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VEHICLE FITNESS

A mockery at the cost of life and limb

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Most vehicles involved in recent major and sensational road crashes did not have the required documents, including valid fitness certificates, or their drivers were without a valid licence.

Experts and road safety campaigners say that for years such vehicles and drivers have been on the roads because the system of monitoring, enforcement, and issuance of papers is not working.

Vehicles without documents and drivers without licences stay on the road bribing a section of crooked law enforcers, BRTA officials, and politically connected people, they said, adding that this creates anarchy on the roads and results in increasing numbers of crashes.

They said many transport owners and workers find valid documents from the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to be unnecessary as they can easily run their vehicles paying bribes.

New vehicle registration is rising every year but vehicles getting fitness clearance has dropped to a seven-year low in the last fiscal year.

About 5.64 lakh vehicles got their fitness clearance in the last fiscal year, the lowest number since 2014-15 fiscal year, according to the BRTA.

DON'T BLAME THE ROAD --PAGE 3 SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



The wreckage of the Barguna-bound Ema Paribahan bus that fell into a ditch, killing at least one and injuring many others, in Pirojpur's Mathbaria upazila early yesterday. Just the day before, a similar accident in Madaripur killed at least 19 people.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

17 more lives lost on roads

2 trucks fall into gorge in Bandarban; bus plunges into ditch in Pirojpur

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and 11 others injured when a truck carrying people rear-ended another truck and the two vehicles fell into a gorge in Bandarban's Ruma yesterday.

The crash happened around 1:30pm when the two trucks were descending a steep incline in Boga Lake area, said Alamgir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Ruma Police Station.

Locals and police said the trucks were coming from Thakkyong Para area of Remakri Prangsa union.

Four of the passengers died on spot. The injured were taken to a local hospital where two others died, said OC Alamgir.

The deceased are Lin Moy Bawm, her sister Var Kim Bawm, Zin Hum Bawm, Lal Shiam Bawm, Nun Thar Moy Bawm, of

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A glorious chapter begins

Says PM while commissioning country's first submarine base



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a glorious chapter opened in the country's history with the commissioning of its first ever submarine base.

The premier was addressing the commissioning ceremony of the country's first submarine base "BNS Sheikh Hasina" of Bangladesh Navy in Cox's Bazar's Pekua. She joined the event virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

Hasina said her government established the Bangladesh Navy as a full-fledged three-dimensional force by adding two submarines

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2018 polls neither free nor fair

Says US state department's report citing observers; DSA widely used against dissent

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The December 2018 elections were neither free nor fair because they were marred by serious irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters, said a US state department report, citing polls observers.

The 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices was released last night.

Washington has recently been making repeated calls for free and fair elections. The polls are supposed to be held late this year or early next year.

The annual country reports document the status of respect for human rights and worker rights in 198 countries and territories.

US Ambassador Peter Haas, in a statement on the release of the report, said, "Promoting respect for individual rights helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous world."

"Defending fundamental freedoms is at the core of who we are as a country. The United States regularly raises human rights issues with the government of Bangladesh in the spirit of respect and partnership. We will continue to do so."

The report said with more than 80 percent of the votes in 2018, the Awami League and its electoral allies won 288 of 300 seats, while the main opposition BNP and its allies won only seven.

During the campaign leading up to the election, there were many credible reports of harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrests, and violence that made it difficult for many opposition candidates and their supporters to meet, hold rallies, or campaign freely.

Only seven of the 22 Election Working Group NGOs were approved by the home ministry, NGO

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Over 1500 marginal farmers get 'AB Bank Smart Agri Loan' at Kushtia

"In our path towards farmers development, Padma Bridge is testament to our abilities"

-Tarique Afzal, President and Managing Director, AB Bank Limited



AB Bank Limited disbursed agricultural loans to over 1500 small and marginal farmers under own supervision through smart cards at Kushtia.

The program was organized at the

auditorium of Zilla Shilpakala Academy, Kushtia. Mr. Md. Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Honorable MP, Kushtia-3, Joint General Secretary, Bangladesh Awami League was present as

chief guest. Barrister Selim Altaf Gorge, Honorable MP, Kushtia-4, Mohammad Saidul Islam, Deputy Commissioner & District Magistrate, Kushtia and valiant

freedom fighter Alhaz Md. Sadar Uddin Khan, Chairman, Zilla Parishad and President, Zilla Awami League, Kushtia were present as special guests with Mr. Tarique Afzal, President and Managing Director

of AB Bank Limited presiding. Local senior leaders of Bangladesh Awami League along with other officials of the bank also attended the program.

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