### 519 died in 458 accidents last month **Says Road Safety Foundation**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 519 people died and 961 suffered injuries in 458 accidents across the country in August, said Road Safety Foundation in a press release yesterday.

Of the deceased, 64 were women and 69 children.

Road Safety Foundation collected the data based on reports of nine national dailies, seven online news portals and electronic

A total of 172 people ed in 183 motorcycle accidents, which accounted for 33.14 percent of the total deaths, the press release added.

Some 109 pedestrians and 94 drivers and helpers died in accidents during this period.

At least eight people died and six remained missing in 11 waterway accidents, while 24 people died and nine were injured in 23 train accidents.



Amid students' protests, local authorities set up a zebra-crossing and speed-breakers in the area where a Chittagong University teacher was killed after a microbus collided with his scooter yesterday.

## CU teacher killed in road accident

Couple among 3 die as pickup, auto-rickshaw collide in Sylhet

STAR REPORT

A Chittagong University (CU) teacher died as a microbus collided with his motorbike in the university's gate-1 area early yesterday.

The deceased is Aftab Hossain, associate professor of the university's Zoology department, said police.

According to police sources, Aftab was going towards the city on his scooter from the university. Around 12:30am, a Hathazari-bound microbus, coming from the opposite direction, hit Aftab's scooter.

Eye witness Moktar babu said, "I was waiting for a CNG and the scooter rider was trying to cross the road, suddenly the microbus came and hit the scooter."

Aftab was seriously injured and rushed to Chattogram Medical College Hospital, where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Kamrul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Raozan Highway Police Station, said locals detained the microbus driver Masud Parvez and handed him over to the police.

Police also seized the microbus.

"After filing a case against the driver, we've already sent him to court," he added.

After the incident, students of the university blocked the Chattogram-Rangamati highway at 3:00am for around 30 minutes, demanding the construction of a foot-overbridge and speed breaker in the accident site.

Aftab Hossain's namaz-e-janaza was held at 2:00pm at

# Incomplete bridge, immeasurable suffering

Narail residents struggle as Kalia bridge's construction remains unfinished

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Thousands have been suffering for years as the construction of Kalia bridge over the Nabaganga river in Narail is yet to be completed.

The bridge was supposed to be completed in 2019. However, only 65 to 70 percent of the work has been done so far.

The duration of the Tk 72,37,00,000 project -- which started on March 18, 2018 has been extended till December 23 in the 4th term. However, the authorities have not yet confirmed if it can meet the fourth deadline

Over five lakh people of Narail and Khulna have been facing manifold problems for years as work of 651.83-metre-long and 10.25-metre-wide bridge could not be completed in five years.

After the expiry of the deadline in 2019,



RHD extended the deadline by one more year till June 30, 2020. The deadline was extended further till June 30, 2021, due to the pandemic.

During a recent visit to the construction site, this correspondent saw the work almost abandoned, with very few people around. One pillar is yet to be re-installed as the previous one broke and sank into the river after being



Barkat Ullah, chairman of Kalia's Khasial union of Kalia upazila, told this correspondent that around 400 villages out of the 635 in Narail district will be directly benefitted from the bridge.

"People of 39 unions of Loharagara and Narail Sadar and 14 unions in Kalia are suffering immensely. Every day thousands of people have to cross Nabaganga river to go to offices, schools-colleges and hospitals in Narail town," he said.

"I have to spend Tk 20 every day to cross the river. It is quite burdensome. If the bridge is fully constructed, I would be benefitted," said eighth-grader Taiba Khatun.

Hassan Al Mamun, chairman of Lohagara's Kotakol union, said, "The construction work is moving at a snail's pace due to the negligence

hit by a cargo. The link roads are yet to be of the contracted firm who are appointing

RHD executive engineer in Narail Md Ashrafuzzaman said, "A pillar broke down due to being hit by a vessel. We need a revised design.'

"Around Tk 36 crore will be additionally needed for this purpose. Besides, the other pillars will be constructed with modern safety rings. Hence, it may take longer than December 2023 to complete the work," he

"I am disappointed at the delay in the bridge's construction. I have repeatedly talked with the contracted company, related offices and the higher authorities to finish the work," said local lawmaker Kabirul Haq Mukti.

"If the bridge is opened, the connectivity of Gopalgani, Barishal and Bagerhat districts with Narail-Jashore will increase," he added.

### **DHAKA COLLEGE** Four hurt in **BCL** fighting

DU CORRESPONDENT

Two factions of BCL's Dhaka College unit locked into clashes on the campus last night, which left at least four injured.

The clash broke out around 8:30pm, after BCL activist Shahariar Hasnat Jion was injured in an attack carried out by another BCL group.

