

1 killed, 3 hurt in Hazaribagh explosion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed and three others were injured in an explosion at a courier service office in the capital's Hazaribagh area early yesterday while unloading goods from a covered van carrying chemicals.

The deceased was identified as Elias, 40, a staff of Metro Express Courier Service and Parcel. The injured are -- Dilip Kumar, 40, Abdul Halim, 38, and Marcel Trudu, 20, -- all are workers of the courier service provider.

Among them, Halim is in critical condition while a leg of Dilip was severed in the explosion.

The explosion occurred at the office the courier service on Shajahan Sardar Road adjacent to Hazaribagh Beribadh around 12:30am, said Muktaruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Hazaribagh Police Station.

Quoting the courier service staffers, the OC said a Gulshan-based

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At "Swadhinata Sangram" in the Dhaka University area, busts created by sculptor Shamim Shikder, in remembrance of the martyred intellectuals during the Liberation War, are in a dilapidated state. Many of them have eroded, so much so that they have become unrecognisable. Despite this situation persisting for years, authorities are yet to address the issue.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

'Bail on mere grounds of age not rational'

Apex court criticises HC in full text of verdict in graft case against former land ministry official

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in the full text of a judgement has criticised the High Court Division for granting bail to the Land Ministry's former administrative officer Md Kutub Uddin Ahmed.

Kutub Uddin (62) -- who has been sentenced to five years imprisonment in a corruption case -- was granted bail by the HC on grounds of his old age, without hearing the pending appeal against his conviction in the case.

In the 20-page full text of the verdict, a three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Nuruzzaman also mentioned that granting bail on the mere grounds of age is not rational.

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Make the DAP fair for all

Demands Institute of Architects Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criticising the way of determining floor area ratio in the new Detailed Area Plan (DAP), Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) yesterday demanded the government determine the ratio keeping equity in mind.

Floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of a building's total floor area (gross floor area) and the size of the piece of land upon which it is built.

"The [low] FAR that was fixed [1.1 to 2.7] for peripheral areas like Gazipur, Rupganj and Kaliganj, Savar, Keraniganj and Narayanganj will not enable proper development. This will ultimately increase the dependency on central Dhaka for accommodation," said Iqbal Habib, convener of IAB's working group on DAP, at a press conference held at the institute's conference room.

Iqbal said the government has fixed FAR based on the characteristics of an area. But it will have to be fixed based on estimated population and development, keeping equity in mind.

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Besides, IAB also demanded withdrawing any opportunity for conditional development on farmland and protecting flood-flow zones, 65 canals and other waterbodies.

Such conditional land use will put Dhaka city in danger of even more waterlogging and will decline its ground water, said Iqbal Habib.

On August 23, the government published the gazette notification for the 20-year (2016-2035) DAP, which covers 1,528 square km of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk).

Stressing the need for decentralisation and ensuring civic facilities, Mubasshar Hussain, president of the IAB, said the pressure on Dhaka city will increase further if the government fails to take care of people in peripheral areas of the capital.

Alleging that Rajuk is an organisation commonly associated with bribery, DNCC Ward-II Councillor Dewan Abdul Mannan said this DAP will just further disappoint people.

DNCC Ward-14 Councillor Md Humayun Rashid said they want a DAP that will meet the demands of the capital's residents.

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'Killing rivers in the name of balu mahal'

Environmentalists call for proper survey before leasing out rivers for sand extraction

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Punish perpetrating officials, illegal sand lifters
- Fix ceiling of how much sand, stones can be lifted
- Implement existing laws to protect rivers
- Seek compensation from encroachers

**According to government statistics, different district administrations leased out as many as 256 balu mahals in the 2021-2022 fiscal alone. The government earned over Tk 235 crore by leasing out rivers. Few government officials are killing these waterbodies only for some money.**

SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN, chief executive of Bela

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government officials in many districts are leasing out rivers in the name of "balu mahals" (a designated place from where sand is lifted), without proper survey, said environmentalists at a seminar yesterday.

Saying that such practice ruins rivers, they demanded punitive measures against the officials concerned.

They came up with the demand at a roundtable discussion titled "Environmental crisis and vulnerability of rivers due to sand-stone lifting and environmental pollution".

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) And Water Rights Forum jointly organised the programme at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Addressing the event, Bela chief executive Syeda Rizwana Hasan said river erosion in many areas has taken a severe turn, as sand and stone extraction from rivers continues unabated.

As a result, vast areas of farmland, households and properties are being lost to riverbank erosion every day, she said.

According to government statistics, different district administrations leased out as many as 256 balu mahals in the 2021-2022 fiscal year alone. The government earned over Tk 235 crore by leasing out rivers. Few government officials are killing these waterbodies only for some money, Rizwana added.

The government should fix a ceiling of how much sand and stones can be lifted from rivers

while approving the lease if needed, she opined.

Shamsul Huda, director of ALRD, said different government officials are leasing out rivers to protect the interest of traders instead of protecting environment.

He also demanded legal actions against such officials and illegal sand lifters.

Nagorik Uddyog's chief executive Zakir Hossain stressed the need for strict implementation of existing laws to protect rivers from grabbers and illegal sand lifters.

Tuhin Wadud, professor of Begum Rokeya University, said only evicting illegal structures from riverbanks is not enough. Rather, the government must seek compensation from encroachers.

Around a dozen of environmental activists spoke at the event.

'Even police, the rich, journos are narco suppliers'

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police, affluent people and journalists, they are the "suppliers of narcotics".

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan made this remark yesterday while addressing a roundtable titled "Role of the private sector in drug addiction treatment".

"We usually bring all of them to book. No one is exempted," said the minister.

Centre of Governance Studies (CGS) organised the roundtable at the capital's Cirdap, with CGS Chairperson Dr Manjur Ahmed Chowdhury in the chair.

As chief guest, the home boss said police and Rab officials who were involved in trading drugs are in jail. The law is not different for any police official.

Asaduzzaman said dope tests are carried out to identify drug abusers in the police force. Those who fail the test are suspended.

"We are going to introduce mandatory dope

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Ensure all-out security for puja

IGP asks law enforcers

BSS, Dhaka

Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed yesterday asked the field level law enforcers to ensure flawless security measures during the Durga Puja celebrations across the country.

He expressed hope that Durga Puja will be celebrated peacefully with collective efforts of all.

Benazir urged the community and beat police to coordinate with the Puja committees concerned to engage in Puja security.

"We have taken three-tier security measures at the pre-puja, during puja and the post-puja celebrations," the IGP said.

He said CCTV cameras in all Puja mandaps will be installed, while handheld metal detectors and archway gates will be set up.

Benazir urged all the puja committees to avoid using loudspeakers during prayers and call the National Emergency Service-999 in case of emergency.

UN for regulating use of antibiotics

Says health minister

UNB, New York

Health Minister Zahid Maleque has expressed concern over the widespread sale of antibiotics amid call from the United Nations to regulate the drug's excessive use.

"The UN has urged its member states to formulate policies and laws so that excessive uses of antibiotics can be prevented," he told the news agency in New York on Sunday.

The minister is in the US attending the 77th UN General Assembly.

"This year, UNGA held three sessions on health in which I had participated. The antibiotics issue, particularly antibiotic resistance, was widely discussed during these sessions. Member countries expressed grave concern over the fact that people all over the world were using antibiotics without prescriptions, and it was discovered that people from the low- and middle-income countries were using antibiotics more than people from the rich countries," he said.

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Dengue death toll **53**

Total number of patients **14,362**

**1,692** still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients **12,617**

**482** more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

**PRAYER TIMING**

SEPTEMBER 27

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:35	12:45	4:15	6:00	7:30
JAMAAZ 5:10	1:15	4:35	6:05	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



In a pickup truck loaded with portable containers made out of polythene, fishers are transporting rui and katla fry from Mymensingh to Cumilla, to release them in a waterbody for farming. This photo was taken from Tejgaon Industrial Area recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Take steps to enforce ban on 3-wheelers

Says JS body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary committee yesterday expressed strong resentment over the long delay of printing and distributing smart driving licences.

In its meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in the capital, the parliamentary standing committee on road transport and bridges ministry recommended swiftly distributing licences among applicants.

With Jatiya Party lawmaker Rowshan Ara in the chair, the parliamentary watchdog recommended taking steps to stop the plying of battery-run three-wheelers on all the highways in the country to ensure road

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