

We need a new road safety law

Demands Road Safety Coalition; points out 5 risk factors for accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Safety Coalition Bangladesh yesterday demanded a new road safety law to prevent deaths on roads.

At a press conference held at Jatiya Press Club in the capital, the coalition identified five behavioural risk factors that increase people's susceptibility to accidents: speeding, not using quality helmets, neglecting seatbelt usage, driving under the influence, and inadequate child safety seats.

The coalition said the country's roads will be safe for passengers if a proper law and related policy are formulated considering these factors.

At the press conference, Nirapad Sarak Chai Chairman Ilias Kanchan said formulating such a law is the demand of the country's people.

He said road safety campaigners were discussing with the political parties to incorporate the issue in their manifestos ahead of the next national election.

The coalition said the Road Transport Act 2018 and relevant rules were formulated giving priority on the transportation system. To ensure safety on roads, a new law is a necessity, it said.

Two women die in N'ganj gas line blast

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two women, who were injured in a gas line explosion at a house in Narayanganj's Araihazar on Friday, died at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery yesterday.

Kaniz Khadija Nipa, 39, and China Akhter, 40, passed away at the high dependency unit around 7:40am and 2:00pm respectively, said Tariqul Islam, a resident doctor at the burn institute.

Four people were critically injured in the explosion caused by gas leakage on Friday night.

Deceased Nipa's mother Hasina Mumtaz, 55, and China's husband Sohan Talukdar, 45, were undergoing treatment at the burn institute in critical condition, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Ruling Awami League held its "peace rally" at the South Gate of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital yesterday afternoon. AL leaders and activists of different units of Dhaka and its adjoining districts participated in the rally. AL rolled out the series of movements, a day after BNP unveiled a series of rallies and road marches that started on September 19.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

WORLD RIVERS DAY

'Our rivers, our responsibility'

Speakers stress coordination among govt agencies at event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday stressed the need for coordination among the government agencies to protect rivers from all forms of onslaught.

They also called for ensuring investment in treating effluent that wrecks havoc on the country's vital water bodies.

Discussants came up with the suggestions at an event titled, "Rights of Rivers", organised by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, marking World Rivers Day on the fourth Sunday of September.

In order to better manage rivers, we need to enhance coordination among the government bodies.

ARIF AHMED MUSTAFA
Chairman of BIWTA

Maintaining the navigability of a river is the responsibility of the government, not sand looters.

SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN
Chief Executive of Bela

The event was held in the capital's Agargaon.

Speaking as the event's chief guest, Commodore Arif Ahmed Mustafa, chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, said that they used to

swim in the Shitalakkhya river on a regular basis as children. But those days were long gone.

He said only five to seven percent of river pollution occurs due to water transport, including small

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'The worst is yet to come'

Says former EC Sakhawat Hossain on US visa curbs at book launch

DU CORRESPONDENT

Former Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain yesterday expressed concerns about the US visa restriction on Bangladesh, fearing that the worst is yet to come.

Speaking at a book launch event at Dhaka University, he cautioned, "I hope politicians, intellectuals, and others understand that we are in deep trouble. Visa restriction is not the end, and some big problems are waiting for us in the future."

Gronthil Prokashon organised the launching event of local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed's book "Sangskar Sanglap" (dialogue on reform).

Sakhawat said the US visa restriction resulted from Bangladesh's inability to conduct credible elections. "It is not a very good sign for us," he said.



Local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed speaking at the launch of his book "Sangskar Sanglap (dialogue on reform)".

PHOTO: STAR

He made the comments a day after the US Department of State had said it is already taking steps to impose visa restrictions on Bangladeshi individuals responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

Sakhawat said many talk about reforming the country's administration, state and other institutions, but politicians pay no attention to it.

Speaking at the event, former Justice MA Matin emphasised the need for dialogues for reform. "We need to change the winner-take-all system," he added.

The book's author Tofail Ahmed said, "People of the country want good governance. But can we achieve that is not being discussed. I have tried to focus on that in my book along with how to reform the state."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

HIGHEST EVER INVESTMENT IN DATABASE INFRASTRUCTURE

Pubali Bank Limited invested Tk. 850 million for procuring the latest Oracle-based database infrastructure. This will ensure the fastest and reliable services to the customers with highest level of data security.

The migration will take place during **28-30 September 2023**. Banking operations will remain **suspended** on those days.