

DHAKA

4 killed as cars collide head-on in Purbachal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four persons died and four others were injured as two private cars collided head-on on 300 feet road in Purbachal yesterday morning.

The accident occurred near Bhuiyabari Bridge in Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila around 10:00am.

The deceased were identified as Milon Mia, 26, of Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila, Nurul Islam, 65, of Sonargaon upazila, Fazlul Haque, 50, of Brahmanbaria's Nabinagar upazila, and Amzad Hossain, 45, of Gazipur's Latifpur area, police said.

Abir Hossain, additional superintendent of police in Narayanganj, said, "A car heading from Kanchan to Dhaka lost control as one of its tyres burst. It then went over a road divider and collided head-on with another car coming from Dhaka."



Eight injured were taken to Kurmitola General Hospital.

"Three of them were declared dead at Kurmitola hospital while another was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital after he was shifted there in a critical condition," he said.

Of the dead, Milon was the driver of the Dhaka-bound private car. He was heading to Kuril area in the capital with four passengers.

His cousin Sharif Mia confirmed his identity at DMCH morgue. Sharif said Milon got married just 15 days ago.

The injured -- Naharul Islam Pappu, 29, Sukhkhur Ahmed, 38, Abdul Mannan, 50, and Md. Sajib, 26 -- were receiving treatment at Kurmitola hospital.

Of the injured, Sukhkhur Ahmed was driving the other private car. The rest of the victims were passengers of the two cars, police said.

METRO RAIL

Bijoy Sarani, DU stations open today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University and Bijoy Sarani stations of the metro rail service will be opened to public today.

"We have completed all the preparations to open the stations tomorrow [Wednesday] morning," Nasir Uddin Ahmed, director (operation and maintenance) of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, the duration of services on the Agargaon-Motijheel section will remain the same -- 7:30am to 11:30am.

MRT/Rapid pass holders, however, can get on trains as soon as 7:10am at Uttara end and as late as 12:12pm at the Motijheel end.

The Agargaon-Motijheel section was opened to public on November 5, along with the three stations -- Farmgate, Secretariat and Motijheel.

The rest two stations -- Karwan Bazar and Shahbagh -- will be opened in January next year, MAN Siddique, managing director of DMTCL, told reporters on December 7.

Metro rail passengers of the Agargaon-Motijheel section may have to wait until April next year to have 12 hours a day service (8:00am to 8:00pm), DMTCL officials hinted.

Contempt of court petition filed against Chunnu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A contempt of court petition was filed with the Supreme Court yesterday against Jatiya Party secretary general Mujibul Haque Chunnu for reportedly making derogatory comments about its judges.

SC lawyer Kamrul Islam submitted the petition, saying Chunnu made the contemptuous comments at a Party event on November 11, which was published on print and social media.

In the petition, Kamrul asked the apex court to initiate contempt of court proceedings and issue summons against Chunnu directing him to appear before this court for explanation.

PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 13

Fazr	Zohr	As	Maghrib	Esha
5-15	12-45	3-45	5-19	7-00

JAMAT	5-50	1-15	4-00	5-22	7-30
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SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A woman looking at various shades of woolen yarn at the makeshift stalls near Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital's Gulistan yesterday. With the arrival of winter, many are now busy collecting woolen yarn to weave sweaters, scarfs, and caps for themselves and their loved ones.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'The situation is worse than before'

Sultana Kamal on indigenous people's rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights activist Sultana Kamal yesterday expressed dismay over recent reports revealing a significant surge in the wealth of political leaders contesting the upcoming elections, as indicated by their affidavits submitted to the EC.

She also slammed Information Minister Hasan Mahmud for his recent comment that "human rights activism has become a business".

I want to challenge how much their [politicians'] wealth has increased and how much that of human rights activists did. They can protect neither people's rights nor the rights activists, and yet they talk aggressively to cover up their failures, trying to threaten us.

SULTANA KAMAL

to cover up their failures, trying to threaten us," Sultana Kamal said.

"When I read the newspapers, I wonder if I am living in the real world. Is it possible though, that each person's wealth has increased by 200 times, 300 times, and even 400 times?" she asked.

Referring to the plight of the country's indigenous communities, Sultana Kamal alleged that the government does not want to recognise their identities.



She made the remarks while speaking as chief guest at the 3rd National Conference of Indigenous People's Human Rights Protection at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in Dhaka's Agargaon.

Kapaceng Foundation organised the conference titled "Ensure the Safety of Indigenous Human Rights Defenders".

