed their innocence.

However, there was no lawyer for the accused at

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শ্রীমতী শামসুল দুলায়ে মাথা তোমাদের দেবে পরানের বারতা

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