

## Cop among three killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed in separate road accidents in Narsingdi and Chattogram yesterday, report our correspondents.

In Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila, a sub-inspector of Demra Police Station, Md Sabuj (30), was killed as a truck ran over his bike in Karar Char area around 9:00am, said Demra Police Station Officer-in-Charge (Investigation) Faruk Mollah.

He was rushed to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital at first, and when his condition deteriorated, the doctors sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries around 12:00pm, said police.

Meanwhile in Chattogram, two people were killed and two were injured when a bus hit a pickup van in Mirsharai upazila.

The deceased were identified as van driver

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## Bus owners plan strike in Rajshahi ahead of BNP rally

STAR DIGITAL REPORT

Transport owners today threatened to enforce a transport strike in all districts of the Rajshahi division from December 1, ahead of BNP's Rajshahi divisional rally scheduled for December 3.

Rajshahi Divisional Road Transport Owners' Association announced the strike in a press briefing after their meeting in Natore town yesterday afternoon, reports our Natore correspondent.

"If the administration does not meet our 11-point demand, including the amendment of the Road Transport Act and stopping the operation of three-wheelers and other illegal vehicles by November 30, the plying of buses and trucks in all districts of Rajshahi division will remain closed for an indefinite period," said Salfat Manjur Biplob, president of the association.

BNP started its series of rallies by holding the

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A group of dancers perform at an event marking the end to general construction work of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel's south tube, which goes beneath the Karnaphuli river. The prime minister joined the event, organised by the Bridges Division in Chattogram, virtually from her official residence Gono Bhaban and officially announced the completion. The photo was taken around 11:00am in the port city's Patenga region yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# Surma dredging plan may be futile

Say experts as BWDB prepares to dredge 15km of 166-km river

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

This year was a disastrous blow for Sylhet's people, due to a devastating flood that continued for around two months from May 12.

Besides floods, in recent years, the city has been facing acute waterlogging. On September 5, only three hours of rain inundated many areas of the city.

For this situation, experts and authorities concerned have pointed fingers at the struggle for Surma river to navigate through the city.

Amid the long-standing demand of dredging the river, it took authorities decades to finally decide on it.

The 15.05 kilometres of Surma, beside the city, is set to be dredged soon.

However, environmental activists raised concerns saying that dredging a small part of the 166-kilometre trans-boundary river won't change the flood situation.

REASONS BEHIND DELAYED INITIATIVES

From 2012 to 2019, Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) prepared three project proposals to dredge Surma and other

waterbodies in the upper-Meghna basin. The first two were scrapped by the ministry.

Its 2019 proposal, which had a budget of Tk 2,200 crore, faced an inter-departmental challenge, since Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) also prepared a Tk 3,000 crore (approx) project.

than 3.68 lakh people and incurring financial losses of Tk 1,238 crore for the division (according to government data).

Considering the pressing demand, BWDB finally got the approval to dredge a small part of the river beside the city under an ongoing project to protect riverbanks.

AKM Niloy Pasha, assistant engineer of BWDB Sylhet, said, "There was an ongoing project to protect Surma's riverbank at Sylhet Sadar and Bishwanath upazila's Rajapur, Mahtabpur and Dashgram areas."

Under this project, the water resources ministry's trustee organisation -- Institute of Water Modelling -- conducted a hydro-morphology study and found that 15.05 kilometres need dredging.

"According to the study, a tender has been called. However, as the recent flood changed the riverbed in some areas, the detailed project plan (DPP) has been revised and now awaiting ministry approval," he said.

"The ongoing project is scheduled to be finished by June

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**Environmental activists raised concerns saying that dredging a small part of the 166-kilometre trans-boundary river won't change the flood situation.**

**"This is good news that authorities concerned finally stepped forward to dredge the river. But the benefit won't last longer than two years, since the river's upstream isn't being dredged."**

ABDUL KARIM KIM  
Surma waterkeeper

After a stalemate in the decision, two more years of inaction passed by.

Eventually, the situation led to this year's flood, displacing more

## DGFI OFFICIAL MURDER CASE ARSA leader among 66 accused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Sixty-six persons have been made accused in the case filed over the murder of a DGFI officer near the Tumburu border in Bandarban's Naikkhangchhari on November 14.

Of them, Ataulah Abu Ammar Jununi, known as the commander-in-chief of Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), has been named as the prime accused.

Mohammad Anwar Hossain, a DGFI field officer in Cox's Bazar, filed the case with Naikkhangchhari Police Station on November 23.

Inspector Mohammad Shahjahan of the police station confirmed the matter yesterday and said Inspector Sohag Rana of Ghumdhum police outpost has been assigned to investigate the case.

Bangladesh Air Force Squadron Leader Rizwan Rushdee, who was serving in DGFI, was killed and Rab official Sohel Barua was injured as drug smugglers opened fire during a clash near the Tumburu border.

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## RANGPUR CITY POLLS Eight mayor aspirants collect nomination papers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Eight mayor aspirants have collected nomination papers from the local Election Commission office for the December 27 Rangpur City Corporation polls.

In addition, 164 aspirants have collected nomination papers to vie for councillor posts, and 53 have done so for women reserved seats.

Except for these, no new collection has so far been reported till yesterday, according to the EC officials.

Meanwhile, the ruling Awami League has nominated Advocate Hosne Ara Lutfi Dalia, a former lawmaker, as its candidate for the mayoral post, said party sources.

Those who took nomination papers are Mostafizur Ramhan, incumbent mayor and Jatiya Party leader; Amiruzzaman Pial, Islami

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After buying old television sets, this local electronics store fixes and sells them to customers looking for a good deal. By selling these reconditioned TVs, the shop is indirectly reducing electronics waste. This photo was taken in Narayanganj's Fatullah town area recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Withdraw 'false' cases against Khasia people

Demand rights activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cases that have been filed against people of the Khasia community should be withdrawn immediately, demanded a delegation of citizens yesterday, after a recent visit to Moulvibazar.

Terming the cases as false, they


said those have been filed to force people out of their own homes. The platform also called for forming a land commission to resolve land-related problems of indigenous people.

The demands were made at a press conference organised by Kapaeng Foundation, a rights organisation

working for indigenous people, at YWCA conference room of Dhaka yesterday.

The district administration was working in favour of the tea-estate management and trying to evict the community, where they have been living for years and using the land

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*We Have Handled Over*

## TWO PROJECTS

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