

MORE NEWS

4 of family burnt in fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four of a family including two children were burnt in a fire believed to be originated from a gas leak in Narayanganj's Arahazar upazila yesterday morning.

The injured are: Solaiman Hossain (44), a cloth trader; his wife Rima Akter (30); their sons Mushfiqur Rahman Mahid (13), a sixth grader of a local school, and Mahmudul Hasan Arosh (5). They were admitted to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka.

Solaiman sustained 95 percent burns, Rima 15 percent, Mahid 16 percent while Arosh had five percent burns. Solaiman was shifted to ICU.

The fire originated at the house on the ground floor at Kumarpara around 6:00am as Solaiman lit a match stick to boil water. It engulfed the house immediately, injured Rima said at the hospital.

The family suspected that gas, leaking from the cylinder used for cooking, caused the fire. Mahid's aunt Hawa Begum, who lives in a nearby room, said they rushed to the house hearing a loud explosion. Rozina Akter, duty officer of fire service, said they did not receive information on the fire but they will investigate it.

Two killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed and three others injured in two road accidents over the last two days.

In Faridpur Sadar, Subrata Kumar Das (38), lecturer of a homeopathy college, died after a bus collided head-on with the microbus carrying him on the Dhaka-Khulna Highway at Mallikpur are around 9:00am yesterday.

The collision also injured three other passengers of the microbus.

Police seized the bus and microbus but the bus driver fled the scene.

In Dinajpur, MD Asaduzzaman (45), a pharma company sales representative, died after being hit by a truck on Sunday evening.

56 hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 56 dengue patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, of whom 13 are from outside Dhaka, according to DGHS. The total number of dengue cases rose to 27,660. Of the total infected, 4,405 are from outside Dhaka.

According to DGHS, 98 people have died of dengue infection in the country this year.



The sudden rainfall has startled all residents of the capital, as they tried their best to take shelter from the raindrops above yesterday. In TSC area, this little one's parent put a plastic bag over the child's head to create some sort of safeguard. Top right, At Karwan Bazar, produce sellers were basically trapped inside their stalls, as water inundated their surroundings. Meanwhile, students were seen holding on to their umbrellas, as they gathered in droves in front of a school at Mohammadpur.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, ANISUR RAHMAN, RASHED SHUMON

Unusual rain, usual suffering

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although December is usually a time when the dry season makes its presence felt, residents of the capital yesterday witnessed heavy rainfall that submerged several parts of the city, causing much suffering.

Commuters, especially students and office-goers, went through a lot of trouble, as transport options were hard to come by amid traffic congestion at some points of the city. Many reached school after getting soaked in rainwater, as they were forced to walk all the way to their destinations.

The rain that started on Sunday, due to the effects of cyclonic storm "Jawad", is still continuing. The met office recorded 67mm of rainfall between 6:00am and 3:00pm in Dhaka

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3-WAY COLLISION IN CTG

Gateman held, bus driver still untraceable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested gateman Ashraf Alami of Khulshi railway crossing in a case filed over the three-way collision between a train, CNG-run auto-rickshaw and bus that killed three people in Chattogram on Saturday.

"On information, we held the gateman from Khulshi area. He was later handed over to the railway police," said OC Sontosh Kumar Chakma of Khulshi Police Station.

OC Md Nizam Uddin of Chattogram Railway Police Station said Ashraf was shown arrested in the case and sent to court.

"The bus driver who ploughed through the traffic and later collided with the running train and triggered the fatal accident is still at large," he said.

The collision allegedly took place due to Ashraf's negligence, which resulted in a barrier on one side of the crossing remaining open as the train rushed in.

The CCTV footage also revealed that two CNG-run auto-rickshaws and a three-

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50 YEARS OF BANGLADESH-INDIA TIES

Bangladesh's liberation changed S Asia's political map

Says Indian High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India yesterday celebrated the first ever "Friendship Day" in Dhaka, Delhi and 18 other capitals of the world, committing to deepen ties and promote regional peace and prosperity.

On this day in 1971, India and Bhutan recognised Bangladesh as a sovereign state, 10 days before its official victory.

"This day is truly a historic one, a day of true friendship," said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at a discussion marking 50 years of diplomatic relationship between Bangladesh and India.

Through recognition of Bangladesh, it was clear that the war, in which India had taken part on December 3, 1971, was not an "India-Pakistan war", Momen said at the event, titled "50 Years of Independence", organised by Sector Commanders' Forum at Dhaka's Jatiya Press Club.

