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Sunk in seconds

Launch capsizes in Shitalakkhya after collision with cargo vessel; 6 die, many missing

STAR REPORT

The MV Afsar Uddin, a small launch thought to have up to 50 people on board, left Narayanganj river terminal around 2:00pm. The weather was fine. The launch was cruising on the Shitalakkhya towards Munshiganj.

But just 15 minutes later, when the launch reached Char Syedpur area in Narayanganj Sadar upazila, horror struck the passengers as a large cargo vessel, the MV Rupshi-9, hit the launch.

Panicked, passengers of the launch started jumping into the river as the cargo ship bore down on the small vessel. Within seconds, the launch sank with many of the passengers still in it.

On social media, distressing video footage, presumably taken by people on nearby boats, showing the launch being pushed by the ship on the busy river did the rounds soon after the incident.

At least six individuals died and 20 others went missing.

Rescuers identified three of the deceased as Jaynal Bhuiyan, 50, Arifa Begum, 35, and her 15-month-old baby Safayet Hossain.

Firefighters said the body of a girl aged around seven and that of two women, around 19 and 30 years old, were yet to be identified.

Contacted last night, Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Narayanganj, said, "We assume that some 20 more people are missing. Our rescue operations are still going on."

Officers of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) said the cargo vessel was seized and 14 of its crew members were arrested.

Five bodies were recovered from inside the sunken



The moment MV Rupshi-9 rams the smaller passenger launch ML Afsar Uddin on the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj yesterday afternoon. The launch, thought to have up to 50 people on board, sank within seconds. Inset, family members of a victim in tears on the bank of the river.

PHOTO: SCREEN GRAB, STAR

US wants Bangladesh vocal against Ukraine war

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US wants Bangladesh on its side as it endeavours to end the war in Ukraine, said a top American diplomat yesterday.

On March 2, a UN General Assembly resolution Bangladesh was among 34 countries -- including India, Pakistan and China -- that abstained from voting in the UN General Assembly resolution on March 2 that

reprimanded Russia for invading Ukraine and demanded that Moscow stops fighting and immediately withdraws its military forces.

"This is a moment for all free nations and all free people to stand together with the people of Ukraine and say this war must end," said Victoria Nuland, the US undersecretary for political affairs.

Nuland's comments came at a press briefing after the eighth US-

Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue at the State Guesthouse Padma.

The US and its allies negotiated for months to prevent Russia from the invasion but Moscow did not listen.

"Now the apartments and maternity hospitals are being bombed and civilians are becoming victims. You are all watching the horrible pictures coming from Ukraine," she said.

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Govt reduces soybean oil price by Tk 8 a litre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday reduced the price of bottled soybean edible oil at the retail level by Tk 8 per litre to Tk 160.

The price of non-bottle soybean oil was fixed at Tk 136 per litre while a five-litre container of soybean oil was fixed at Tk 760 at the retail level.

Tapan Kanti Ghosh, senior secretary to the commerce ministry announced the new rate of edible oil at a press conference at the

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Brac's lesser-known gift to Bangladesh: vaccination push

GOLAM MORTOZA

If one was to list the work Brac, the organisation Sir Fazle Hasan Abed built, has done or how it has contributed to Bangladesh's development, the task would be next to impossible.

What would be easier is if we asked what this organisation has not done -- and Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus articulated it best.

"It is certainly not an exaggeration to say that there is hardly anyone among the 170 million people of Bangladesh who do not benefit in some way from Abed's programmes or enjoy products and services provided by his organisations," the Grameen Bank founder said.

Sir Fazle and Brac are synonymous -- there is no scope of discussing one without the other.

Even in absentia, he is fuelling Brac's onward journey through his guiding principles.

It is as if there's no end to the half-a-century-old organisation's work extravaganza. Apart from its home

RELATED STORY ON B4

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

OBITUARY

MD. RAKIBUR RAHMAN

August 18, 1951 - March 18, 2022

Former 3 times President, Dhaka Stock Exchange Ltd.
Founder Chairman, Sheikh Russel Jatiyo Shishu Kishore Parishad
Chairman, Midway Securities Ltd.

We mourn the death of our beloved father Mr. Md. Rakibur Rahman, who passed away at 12:23 pm Friday afternoon on March 18, 2022 in United Hospital (*Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*).

His Salat al-Janazah was held after Isha prayers in Azad Masjid, Gulshan and he was laid to eternal rest in Banani graveyard.

He is survived by his wife, 2 sons, numerous family members, friends, colleagues and well wishers. On behalf of the Rahman family and Midway Securities Ltd., we humbly seek your prayers for the departed soul.

Md. Ashequr Rahman & Zarif Fatah Rahman

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ANOTHER MILESTONE TOWARDS A SAFER NATION INAUGURATION OF PAYRA THERMAL POWER PLANT

81,158 MT of Steel has been supplied by BSRM

For making this a reality, we are most thankful to
The Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

We would also like to express our gratitude to: The Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh China Power Company (Pvt.) Limited, the Consortium of Miniconsult Sdn. Bhd, Shenzhen Energy Engineering Corporation and Power Energy Management Engineering Company, Power-Energy Management and Engineering Company (PEMEC), the Chinese Government, China Energy Engineering Group Northeast No. 1 Electric Power Construction Co. Ltd. (NEPC) and China National Energy Engineering and Construction CO.Ltd (CECC).

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