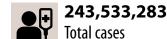
27,805

4,949,537

Deaths



BRINGING DISCIPLINE TO ROADS It's a big challenge

BANGLADESH UPDATE 232 New cases in 24hrs

Says Quader; asks BRTA to stop corruption, irregularities

Bss, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has said bringing discipline to the roads is a big challenge now.

He was addressing a discussion marking the National Road Safety Day at Sarak Bhaban in the capital's Tejgaon yesterday.

Earlier, Highway Police Additional IGP Mallick Faqrul Islam presented the statistics on fining vehicles over violating traffic rules on streets in the last nine months.

In this regard, Quader said: "There will be no benefit from presenting the amount of fines. It doesn't matter. To me, what matters is whether the roads are safe or not, whether the vehicles are abiding by traffic rules or not, whether vehicles have fitness certificates or not and whether the drivers are eligible or not."

Noting that road accidents remain as a reason for a big worry, the minister said the country is witnessing fatal road crashes every day and many people are dying.

"We have many flaws. Our duty won't end by making beautiful banners and posters only. We will have to consider every day as road safety day."

He said if the authorities cannot bring discipline to the roads, massive development and progress in this sector will fade away.

15,67,139 Total cases

Mentioning that several mega projects will come under his ministry in the coming days, he said infrastructural development is visible now as mega projects like the Padma Bridge, MRT Line-6, Bus Rapid Transit and Karnaphuli tunnel are expected to be inaugurated next year.

Quader, also the Awami League general secretary, asked the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to stop corruption and irregularities in it and take disciplinary actions against those involved in irregularities.

He expressed worries that movement of battery-run "easy bikes" has spread up to the village level. "We have banned plying of easy bikes on 22 roads. But this ban is not being obeyed in some areas. Now, plying of motorcycles on roads has become a problem as those are also violating traffic rules frequently."

Nirapad Sarak Chai Chairman Ilias Kanchan and Roads and Highways Department Chief Engineer Abdus Sabur spoke, among others, at the programme, chaired by Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary Nazrul Islam.

ATTACK IN ROHINGYA CAMP UNHCR calls for improving security

UNB, Dhaka

The UNHCR, has urged Bangladesh to take immediate measures to improve security in the Rohingya camps, saying that it is "extremely concerned" by another violent attack there.

"UNHCR is extremely concerned by another violent attack in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh," said the UN refugee agency in a statement issued last night.

This incident, which took place early yesterday, resulted in the deaths of at least "seven" refugees and injuries

to an unspecified number of people, including children, it said.

The injured are now receiving medical care. The UNHCR also sought arrest

and prosecution of those responsible for instigating and committing these violent attacks in accordance with the

"Rohingya refugees fled to Bangladesh seeking safety and security from violence. A large majority some 80 percent -- are women and children," the UN agency said.



15,30,647

Recoveries

A bus picks up a passenger right in front of a sign prohibiting pulling over and parking of vehicles on Airport Road in the capital's Kurmitola. Violation of traffic rules is a common sight on city roads, which leads to traffic congestion and accidents. The photo was taken on Thursday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Six killed in grisly attack FROM PAGE 1 grisly attack majhis (leaders) of camp-18, said

Since August 2017, at least 226 Rohingyas have been killed and some 1,298 cases filed accusing 2,850 individuals, mostly in connection with drugs and firearms.

Worried over this situation, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said law enforcers will open fire, if necessary, to stop illegal drugs and arms business in the Rohingya camps in Cox's bazar.

"We had a meeting only on Thursday on how to improve law and order in Rohingya camps. After that meeting, such an incident has happened, which is a matter of serious concern," he told journalists in Sylhet. A number of camp dwellers said after the killing of Mohibullah, chairman of the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights, APBn personnel have been conducting raids in the camps almost every night to arrest criminals.

In the raids, Rohingyas helped the law enforcers, which might have triggered anger among armed criminal groups, they added.

APBn-8 Additional Superintendent of Police Md Kamran Hossen told The Daily Star, "The criminals attacked the madrasa hours after the block raid." However, he said, the motive behind the grisly attack could not be known immediately.

some of those who died had been working with police, providing it was ARSA men who attacked the information and other assistance. The attackers might have carried out the attack because of this.

Some refugees and police officials suspect the murders could be linked to Arakan Rohingya Solidarity Army (ARSA), an insurgent group based in northern Rakhine State of Myanmar. Many armed criminals in the camps introduce themselves as ARSA members, they claimed.

Muhammad Safi, a resident of Kutupalong camp and also uncle of deceased Nur Alam, said "ARSA activists have long been trying to take over the madrasa and they had pressured Halim to stop the activities of the madrasa."

Halim had informed the matter to Mohibullah, he added.

"Following the intervention of law enforcers, ARSA men stopped coming to the madrasa. But after the killing of Mohibullah, the criminals dared launch this attack," he told these correspondents in front of Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue.

Quoting witnesses, Alam said Halim was sleeping at the madrasa and his throat was slit along with others'. The attackers also opened fire, he added.

Md Ismail Hossain, brother of Seeking anonymity, two Rohingya another victim Md Ibrahim Hossain,



said, "The body of my brother bore marks of hacking. The witnesses said

GLOBAL

madrasa.' The Daily Star could not independently verify their claims

regarding ARSA link to the incident. A police official of Cox's Bazar, wishing not to be named, said at least 50 criminals stormed the madrasa carrying sharp weapons and firearms. After the killing, they fled in small groups before the arrival of police.

"We think the criminals launched the attack to show their strength to the administration and police."

Three battalions of APBn maintain law and order in the refugee camps where over a million Rohingyas have been living since the mass influx of 2017.

Besides, Moinarghona Police Camp-12 is close to the spot.

Questioning the camp security, number of camp residents asked how could armed criminals enter the refugee camp and escape so easily.

Ukhiya Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Ahmed Sanjur Morshed said, "Police have prepared the inquest reports of the six deceased Rohingyas and sent the bodies to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The injured were taking treatment for hacking and bullet wounds at MSF Hospital in Ukhiya as of filing this report, sources said.

Iqbal admits

FROM PAGE 1

Suganda point of Cox's Bazar sea beach after some students, who were on a trip in the tourist city, informed police of a youth who resembled the man seen in the CCTV footage that had surfaced in the media.

"He [Iqbal] confessed to his misdeed. He is being interrogated by a team of investigators to know what exactly his intention was, who guided him through the whole plan and the players behind it," M Tanvir Ahmed, additional superintendent (crime) of Cumilla police, told The Daily Star.

Asked whether any case will be filed against him, the police officer said everything would be known after the interrogation.

"The whole thing is now at the preliminary stage. We have to wait until the interrogation ends. Then high-ups of police will determine the next course of action," Tanvir added.

A team of Cumilla district police rushed to Cox's Bazar and took him to Cumilla vesterday noon. Brought by a black vehicle, Iqbal was handed over to Cumilla district police at the Police Lines around 12:35pm.

According to police, Iqbal was seen in a dozen pieces of CCTV footage taking the Holy Quran from a mosque next to a shrine, loitering through key thoroughfares of Cumilla city and heading towards the mandap.

He was also seen wandering around with a mace. The mosque is located around 500 yards away from Nanua Dighir Par puja mandap.

On October 13 morning, a mob ncited by Fayez Ahmed's Facebook Live video attacked the puja mandap over the alleged demeaning of the Holy Quran.

In the video which went live at 7:00am, Fayez, a Saudi expatriate, urged people to wake up to protest the alleged defamation. The video incensed zealots across the country amid Durga Puja celebrations and led to communal violence in at least 14 districts.

Arrested earlier, Fayez yesterday admitted before a Cumilla court that he went live to "incite local people but did not realise things would go that far".

He gave the confessional statement before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Mithila Jahan.

Mohammad Rezwan, police super of Cumilla CID, told The Daily Star that during his two-day remand, Fayez confessed that he could not tolerate the incident and went live to incite locals.

"But I did not realise that it would create such anarchy across the country," Rezwan quoted Fayez as saying.

The police official said Fayez learnt how to operate Facebook during his days in Saudi to keep contact with his wife.

Meanwhile, a man, who was injured during an attack on temples

On runway of recovery irresponsible acts," reads the joint

Law enforcers

Simultaneously, the citizens called upon the government to immediately undertake a realistic initiative to uphold religious harmony and ensure equal rights of all citizens as well as by uniting all the good forces in the society.

They expressed anger and strongly condemned the recent "disgusting" attacks and vandalism of the pavilions and houses of the Hindu community.

They said those who were involved in the incidents, directly or indirectly, were against establishing equal rights of all citizens and an ominous threat to the country's independence and sovereignty.

The citizens also called upon the government to immediately identify the perpetrators and ensure proper punishment through trial.

Besides, they urged the government to provide the necessary compensation to the victims.

They said the administration and law enforcement agencies should have played a more "cautious, proactive and responsible" role after the Cumilla incident.

However, after that incident, more such communal attacks took place in other parts of the country. The administration and law enforcement cannot avoid their agencies responsibilities in this regard, they added.

The reasons behind the inactive role of the administration and law enforcement agencies regarding the incidents have to be found out, they further said.

On the other hand, in some places, law enforcement agencies opened fire on people's gatherings to disperse them. It should be investigated whether law enforcement agencies' such act was as per the law, said the citizens

The citizens said after the incidents in different parts of the country, it was seen that the country's main political parties got involved in their old habit of blaming each other instead of unitedly preventing the incidents' recurrence.

In other words, such evidenceless politics of blaming help the perpetrators to be in hiding and remain unpunished, they said.

"We urge the politicians to keep themselves away from such

statement.

Besides, they urged law enforcement agencies to restrain from grossly filing cases, to not harass people in the name of justice and to not get involved in the "arrest business".

The signatories are: Prof Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury; Jurist Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam; former advisers to the caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan, Akbar Ali Khan, Sultana Kamal, Hameeda Hossain, and Rasheda K Chowdhury; former justice Abdul Matin; former Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain; former Bangladesh Bank governor Salehuddin Ahmed; former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumder; former LGRD secretary Abu Alam Md Shahid Khan; former Mohiuddin foreign secretary Ahmed; CPD distinguished fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya; rights activists Khushi Kabir, Barrister Sara Hossain, Faustina Pereira, and Nur Khan; Central Women's University VC Prof Perween Hasan; Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar; Prof Anu Muhammad; local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed; former ambassador Tariq A Karim; jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik, Naripokkho member Shireen Huq; Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association President Salma Ali; Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam; Bangladesh Country ActionAid Director Farah Kabir; Prof Geeti Ara Nasreen; Bangladesh Adibashi Forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong; Photographer Shahidul Alam; Brotee CEO Sharmeen Murshid; Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association Executive Director Syeda Rizwana Hasan; Prof Asif Nazrul, Prof Rahnuma Ahmed, Prof Akmal Hossain, Prof Shapan Adnan, Prof Firdaus Azim, Prof Robaet Ferdous, Prof Niaz Asadullah, Associate Prof Nova Ahmed; former banker Syed Abu Naser Bukhtear Ahmed; South Asian Network on Economic Modelling Executive Director Prof Selim Raihan; Ain O Salish Kendra Executive Director Golam Monowar Kamal; Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation's Clinical Neurosciences Centre Director Prof Naila Zaman Khan; Nagorik Udyog Chief Executive Zakir Hossain; and Article 19 Regional Director Faruq Faisel.

FROM PAGE 1

have resumed flight operations to and from Bangladesh," Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman told The Daily Star recently.

More than 10,000 passengers -- many of whom are Bangladeshi expatriate workers -- are flying from the Dhaka airport every day on average, he said, adding that the number ranged between 3,500 and 4,000 three months ago.

Currently, 80 flights are operated from the airport every day and that the number will further increase within the next week.

The Caab chairman also said flight operations have tripled in the last three months.

Asked, Mafidur said 120 flights were operated every day before the pandemic. Biman Managing Director and CEO Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal said the airlines, which could not operate flights to almost all its 18 destinations due to the pandemic, was trying hard to turn around.

During the travel restrictions, Biman tried to stay afloat by operating special and chartered flights as well as airfreight services using its passenger aircraft.

In April, state-owned Sonali Bank approved a loan of Tk 1,000 crore for the national flag carrier as it was reeling from a fund crisis due to the travel restrictions.

Saleh said, "Biman is now trying to recover from the pandemic-induced losses. It has spread its wings on 15 out of its 18 international routes.

our passenger capacity on the domestic routes. On the international routes, it is 80 percent.

The Biman boss also said, "We are standing on a breakeven point at present. If the current situation continues, Biman will be able to stand on solid ground soon."

Similar is the situation for the private airlines

Kamrul Islam, general manager (public relations) of US-Bangla Airlines, said they resumed flight operations on seven out of their nine international routes

US-Bangla is now operating 34 flights on seven domestic routes, which is close to the pre-pandemic level, sources at the Dhaka airport said.

Kamrul said they were flying with 80 percent of their passenger capacity on the local routes. During the prepandemic times, it was 85 to 90 percent, he said. "If things stay the way they are now, we will be able to go back to the pre-pandemic situation within the next six to seven months.

Mofizur Rahman, managing director of Novoair, also said flight operations on the domestic route were turning to normalcy.

He said Novoair was now operating flights on all seven domestic routes with 70 percent passengers against their capacity.

PEOPLE JOINING JOB

Different countries have started opening their borders withdrawing travel restrictions for Bangladeshis

Silence of the river

FROM PAGE 1

fisherman of Majhipara village.

Although the tension first started brewing in Uttar Majhipara area of Boro Karimpur village, the mobs could not get a chance to carry out the attack, but looted several houses of Hindus there,

The mobs attacked the northern side of Majhipara, said the locals.

Around 50 Hindu families live in Uttar Majhipara, mostly managing their livelihood by fishing in the nearby Akhira river and Boro Beel, which flows past the village, said Nripendranath Sarker, another fisherman whose fishing net was stolen by the attackers.

"Since Majhipara came under attack late on Sunday night, we have been living in fear and panic. Everyone is fearful of going out of the village," he

Most villagers live on their daily earning, he added.

administration allocate relief to them. Since the incident, most of the earning members are staying home and families of Uttar Majhipara have not senior fisheries officer of Pirganj upazila, said, "We have already identified 26 gotten enough relief.

'If the situation continues, we have to starve along with our family members," he said.

Kartik Das, another villager, said mobs looted his house and took away his fishing net. Besides, his boat was also damaged, he claimed when these correspondents visited his house on Thursday afternoon.

"We are yet to get any relief from the government," he said.

Laxmi Rani Das, a woman of the village, said her husband has not gone to work for the last five days. "We are living on the food that we are getting

"We are flying with 70 percent of as the Covid situation continues to improve. Recently, Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia, the UAE, the UK, Thailand, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait have

withdrawn such travel restrictions. Following the second wave of Covid in Bangladesh in April, different countries had imposed ban on the entry of Bangladeshis, leaving thousands of migrant workers stranded in the country. Many students who got admitted to universities abroad had also remained stuck here.

A few months ago, different embassies and high commissions in Dhaka, including those of the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada and EU countries, started issuing student visas. Around 35,000 Bangladeshi workers, who remained stranded for several months, started returning to their workplaces in the UAE, the second largest source of foreign remittance for Bangladesh in 2019, early this month.

"We are hoping that many other countries will soon issue visas to our skilled workers. The labour market in the EU is also opening. An improvement in the Covid-19 situation will help us send more workers abroad," said Fakhrul Islam, president of the Recruiting Agency Welfare Organisation of Bangladesh.

Pointing out that most of the newlyhired migrant workers were heading for Saudi Arabia, he said the Bangladesh government needs to negotiate with other countries such as Kuwait and the UAE to create new job opportunities for Bangladeshis there.

She also demanded the local

When contacted, Md Aminul Islam,

fishing families whose nets were torched

depend on fishing in the Akhira river

and Boro Beel. They catch fish the entire

day and sell it at Boterhat bazar and

From the fund of the district fisheries

office, he said, they have given 15

fishing nets to 15 families, but were yet

to receive any relief and cash from the

[affected villagers] return to their

normal lives," said the fisheries officer.

When we get it, we will help them

"There are over 100 families who

from relatives."

during the attacks.

Pirganj upazila town.

government.

in Cumilla on October 13, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital early yesterday.

Dilip Das, 60, breathed his last around 12:15am, said Bachchu Mia, in-charge of police outpost at the hospital. Father of two, Dilip had a laundry business in the area.

He was wounded after being hit by a brick chip at Raj Rajeshwari Kali Bari Temple in Cumilla, said his younger brother Arjun Kumar Das.

Dilip was primarily treated at local hospital. As his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to DMCH where he underwent two surgeries, said Arjun.

MORE ARRESTS

In Chattogram, at least 10 people, ncluding three Chhatra Jubo Odhikar Parishad leaders, were arrested between Thursday night and yesterday morning in a case filed over attacking JM Sen Hall puja mandap on October 15.

The arrestees are Md Nasir Uddin, engineer Md Mizanur Rahman, Md Rasel, Md Emon, Yar Mohammad, Zia Uddin, Yassin Arafat, Habibullah, Imran Hossain and Md Mizan, said police sources.

Of them, Nasir, Mizanur and Rasel are leaders of Chhatra Jubo Odhikar Parishad that plotted the attack, said Nezam Uddin, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

With this, police have so far arrested around 100 people in connection with the violence in Chattogram, said police.

In Feni, one more was arrested on Thursday night in connection with attacks on Hindu temples and houses on October 16. The arrestee is Tawhid Islam Jisan.

With Jisan, 16 people were held in this connection in Feni, police said.

In Tangail, Sri Ramkrishna Math Ashram yesterday held a human chain in the town's Battala area, protesting recent attacks on minorities.

On Thursday night, Muhammad Kamruzzaman Sikder, OC of Begumganj Police Station in Noakhali, was withdrawn. He was later attached to Industrial Police.

Earlier, local Hindus demanded his withdrawal, bringing allegation of his negligence in duties during attacks on minorities on October 15.

A total of 102 cases have been filed n connection with the violence against the Hindu community as of yesterday, according to the Police Headquarters.

At least 583 people have so far been arrested.