Bangladesh and her people are grateful to India and the Indian people for supporting -- in all ways -- the Liberation War, he said.

"We have solved all major problems through

dialogue and discussion. We will do the same for any other small problems that may arise," the minister added.

Connectivity between the two countries via rail, road and river-ways is improving, he said, adding that connectivity with all countries in South Asia -- including Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan -- will be improved rapidly.

Indian High Commission in Dhaka also arranged an event at Bangabandhu International Convention Center, which was attended by ministers, war veterans, officials, diplomats, journalists and civil society members.

Indian High Commissioner Vikram K Doraiswami said the liberation of Bangladesh changed the political map of South Asia.

"But it also changed our ideological map: your freedom proved beyond doubt that the common bonds of culture, civilisation, and language transcend the false theory that different religious groups cannot live together," he commented.

"Your liberation struggle also emphasised the inevitability of the victory of truth and justice over

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Golapganj mayor suspended for commenting on 'LGD corruption'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Mayor Aminul Islam Rabel of Sylhet's Golapganj municipality has been suspended over his controversial comments about corruption of the Local Government Division.

He was suspended as per the Local Government (Municipality) Act-2009, says an official notification issued yesterday.

In the notification, the division stated that his comments regarding the government and the department are a punishable offence as per the act and the division has suspended him from his mayor post.

On November 24, Aminul attended a programme in London organised by Greater Sylhet Development Council.

At the event, he said, "I'm elected mayor twice in a row as people chose me over political candidate. Awami League's Obaidul Quader did not allow me as AL candidate, but I secured five-six times more vote than the rival candidate while

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The man who 'smuggled' freedom fighters



After coming to know of his involvement with the Liberation War, the Pakistan army torched Royes' house. The family could never recover from it. Now, his children live in a much smaller space.

PHOTO: STAR

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

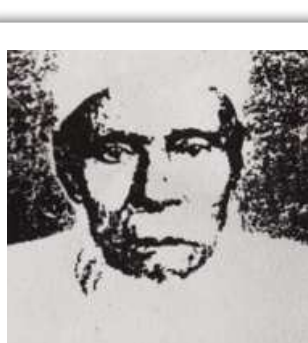
Royes Uddin Pashari did not plan to get involved with the Liberation War. Before it began, he was already one of the richest people in Pirojpur, so there was little incentive for him to get swept away by the sirens of the battlefield.

But his fortunes were not amassed through legal means. Royes Uddin Naiya, as he was known, smuggled various goods from neighbouring India through Sundarbans' waterway. He was one of the top smugglers marked by the Pakistan government.

But the all-engulfing nature of the war eventually pulled Royes under its fold. As one thing led to another, he turned out to be a major contributor to the war efforts in the district.

At the beginning of the war, he came into contact with Major Ziauddin, sub-sector commander of sector-9, based on the Sundarbans. As Royes knew how to navigate those waters, Ziauddin would take his help to guide freedom fighters through the numerous canals of the world's largest mangrove forest.

On his boats, Royes would transport freedom fighters, for training, as well as refugees to India, where millions of Bangladeshis, especially Hindus, took shelter from the Pakistan army and



Royes Uddin Pashari



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met with repercussions. After the Pakistan army and their collaborators had come to know about Royes' role, they torched his and his relatives' homes adjacent to Badura fish landing station in Pirojpur Sadar upazila.

With everything on fire, Royes had to take his family and relatives to India.

"I can still remember that time, even though I was only a 13-year-old boy back then," Sohrab said.

Selina Begum, one of Royes' daughters, said his father had brought in logs and carpenters from India to finish the two-storey wooden house at their village.

"It took the Pakistan army three attempts to put it on fire with kerosene," she said, adding that it were the collaborators who pulled the strings behind this.

Royes lost a huge portion of his wealth. He could never rebuild the house, and his sons now live in tiny houses.

Md Samsul Haque Khan, a freedom fighter from Pirojpur, told this newspaper that without the help of Royes, it would be difficult for the freedom fighters to use the Sundarbans route for communication.

So important was this, that Major Ziauddin mentioned Royes' role in his book on the war.

On 15 January in 2003, this smuggler turned ally of the freedom fighters passed away.



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	BASHUNDHARA R/A	JOAR SAHARA	BRAND NEW:
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