

## EID HOME RUSH 207 killed, 389 hurt in road accidents

Says Road Safety Foundation report  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 207 people were killed and 389 were injured in 158 road accidents in the country in 11 days – July 14 to 24 amid the Eid rush, Road Safety Foundation said Saturday.

Among the deceased, 29 were women and 17 were children, said a press release of the foundation.

A total of 87 people died in 76 motorcycle accidents, which accounted for 48.1 percent of the total deaths, it said.

Some 43 pedestrians and 32 drivers and helpers were killed in accidents during the period.

Meanwhile, at least two people were killed and 26 were injured in four waterway accidents while two others were killed in two railway accidents.

Road Safety Foundation collected the data from reports in seven national

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Despite the "strict lockdown", the capital's Jatrabari wholesale kitchen market saw crowds moving throughout the premises yesterday. Traders, customers and other workers were seen mingling, with little care for social distancing or wearing face masks. Parked trucks and three-wheelers moving in and out of the location made the area congested.

PHOTO:  
ANISUR RAHMAN

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES Their needs being constantly ignored

Prof Abul Barkat tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has an extreme lack of respect for persons with disabilities, as their needs have been constantly ignored in many spheres of life, said eminent economist Prof Abul Barkat yesterday at a virtual discussion.

This is reflected in two indicators among other factors. Firstly, the government does not bother much about knowing the total number of people with disabilities in the country, he said.

"Official statistics for the same year [2010] report two different figures, 1.41 percent and 9.1 percent [of the population], even though the actual number should be at least 18 million people."

"Secondly, 98 percent of the national budget disrespects people with disabilities," he said, as for this group less than two percent of the social protection budget is allocated for health, education, employment and other assistive services.

He made the comments at the event titled "Sustainable economic empowerment of persons with disabilities through a disability-inclusive poverty graduation programme", jointly organised by The Daily Star, in partnership with Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion Bangladesh.

Md Mazedul Haque, country operational coordinator of Handicap International, moderated the event. In his presentation, he said 15 percent (approximately one billion) of the world's population lives with a disability, and 80 percent of them live in developing countries, 82 percent of whom earn less than a dollar a day.

In low and middle-income countries, 80-90 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed, he stated.

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## 'Strictest lockdown' eases up on 4th day

STAR REPORT

The nationwide 14-day "strictest lockdown" seemed to have loosened up on the fourth day, as public and vehicular movement increased on the roads in Dhaka and elsewhere yesterday.

Despite restrictions, hundreds of Eid holidaymakers continued to enter the capital through different entry points from their village homes, by changing different modes of transports.

Dhaka dwellers, mainly office-goers, faced difficulties on the road due to suspension of public transport, as banks and offices of stock exchange and several emergency services reopened amid the lockdown after Eid-ul-Azha holiday.

City streets witnessed crowds and more vehicles yesterday, compared to the previous three days.

In the morning, some office-goers were seen travelling by rickshaws, motorbikes and private cars. Many were seen walking

long distances.

This correspondent visited Asad Gate, Farmgate, Mohakhali, Gulshan, Banani, Pragati Sarani, Panthapath, Mohammadpur, Shyamoli, Ring Road, Adabor, and Dhanmondi areas and found that the number of pedestrians, rickshaws, private cars and goods-carrying vehicles increased on the roads.

Ahsan Habib, an employee of a private bank who was going to Motijheel from Mohammadpur, said he struggled to get a vehicle. "Changing rickshaws three times, I reached office after a two-hour commute. It cost me Tk 450. How can we afford it for days on end?"

Visiting the by-lanes in Mohammadpur and Bhatara areas, our correspondent found some shops and tea stalls open.

Police, Rapid Action Battalion, Border Guard Bangladesh and army personnel were seen checking vehicles by setting up checkpoints at important points.

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## By-polls to Sylhet-3 postponed till Aug 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed till August 5 the by-election to Sylhet-3 constituency, which was scheduled to be held on Wednesday, due to the ongoing "strict lockdown".

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim passed the order following a writ petition filed seeking its directive on the Election Commission (EC) in this regard.

While passing the order, the HC bench said this court will make further decision on holding the by-election after August 5 on hearing the petition in details and observing the circumstances.

"The government is serious about restraining the surge of Covid-19 infection. There is time for holding the by-polls till September 7 as per the constitutional provisions. Considering all the aspects, the by-election has been stayed till August 5," said Justice Enayetur Rahim.

The HC bench also asked Attorney General AM Amin Uddin to communicate the stay order to the EC.

During the hearing, petitioners' lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told the HC that the deadline for the by-election is September 7 according to article 123 (4) of the constitution.

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## Greens condemn Unesco decision

Say strategic environmental assessment on Sundarbans lacks scientific clarity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Save the Sundarbans (NCS) yesterday accused Unesco of failing to protect the outstanding universal value of the mangrove forest by endorsing an SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) that lacks scientific clarity and giving the government one more year to place its long-term plans to protect it.