The information minister said human rights activism has now become a business. I want to challenge how much their [politicians'] wealth has increased and how much that of human rights activists did. They can protect neither people's rights nor the rights activists, and yet they talk aggressively

"Their lands are being grabbed in the name of development. In 2022, 37 families lost their land in the hill tracts and four in the plains. Attempts have been made to grab 421 acres of land in the CHT and 15 acres in the plains," she said.

"The crop fields and orchards of 200 hill families and five families on plain land have been destroyed. There were 276 incidents of human rights violations including extrajudicial killings, arrests, detentions, physical torture. There were 21 cases of sexual harassment, attempted rape, gang rape, and murder after rape."

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'They wanted to expand beyond Bangladesh'
Says Rab after arresting 5 Ansar Al Islam militants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Militant outfit Ansar Al Islam reportedly intended to extend their operations beyond Bangladesh, particularly in India.

As part of the plan, at least eight members of the Al Qaeda-inspired outfit went to India's Gujarat in February 2019.

However, four of them were arrested by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) in May of this year, while the whereabouts of the other four remain unknown.

Rab came up with this information following the arrest of Shariful Islam, 32, who facilitated the illegal entry of the Ansar Al Islam members into Gujarat.

Shariful, along with five others, was arrested by Rab on Sunday from Rupganj area of Narayanganj.

A Rab official told The Daily Star yesterday that Shariful was responsible for sending newly recruited outfit members to India and Afghanistan for training.

During primary interrogation, Shariful admitted to having sent the eight individuals to Gujarat in two phases. He himself travelled to Gujarat in 2019 and returned to Bangladesh in December of the same year, said the official.

"The outfit has several members in Gujarat and other places of India. However, specifics regarding their intentions or plans in those locations are still unclear," the official added.

Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of the legal and media wing of Rab, told The Daily Star yesterday that they are investigating to get details on the

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Candidacy of all Ganotantriy Party aspirants cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday decided to cancel candidature of all aspirants of the ruling alliance member Ganotantriy Party as the party has no commission approved central committee.

The commission issued a letter to all the returning officers in this regard.

The EC in the letter said the president and general secretary of the party recently submitted separate committee names to the commission. So, there is no approved committee of the party right now.

The party has been split in two groups and they fielded 12 candidates in total for the 12th national polls set to be held on January 7.

With cancelling of all candidatures of the 14 party-alliance member, total number of parties joining the national polls now drops to 28.

NATIONAL ELECTION EC declares 61 more candidates valid

STAR REPORT

The Election Commission yesterday declared 61 more aspirants as valid contenders after hearing 98 appeals filed by aggrieved aspirants

With 61 new aspirants, a total of 168 hopefuls got back their candidacy in the first three days after the EC on Sunday started hearing and disposing of the appeals submitted against the cancellation or acceptance of nomination papers by the returning officers (ROs), reports UNB.

On Tuesday, the commission headed by CEC Kazi Habibul Awal turned down 35 petitions and kept its decisions over two petitions pending following hearing at Nirbahan Bhaban in the city.

The EC has so far heard 291 appeals in the first three days and made its decisions over 276 petitions and kept the decisions regarding 15 pending. Nine petitioners did not turn up in the hearing.

The commission is hearing and disposing of the petitions from December 10 to 15 as a total of 561 aggrieved aspirants challenged the ROs' decisions.

Earlier, a total of 2,716 aspirants including 747 independents submitted nomination papers in 300 constituencies throughout the country to contest the 12th national parliamentary election.

Most of the nomination papers were rejected on three grounds -- mismatch in the one percent voters' signatures submitted by independent aspirants, loans and utility bills defaults, and dual citizenship.

Police ready for polls: IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have taken all necessary preparations and are ready to facilitate a free, fair, and festive national election, said Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun yesterday.

"We are fully prepared with our manpower and have completed our planning for the election," said the police chief in reply to reporters' query after attending the 13th founding anniversary of Bangladesh Police Blood Bank in the capital's Rajbari Police Lines.

Mamun said police already have taken special plans for tackling pre-election, election-time, and post-election situations.

"We are working as per the directive of the Election Commission after the announcement of the election schedule," he added.



A pack of wild capped langurs relish on the tender bamboo shoots in Sylhet's Malnicherra Tea Estate yesterday morning. This picturesque scene used to be common once upon a time when humans co-resided with them in the tea gardens of the district. However, continued deforestation has endangered the species, making them a rare sight these days.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR