

9 more lives lost on roads

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 19 others injured in road accidents in three districts, according to reports from our correspondents and a news agency.

In Cumilla, four persons were killed and 15 others injured as a covered-van ran over a pickup on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Lalbag area.

Cumilla Sadar South Police Station Officer-in-Charge Debashis Chowdhury said the pickup was carrying a local football team.

The deceased are pickup driver Morshed, 24, Shahin Alam Saikot, 13, son of Mohon Mia from Lalbag, and Sakib and Faisal from Sadar South upazila.

Locals said the football team was going to participate in a tournament arranged by Cumilla Sadar South Upazila Parishad.

Mohon Mia, father of Saikot, said his son, a class eight student of a local school, went to play the football match at upazila football ground.

UNO Suvashis Gosh said 10 of the injured were admitted to Cumilla Medical College Hospital and the rest to different other hospitals.

Both the driver and helper of the covered-van fled the scene.

In Thakurgaon, three people were killed and four injured in a collision between a three-wheeler, motorbike and human haulier in Thakurgaon yesterday.

The accident happened around 10:30am on Thakurgaon-Baliadangi road at Baliapukur village in Baliadangi upazila, said Baliadangi Police Station Sub-inspector Md Abdus Sobhan.

The deceased are three-wheeler passengers Alimuddin, 65, Abul Hossain, 67, from Chandanchahat Malibasti

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Gridlocks on the capital's Shantinagar Road have become a regular affair as vehicles and motorbikes continue to park there defying "no parking" signs. Some of the illegally parked vehicles even belong to law enforcers. This photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Life sentence for razing hill

Demands Ctg mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Those who are cutting hills should be given life sentence, said Chattogram City Corporation Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury yesterday.

He made the remark at a discussion held to exchange views on ways to prevent hill-cutting in the port city.

The session was organised by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) at a city hotel.

"The existing law ensures that the offenders serve two years in prison and are fined Tk 2 lakh, which is a minor punishment for a major crime," he said.

Claiming that Bayezid Link Road could have been built without destroying the hills, he said people of the district do not want development at the cost of their natural treasures.

According to the attendees, influential people are cutting down the city hills

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MADHABPUR MUNICIPALITY

Highway turns dumping zone



MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

The Dhaka Sylhet highway near Madhabpur has been transformed into a dumping ground as municipality trucks have been throwing away and burning waste there indiscriminately for a while now.

The locals are facing serious problems as the unplanned waste disposal is not just causing inconveniences to commuters but has also led to traffic congestion on the road.

People from all walks of life, including students of Maulana Ashad Ali Degree College, are now concerned as no steps are being taken to mend the situation, despite repeated complaints and requests.

"The area used to be very clean until the municipality vans started dumping their collected household waste here about a year ago," said Zahir Uddin, principal of the college.

Visiting the area, this correspondent saw household waste being dumped by the municipality workers. While the stench from the rubbish made the place unhealthy and unbearable, the smoke coming out of the burnt garbage often clouds the highway, making visibility of the road an issue for transport workers and commuters.

According to locals, they, at the recent monthly upazila parishad meeting, demanded for a planned disposal of waste in the area. However, no steps were taken to address their complaint.

"The spot has become a breeding house for mosquitoes and flies and with the rainy season being just around the corner, the road would turn into a sea of floating waste, and locals and passengers have to peddle through it. There is no dumping ground in the municipality and that is the root cause of this problem," said Humayun Kabir of Upazila Public Health Engineering Department.

The dumping ground allotted by the DC office is just around 1.5

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RAJSHAHI CITY POLLS

Infighting Liton's only headache

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

With BNP absent from the race in the upcoming Rajshahi City Corporation polls the stage seemed set for an easy victory for Awami League candidate AHM Khairuzzaman Liton. However, Liton's camp is now alleging that the real threat to his triumph comes not from external contenders, but from within the ranks of his own party.

Different social media groups and profiles campaigning for Liton have raised allegations about a "vested quarter" within the AL, "making concerted efforts" to defeat their own candidate.

The supporters of the accused faction have dismissed these claims, asserting that these are desperate attempts to stay politically relevant.

Tensions reached a boiling point in Rajshahi as a group of several hundred AL leaders and activists, brandishing sharp weapons, took to the streets in a procession through the Kumarpara area last week. Their resounding slogans, filled with resentment, were aimed directly at Dablu Sarker, the city AL's general secretary.

The catalyst for this unrest lies in Sarker's unsuccessful bid to secure the AL nomination for the mayoral position, said party insiders seeking anonymity.

Leading one of the factions is none other than Liton himself, a powerful figure who also holds a coveted position as an AL presidium member. Backed by a significant number of AL leaders, activists and influential lawmakers such as Enamul Haque of Rajshahi-4 (Bagmara) and Mansur Rahman of Rajshahi-5 (Puthia-Durgapur) constituencies, Liton's support base remains formidable.