The accusation was made at a virtual press conference organised by NCS, an alliance of 50 rights and environmental organisations, and administered by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa).

On Friday, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's 21-member World Heritage Committee met online to finalise recommendations for the Sundarbans

world heritage site.

The decisions are yet to be made publicly available in written format.

At the press conference, NCS also condemned the committee for its failure to uphold the mission of the World Heritage Convention, which aims to protect the world heritage based on scientific findings.

Sultana Kamal, president of Bapa, said many ill initiatives were taken to "water down" the recommendations made by Reactive Monitoring Mission of Unesco in 2019.

"The government has been able to lobby the Unesco's World Heritage Committee (WHC), which watered down recommendations and extended another year for the decision on whether the

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## Man held with foreign currency worth Tk 2.5cr at Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Airport Armed Police Battalion (APBn) detained a man with foreign currencies equivalent to Tk 2.5 crore at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning.

Jahangir Gazi (36) was detained when he was trying to board an Istanbul-bound Turkish Airlines flight around 6:30am, said Ziaul Haque, additional superintendent (media) of APBn.

The man first denied having any foreign currency with him. But officials scanned him and found currencies of eight countries, including 11.65 lakh Saudi riyal, he said.

"The total currencies are equivalent to Tk

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## 'Work for tackling Covid situation'

President urges chiefs of three armed forces

BSS, Dhaka

President M Abdul Hamid yesterday called upon all, including every member of the Armed Forces Division, to work from their respective position to tackle the coronavirus situation.

The president made the remarks while exchanging Eid greetings with the chiefs of the three services at Bangabhaban in the capital.

During the meeting, the president said the world is facing a severe crisis at present due to the outbreak of the fatal Covid-19. Its effect is also becoming evident in Bangladesh, Hamid added.

He called upon all to work together with providing all necessary supports to the incumbent government to deal with the situation in a planned way.

Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafuddin Ahmed, Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Sheikh Abdul Hannan



President Hamid meets with Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

and Acting Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Abu Ashraf separately met the president at Bangabhaban in the evening.

After the meeting, the president's

Press Secretary Md Joynal Abedin told the news agency that he also conveyed Eid greetings to the members of the armed forces and their families.

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## KAMRANGIRCHAR DOUBLE MURDER

### Arrestee confesses to killing wife, daughter

Also tried to kill himself; poverty, debt pushed him to do it, he tells court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mukhendra Chandra Das yesterday confessed that he killed his wife and daughter at their Noagaon residence in the city's Kamrangirchar area on Saturday and tried to die by suicide afterwards.

Police recovered the bodies of Fulbashi Rani (35), wife of day-labourer Mukhendra, and their 11-year-old daughter Sumi Rani at their house in the morning and sent the bodies to Mitford hospital morgue for autopsy.

There were black marks on the necks of the victims, police said. Mostafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Kamrangirchar Police Station, said Mukhendra made the statement before a Dhaka court yesterday, confessing that he strangled his wife and daughter to death in their sleep.

He first strangled his wife and then took insecticide. He then killed his younger daughter. As he attempted to strangle his elder daughter Jhuma Rani, she got up and cried for help prompting locals to nab Mukhendra,

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## No political harassment in the country: Quader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader has said no one is subjected to any political case or harassment in the country.

In a statement yesterday, Quader said law enforcers make arrests only on the basis of specific allegations. This is part of their normal activity.

Quader's statement came in response to allegations made by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

He said BNP is resorting to lies and politicising normal activities, because its main objective is to patronise murderers, terrorists and militants.

"We have seen how BNP had used state power to shelter and patronise war criminals and murderers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he said.

"But it is unfortunate that at a time when our government, under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is working hard to save lives and livelihoods of the people, the political party called BNP is increasing the people's misery every day with false statements," said the ruling party stalwart.

The Road Transport and Bridges Minister said BNP has turned into a corrupt party by politically recognising the corruption of its top leaders, and it even shamelessly amended the party constitution for them.

In the statement, he called upon BNP leaders to take part in public welfare politics by working to alleviate sufferings of people.



As office, bus stands, terminals, and other workplaces are closed during the lockdown, rainwater and clear water from various sources are piling on any and all places, increasing the risk of dengue in its peak season. This photo was taken from Gabtoli on Sunday.

## 15th death anniversary of Novera Deepita

UNB, Dhaka

Today is the 15th death anniversary of journalist Novera

Deepita. Novera, who worked with The Daily Star, passed away on July 27 in 2006. She was a gold medalist student of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at Dhaka University.

To mark the day, Novera's family will offer prayers at the Azimpur graveyard and provide help to orphans, madrasas, and those in need.

Moreover, the Novera Deepita Memorial Trust will award 'Novera Deepita Memorial Scholarship' to the student achieving the highest marks in BA (Hons) examinations under the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University when the university reopens.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMAN