

Three killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed in road accidents in three districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Chattogram, a college student was killed after a covered van ran her over on Bayezid Link road in Sitakunda upazila.

Fateha Jahan Zeba (18), a student of the port city's Enayet Bazar Mahila College, died instantly, said police.

Zeba – who was from Sitakunda's Kalu Shah area – along with her father Md faruk was going to her college on a motorcycle.

The accident happened when the bike skidded off the slippery road and she fell from it, said Md Towhid, in-charge of Fouzderhat Police Outpost.

Police sent the body to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy, he said.

The covered van driver managed to flee with the van, he added.

Meanwhile in Patuakhali, Rana (36), helper of a bus driver, died as the vehicle ran him over at Nachnapara intersection in Kalapara.

According to eyewitnesses and police, the bus of Molla Enterprise had left Kuakata in the morning for Patuakhali and was waiting at Kalapara bus stoppage to pick up passengers.

Rana got down from the bus and was going to the ticket counter. Meantime, he was hit by the bus as the driver was trying to park it at a suitable place.

He was declared dead at Kalapara Hospital.

Kalapara Police Station OC Jasim Uddin said they seized the bus but its driver fled the scene.

In Barguna, a bank officer named Sahidul Islam (35) was killed as a microbus hit his motorcycle from the opposite direction on Amtali-Kalapara road at Manikjuri, said police.



Disregarding a High Court directive and environmental laws, illegal hill cutting continues unabated in Habiganj due to lax monitoring of the authorities concerned. This photo of an excavator used for cutting a hill in Nabiganj area of the district was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Hill cutting on, defying ban

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

Disregarding a High Court directive and environmental laws, illegal hill cutting continues unabated in Dinarpur of Habiganj due to lax monitoring of the authorities concerned.

Responding to a petition, the HC in 2015 directed the government to stop hill cutting in the area and take appropriate legal steps against offenders.

According to Bangladesh Environment Preservation Act 1995, amended in 2000, cutting of hills without approval of the authorities concerned is prohibited.

Punishment of such an offence for the first time is up to two years' imprisonment or Tk 2 lakh fine or both.

For subsequent offences, the punishment is up to 10 years' imprisonment or Tk 10 lakh fine

or both.

Still, many powerful individuals raze hills in the name of development work, housing and business establishments, ignoring existing environmental laws and defying bans by the Department of Environment (DoE).

This gross disregard to the HC directive first came to the fore in 2016, when two workers were killed in a landslide while cutting hills in Dinarpur – just a year after the ban.

Still those involved with illegal hill cutting and sand extraction did not face any consequences, much to the astonishment of environmental activists in the district.

Several groups, under the leadership of brothers Sirul Mia and Salim Mia, are currently active in cutting hills in the region, locals said, seeking anonymity.

In May, they extracted sand from a canal next to Nalsuja football field in Nabiganj upazila and filled Abdus Shaheed area of Sadarghat New Market in exchange for Tk 20 lakh. Initially, the administration did not take action against them.

When the information garnered mainstream attention, the authorities confiscated their excavator machine and took away the keys only to return it when things cooled down, alleged locals.

A high-rise building was built in Debpara Konapara area after cutting huge hills in the months of June-July. This was also reportedly led by Sirul and Salim.

On July 9, they started cutting a hill at Shankarsena village of Ghaznaipur union.

Nabiganj Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Uttam Kumar Das conducted a raid and detained a soil-laden tractor and

its driver.

However, the two brothers used their influence to get the tractor and driver released later, locals alleged.

Contacted, Salim Mia denied the allegations, saying, "We have no affiliation with hill cutting. Some people are trying to spoil our reputation."

His brother Sirul Mia could not be contacted for comments.

Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon in Habiganj, said, "Hills are being cut despite the High Court directives. Strict measures have to be taken against the perpetrators."

Uttam Kumar Das said they will write a letter to the DoE to take necessary measures on the matter.

Mohammad Emran Hossain, director of DoE Sylhet, said a team will visit Dinarpur to investigate the matter.

DNCC demolishes two police boxes

UNB, Dhaka

A mobile court of Dhaka North City Corporation demolished two unauthorised police boxes built on a footpath in front of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital (SSMCH) in Dhaka yesterday.

Sources said the two police boxes were built illegally and caused suffering to people including treatment seekers and commuters.

Mayor Md Atiul Islam was present during the drive.

He said all the footpaths will have to be freed from illegal structures to ensure safe and smoother movement of pedestrians.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Don't waste food: minister

UNB, Ctg

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder yesterday urged the people of the country to eat nutritious rice and prevent food waste.