According to campus sources, Jion was attacked following his protest for serving poor-quality food at the canteen on Thursday.

The situation turned worse yesterday evening when BCL activists from northern and southern hostels of the locked into clashes.

Meanwhile, college sources said at least two rounds of bullets were fired during the clashes.

Prof Mohammad Yousuf, principal of the college, said, "I have heard that there has been a dispute between two factions of Chhatra League... But there was no exchange of fire. I have heard that crude bombs exploded."

The superintendents of the hostels were trying to bring the situation under control, he added.

BCL central committee president Al Nahian Khan Joy said, "They [BCL] activists have been instructed to remain calm. Organisational action will be taken after investigating the matter," he said.

## Arsenic detected in tube-well water in C'nawabganj Over 50 infected with arsenicosis in Betbaria

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Over 50 people have been detected with arsenicosis in the last two months in Betbaria village of Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila.

They used to consume water with high concentration of arsenic from tube-wells, said officials of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) after a survey.

Forty-three-year-old Alef Nur, a resident of the village, saw multiple warts on her body around five

"I passed around five years with these on my body. But I didn't face much trouble. Around two months ago. I started feeling sick. I couldn't walk properly. I couldn't go out of home for work," she



When we heard that a large number of people have been detected with arsenicosis, we tested water of all the 28 tube-wells in Betbaria village. We found high concentration of arsenic in all of those.

AMIT KUMAR SARKAR

"I went to Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital. After diagnosis, doctors told me that I'm suffering from arsenicosis. Six of our family members have also been detected with arsenicosis. We are now under treatment," she added.

Another resident Roni Ahmed (24), a mason by profession, along with eight of his family members has also been diagnosed with arsenicosis.

Amit Kumar Sarkar, executive engineer of DPHE in Chapainawabganj, said, "When we heard SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

# Attack on baul singer protested in Narail

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat** 

Cultural activists yesterday protested attack on baul singer Harez Fakir in Narail.

The 70-year-old was attacked allegedly by the local UP chairman's men at Purulia village in Kalia upazila

Protesting the incident, Sammilita Sangskritik Jote formed a human chain at Narail Press Club.

Jote president in Narail Maloy Kundu, vice president Aslam Khan Lulu and general secretary Shariful Alam Litu among others spoke on the

Municipality mayor Anjuman Ara also joined the programme.

The speakers said such an attack cannot be accepted in any way. They demanded justice for the



### Whale carcass washes ashore in Kuakata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A 30-feet-long dead whale washed up on the Kuakata in Patuakhali beach yesterday morning.

The half-decomposed body of the mammal was found at Jhaubagan point of the beach around 9:00am, said Dolphin Protection Committee Member Abul Hossain Raju.

"In the morning, a motorcyclist spotted the dead whale on the beach and informed us. Later, we reached the spot and informed the forest department. The whale is 30 feet long and 6 feet wide. It is believed that it died 10-15 days ago," said Abul Hossain.

Sagarika Smriti, a biodiversity Kuakata researcher at World Fish, said it was a Baleen species of whale. There are also 16 types of the Baleen whale. These mammals like to live in the cold water of the deep sea. It is yet to be

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# EVERYONE'S DOING IT

Illegal sand extraction goes unabated in Bagerhat

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat** 

Bagerhat has become a safe haven for illegal sand miners, as they have been wreaking havoc in different areas of the district, polluting the environment and creating public nuisance.

Locally made dredger machines are used day and night to lift sand.

On Saturday afternoon, two dredgers were seen extracting underground sand from the canal adjacent to the road at Barabasbaria area in Dema union of Bagerhat Sadar upazila.

The first one, mining sand from a canal at Abdul Rasulpur village, belonged to Ripon Kumar Mosid, a member of Dema Union Parishad's ward-8.

The second dredger, belonging to



one Palash, was placed in a canal at Barabasbaria.

Locals alleged that Dema Union Awami League president Sheikh Jahangir Hossain is involved with sand lifting.

Not only in Dema, but this activity is going on in 75 unions and three municipalities of Bagerhat.

Seeking anonymity, dredger owners

have alleged that part of the money received from sales has to be paid to the local public representatives.

Contacted, Ripon Kumar said. "Everyone does it. Why is it only my fault? I immediately stopped lifting sand when the upazila nirbahi officer sir gave a warning."

"There is little profit in this business anyway," he lamented. Dema Union AL President Sheikh said

he is mining sand to fill a field of a local school to facilitate students' activities.

"I'll stop the machine when the field is full," he added. Dilip Kumar Dutta, professor of

environmental science at Khulna University, said the biggest damage caused by underground sand lifting is the loss

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