ROAD ACCIDENTS

Three teens among nine killed in a day

STAR REPORT

Nine people were killed in road accidents in five districts in a day yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Bogura, three teenagers lost their lives as a motorcycle they were riding hit a milepost in Ekdala intersection area in Gobindaganj upazila.

Suman Mia (16), son of Mozzafar Hossain, died on the spot; Md Abdullah (18), son of Shahjan Ali, succumbed to his injuries at Gobindaganj Upazila Health Complex while Md Sakib (16), son of Sariful Islam, at a Bogura hospital, said police.

Locals said Sakib and Suman were 10th-graders of a local high school.

"The motorbike was heading towards Panitala from Rajabirat with high speed," said Boiragihat Police Station Sub-inspector Sikandar Ali.

The accident happened as the rider lost his control over the bike, the SI quoted witnesses as saying.

In Gopalganj, a truck hit a tree beside Dhaka-Barishal highway at Charposhornadi in Muksudpur upazila, leaving two people -- including the truck driver -- dead.

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Groups of people board these flimsy boats, even with children, to cross the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram. The small motorised vessels have no safety measures, and two boat capsizes within the last week left one person dead and four missing. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Drive against English signboards starts

DNCC fines 25 orgs in Gulshan, Rampura

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has started a drive against signboards and nameplates in English instead of Bangla in the capital. As part of the drive, DNCC mobile courts yesterday fined 25 establishments Tk 1.67 lakh in Gulshan and Rampura areas.

Five executive magistrates of DNCC -- Tazwar Akram Sakapi Ibne Sazzad, Abdullah Al Baki, Md Abdul Hamid Miah, Rifat Ferdous and Parshia Sultana -- conducted the drives from 11am to 2:30pm.

Magistrate Baki, who led the drive at Kemal Ataturk Avenue fined 10 organisations Tk 55,000. The mobile court also realised Tk 3,000 each from three banks. The court asked the building and establishment owners to re-write their signboards and nameplates in Bangla within the next seven days.

The court also fined a flower shop Tk 10,000.

In another drive, executive magistrate Hamid fined three businesses Tk 9,000 in total at Kemal Ataturk Avenue.

Another Mobile court led by Tazwar fined five institutions Tk 48,000 and removed their signboards in Rampura.

The mobile court led by Rifat Ferdous fined two businesses Tk 15,000 in Rampura. Another mobile court led by Parshia Sultana fined five organisations Tk 45,000 in the same area.

ASM Mamun, public relations officer of DNCC, said they conducted this kind of drive earlier as per instruction of the High Court.

He said the HC made the use of Bangla compulsory in every signboard, billboard, nameplate and banner except at embassies and foreign agencies years ago. The local government division at that time had given instruction to DNCC to follow the order, he said. DNCC issued public advertisements in this regard many times and also conducted drives, Mamun added.

DU ADMISSION

Applications open March 8

DU CORRESPONDENT

Applications for Dhaka University (DU) honors' first year admission for the 2020-21 academic session will start from March 8 and will continue till March 31.

Minimum qualification to apply has increased for applying in different units.

This decision came from a meeting of General Admission Committee at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury senate building today, presided over by DU Vice-Chancellor Md Akhtaruzzaman.

The entrance test will begin on May 21 in eight divisional cities for the first time, considering the pandemic.

'Ka' unit admission tests will be held on May 21, 'Kha' unit on May 22, 'Ga' unit on May 27, 'Gha' unit on May 28 and 'Cha' unit

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ENSURING COVID VACCINE ACCESS

Momen for global political commitment

BSS, *Dhaka*

A strong global political commitment is needed to build partnership among the nations for ensuring universal access to Covid-19 vaccine, said Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday.

"We need partnership… we need a political commitment to help each other (for ensuring access to vaccine)," he said after receiving vaccine along with a number of foreign diplomats stationed in Dhaka at Sheikh Russel Gastro Liver Institute and Hospital at Mohakhali.

The foreign minister said Bangladesh is among the 30 to 35 countries that have Covid-19 vaccine now due to farsighted leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"There are a number of developed countries who are yet to get access to Covid vaccine," he said.

As per directive of the prime minister, Momen said Bangladesh started the vaccine hunting campaign much before the inoculation was developed. "We'll give vaccine to all our people… no one will be left behind," he said.

Among the diplomats, British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson was vaccinated yesterday.

On February 10, the government launched the Covid-19 vaccination campaign for foreign diplomats. Over 30 diplomats got vaccinated on the opening day.

The foreign ministry official sources said around 1,200 foreign diplomats stationed in the country will be vaccinated gradually.

Restrictions on language unfair to identity of a nation

Speakers tell event marking Int'l Mother Language Day

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

International Mother Language Day is a source of inspiration to build multicultural and inclusive societies where people of all races, faiths, languages and cultures will have respect and dignity, said ministers and academics said yesterday.

They said oftentimes some languages are imposed on people for political or economic reasons, which, however, is unfair to the very identity of those being dominated. International Mother Language Day, which is recognized by the UNESCO and is celebrated on February 21 commemorating the struggle for Bangla language in 1952, speaks of recognising all languages and cultures.

The observations came on the first day of a two-day webinar titled "Understanding Asian Transformations: Language and Cultural Binds," jointly organised by the Centre for Genocide Studies, University of Dhaka; and School of Liberal Arts

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STUDENTS ATTACKED BY WORKERS

Barishal University yet to file case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barishal*

No case has been field yet in connection with the attack on Barishal University students by transport workers on Wednesday.

At least 25 students were injured when a group of transport workers attacked student dorms of Barisal University (BU) in the Rupatali area of the city.

It happened after university students vandalised a BRTC bus counter and blocked the Barishal-Kuakata regional highway for two hours till 5pm on 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. At that time, they got into an altercation with a transport worker named Rafiq, and Rafiq allegedly stabbed Sajol.

After the attack on students' accommodations, agitated students demonstrated throughout the day yesterday, demanding arrest of the attackers.

Khorshed Alam, general secretary of BU Teachers' Association, said preparations were underway to file a case.

Students said they staged a sit-in in front of the six-point pillar of the university on the ground floor of campus administrative building from 10am to 2pm yesterday. They strongly condemned the attack on university students.

Student Mahamudul Isalam Tamal said the authorities had informed them that a case would be filed and the

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REINSTATING STAFFERS

HC summons Dr Yunus over contempt plea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned Grameen Telecom Chairman Nobel Laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus and its Managing Director Md Ashraful Hasan to virtually appear before it on March 16 to place explanation over not complying with its order to reinstate services of 38 employees to the organisation.

The court also issued a rule upon them to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be brought against them.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Islam Mollah came up with the order and rule following a contempt of court petition filed by Md Kamruzzaman, one of the 38 terminated employees, on February 8.

Petitioner's lawyer Md Yousuf Ali told The Daily Star that in continuation of a legal battle, the HC on December 6 last year directed Grameen Telecom's Chairman and MD to immediately reinstate services of 38 employees who were terminated on October 25 last year.

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