"Rice is being wasted by cutting coarse rice to turn them into fine rice and thus rice is losing nutrition. People should be careful about preventing food waste," he said.

The minister said these at a views exchange meeting with officers of Central Storage Depot at Chattogram's Halishahar.

Sadhan said rice import by private companies has started. "Importers will bring rice that people want. No one will be allowed to import substandard rice."

The minister said those traders who didn't provide rice to government depots even after signing agreements will be punished. "The government will sign agreements with the rice traders once again. Doing business will become tough for those who won't follow the agreement."

Food Secretary Md Ismail Hossain and DG of Food Directorate Md Shakhawat Hossain were also present.



PHOTO: STAR

Bringing a wind of change

Kurigram youth spends his days spreading education, stopping child marriage

S DILIP ROY

Six years ago, Shyamoli Akhter used to be a playful seventh-grader – who loved studying, playing, and roaming around the village with her head held high.

But her parents didn't approve. They started taking up frantic efforts to marry her off, jeopardising her childhood.

Shyamoli hails from the remote Dharmapur village in Kashipur union of Kurigram's Phulbari upazila, near the Indian border.

"It was a bleak winter morning of 2016 when I found out that my parents finalised my marriage without my consent. There was no way out," she said.

"Just a day before the marriage, a man came to my house as a blessing. He convinced my parents to dismiss the marriage after discussing child marriage's adverse impacts with them for hours," she added.

Shyamoli was eventually able to continue her education. At present, she studies at Kashipur Degree College.

The man behind saving Shyamoli

from the grasp of child marriage is Habibur Rahman, a 25-year-old from Kashipur union, studying law at a university in Rangpur.

Habibur has single-handedly stopped around 300 child marriages in the last nine years, said locals.

Apart from this, his activism also includes counteracting school dropouts and awareness about smuggling.

He is now popularly known as a "Border Volunteer" in the locality.

Most residents of Dharmapur are poor. Because of that, most still don't give much importance to their children's education.

Habibur also distributes notebooks and pens among poor children, free of cost, to encourage them to continue their education.

"I was able to send over 700 dropout children back to school," he said.

Abdul Jabbar (55), a village resident, said, "Habibur often homeschools children free of cost."

"Student attendance was very low even five years ago but it's gradually increasing, thanks to Habibur's

role," said Paresch Chandra Sarkar, headteacher of Kashiabari Govt Primary School.

As the village is along the border, there have been many incidents of smuggling in Dharmapur.

"Even children are being used in smuggling. Habibur has been working against smuggling for the last couple of years," added Abdul Jabbar.

Habibur devoted himself to such social and philanthropic activities in 2013, after passing his HSC examination.

"I noticed that people in my area are lagging due to a lack of education. I emphasised teaching children and then gradually shifted my focus to ending child marriage and smuggling," Habibur said.

Habibur also provides tutoring and spends his earnings mostly on conducting social activities.

At present, he has formed a "Youth Forum" at each of the union's nine wards to speed up social activities. Each committee comprises nine youths.

He sought the cooperation of administrations in this regard.

Man arrested with 765 yaba pills in Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have arrested a man from Dhaka's Hatirheel area yesterday on charges of selling yaba pills.

Rab-3 conducted a drive in Hatirheel's Mirbagh area at 9:30pm and arrested Arif Babu (38), said a Rab press release.

Around 765 yaba pills, mobile phones, SIM cards, one knife and Tk 2,160 were recovered from his possession, Rab sources told the news agency.

Arif buys yaba pills from Cox's Bazar and sells them to different areas in the capital, said Rab.

An investigation is underway in this regard.

Dredger used for sand extraction seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A team of forest officials seized a dredger and two pipes used for sand extraction from inside Barbakia reserve forest in Chattogram early yesterday.

Habibul Hoque, range officer of Barbakia Range, conducted the drive while those were being used in extracting sand from a canal flowing through the reserve forest.

Immediately after the team rushed to the spot, perpetrators fled the scene leaving the equipment, said Shafiqul Islam, divisional forest officer of Chattogram south forest division. A case was filed, he added.



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e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Zone-5, Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of following package, which will be available at e-GP website from 24/07/2022, 7.00pm.

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of works	Last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
1.	Tender ID-715244 egp/dscc/z05/21-22/P-38	Construction works of community center as like as 1st floor of Sutrapur Community Center by removing old shop on the ground floor under Ward No. 44.	10/08/2022 2.00pm	10/08/2022 4.30pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Saiful Islam Joy
Executive Engineer
Zone-5 (Sayedabad)
Dhaka South City Corporation

DSCC/PRD/15/2022-23
GD-1422