However, standing against Liton's faction is a rival group led by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam, joined by lawmakers Omor Faruk Chowdhury, Ayeen Uddin, and

Rajshahi District AL General Secretary Kazi Abdul Wadud Dara, added the sources.

The ongoing feud between Mayor Liton and the city AL general secretary Dablu Sarker can be traced back to the zilla parishad election held in October of last year. Tensions escalated as Liton openly opposed the AL's nominated candidate, Mir Iqbal, who happened to be Sarker's brother-in-law.

Despite Liton's opposition, Mir Iqbal emerged victorious in the election.

However, the dynamics took a dramatic turn earlier this year when a scandalous video featuring Dablu Sarker went viral, diminishing his influence in city politics.

Nurul Islam Sarker Aslam, a prominent figure in Rajshahi AL politics, emphasised that some party members may be spreading conspiracy theories out of fear that Liton's progress could undermine their own positions.

However, Asaduzzaman Asad, the former general secretary of the district AL, said the city's politics are inseparable from Liton, indicating his significance in the political landscape.

Contacted, lawmaker Ayeen Uddin denied any notion of opposing Liton, saying, "Since Liton is nominated by the Awami League, the question of opposition does not arise.

I have instructed all my followers to ensure Liton's victory."

Similarly, lawmaker Omor Faruk Chowdhury dismissed the accusations against them, suggesting that only a handful of individuals are attempting to gain favour with Liton by false accusations.

He said there is no strong candidate against Liton, expressing certainty of Liton's triumph.

"In adherence to election rules, I have refrained from joining any of Liton's campaigns, as lawmakers are prohibited from actively campaigning," he said.



Leading one of the factions is none other than Liton himself. Standing against him is a rival group led by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam.

No compromise on caretaker govt

Says Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said there will be no compromise on the question of neutral government, and it would be resolved on streets, if necessary.

"The government has started shaking. They make one statement in the morning and another in the evening. The issue of a neutral government will not be subject to negotiation, the decision will be taken on the streets through procession," he said.

Addressing the biennial conference of Gazipur metropolitan BNP as the chief guest, Fakhrul also said Awami League would not be able to get even 10 seats, if there is a caretaker government.

That is why the ruling party's general secretary termed the caretaker government a dead issue, he said.

"But no, the issue of a caretaker government has remained alive. The world wants a free and fair election in Bangladesh," he added.

People lost faith in BNP: Quader

BSS, Dhaka



Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said people have lost their faith in the BNP due to its hypocrisy and deceitful political tactics.

As the BNP played game over the country's democracy, constitution and voting rights of people time and again, they have rejected them, he said.

He said the ruling party has never cheated the people. The Awami League has kept the pledges it made to the people and that is why they have repeatedly voted AL to power, he said.

BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has been playing the "broken record" over the obsolete caretaker government issue, Quader said.

He said the caretaker government is a live issue

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Rain likely in Dhaka, other divisions

UNB, Dhaka

Meteorological Department has predicted rain or thundershowers in eight divisions, including Dhaka, over 24 hours starting from 9:00am yesterday.

"Rain accompanied by gusty or squally wind are likely to occur at many places under Rangpur, Mymensingh, Chattogram and Sylhet; at a few places in Dhaka, Khulna and Barishal divisions; said a bulletin of Met office.

PRAYER TIMING				
JUNE 12				
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:05	12:45	5:00	6:50	8:15
JAMAAT 4:40	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION				



With Barishal going to the polls today, security has been enhanced in the city. As part of that, law enforcers were seen checking vehicle papers at various points of the city yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

8 promoted to DIG rank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday promoted eight police officials to the rank of deputy inspector general in the latest reshuffle of the police administration.

The Public Security Division of the home ministry issued a gazette notification in this regard.

The officials are -- DIG (current charge) of Railway Police Md Shah Alam, Additional DIG of CID AKM Nahidul Islam, Additional DIG of Special Branch Rakhfar Sultana Khanam, Acting DIG of CID Shaymol Kumar Nath, Joint Commissioner of DMP Md Zakir Hossain Khan, Additional DIG Mohammad Abdullaheel Baki, Joint Commissioner of DMP Biplob Bejoy Talukder and Additional DIG of SB Md Muniruzzaman.

Govt decision to allow Jamaat rally 'surprising'

Says Gontontro Moncho

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The leaders of Gonotontro Mancha have raised concerns regarding the government's sudden decision to grant permission for Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami to hold a rally in the capital after 10 years.

They suspect that this move is part of the government's strategy to associate the opposition's anti-government movement with Jamaat, thereby misleading both local and foreign allies.

During a press conference held yesterday at Mehraba Plaza in Puranapaltan area, Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna expressed his surprise over Jamaat's rally permit.

"When Jamaat supporters initially approached authorities to seek permission, they were promptly arrested. However, they were released an hour and a half later. Subsequently, the permission for the rally was granted," he said.

Meanwhile, the platform called for a demonstration towards the Ministry of Power,

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