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Driver killed in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver died and two passengers were injured after the vehicle overturned in the Hatirjheel area yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Ashraf Hossain, 42.

The accident happened around 4:00pm when the front wheel of the auto-rickshaw came off.

The driver lost control over the vehicle and it turned over near My TV office.

The driver suffered head injuries and was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, said Inspector Bachchu Mia, in charge of DMCH police outpost.

The injured passengers took treatment at a local hospital, said witnesses.

The body is kept at the hospital morgue, the police officer added.

AL's Jan 30 Tejgaon rally postponed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League's Dhaka north city unit has postponed its peace rally planned for January 30 in Dhaka's Tejgaon "due to unavoidable reasons".

A press release in this regard was issued by the AL unit's office secretary Proloy Samaddar Bappi yesterday.

"Due to unavoidable reasons, the peace rally and procession of Dhaka north city Awami League scheduled for January 30 has been postponed as per the order of its president and general secretary. Further schedule will be announced in detail later," reads the release.

On January 27, during a rally at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader announced country-wide rallies for January 30.

FROM GANGA TO MEGHNA Microplastics are everywhere

AHMED DEEPTO

Microplastic particles are accumulating in riverbed sediments that entered Bangladesh through India's Ganges river, reveals a recent study published in Elsevier's ecotoxicology and environmental safety journal.

The study, titled "Distribution of Microplastics in Shoreline Water and Sediment of the Ganges River Basin to Meghna Estuary in Bangladesh," highlights the significant ecological risk posed to the river ecosystem and

and downstream in Bangladesh. The rates of microplastics varied, with different concentrations observed in different locations," says Prof Shafi Muhammad Tariq of Jahangirnagar University's Department of Environmental Sciences, a member of the research team.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), microplastics are an "emerging" pollutant in environment which has as a serious public health concern.

Exposure to microplastic particles has human health

the highest concentration of microplastics was detected near the Hardinge Bridge in Kushtia, while the lowest at Premtoli Ghat in Rajshahi.

The average microplastic concentrations in upstream and downstream water were recorded at 24 to 50 particles per litre and 26 to 64 particles per litre, respectively.

In sediments, concentrations ranged from 1,670 to 2,953 particles per kilogramme upstream and 1,717 to 4,014 particles per kilogramme downstream.

dominated by polyamide (PA).

Prof Tariq expressed concern about the findings, stating, "We are now living in a plastic age where plastics are everywhere. Our research found a high level of microplastics in the river system, posing a threat to both human health and aquatic species."

"Microplastics contain toxic chemicals that persist for years without dissolving," he added.

Public health experts echoed these concerns, emphasising the direct toxicity, bioaccumulative nature, and incorporation into



The 330-kilometre journey from the Ganges river basin to the Meghna estuary witnesses the deposition of microplastics in shoreline water and deep sediments.

biodiversity.

This study marks the first in Bangladesh to underscore the serious threat posed by microplastics in transboundary rivers to the marine ecosystem.

It shows the role of rivers in transporting these microplastics into the marine system, creating a potential threat to land, water, and human health.

The 330-kilometre journey from the Ganges river basin to the Meghna estuary witnesses the deposition of microplastics in shoreline water and deep sediments.

"We found tiny plastic particles of different colours and sizes, indicating the presence of microplastics both upstream

implications when they enter the human body through the environment, food, water and air.

Moreover, microplastics in water can float or sink based on its concentration, duration and degradation rate of the material. Chemicals associated with microplastics are also hazardous to aquatic life.

The research covered 10 districts in Bangladesh, collecting a total of 180 water and sediment samples from 30 sampling points stretching from Chapainawabganj to Chandpur's Meghna estuary.

The study revealed that

the food chain of microplastics.

Abu Jamil Faisal, president of the Public Health Association of Bangladesh, said, "Microplastics are considered a cause of cancer, containing harmful chemicals that can lead to various diseases. They can affect the lungs, be found in the blood, and induce hormonal changes, impacting reproductive health."

"Widespread microplastic pollution necessitates urgent monitoring," he added.

DEATH OF AYAAN HC terms DGHS report 'ridiculous and an eyewash'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday expressed grave dissatisfaction at the probe report submitted by Directorate General of Health Services on the death of five-year-old Ayaan at United Hospital in the capital, terming the report an eyewash and its recommendations ridiculous.

"We are not physicians. But we have studied medical jurisprudence. It is understood that you (doctors concerned) had negligence. The probe report has been prepared without conducting any inquest. Such a huge dose of medicine, which has been used for carrying out his circumcision, is not usually needed for bypass surgery," the HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah said while hearing a petition.

"Why was his circumcision carried out so hurriedly even after the doctors learned that he had a bronchial asthma problem? They could have waited for some days to conduct his operation," the HC bench also said.

The petition was filed by Supreme Court lawyer ABM Shahjahan Akanda Masum and Ayaan's father Shamim Ahmed.

Earlier in the day, DGHS submitted the 14-page probe report through Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy before the HC bench in compliance with its January 15 order.

In the report, the probe body said Ayaan had normal bleeding because of his circumcision operation, and he might have a rib fracture because

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'It was sabotage, but don't know who did it'

Say BR probe reports on arson attacks on two trains

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The incidents of fire on two passenger trains ahead of the general elections were "acts of sabotage," according to the probe committees of rail authorities.

They, however, could not identify the culprits behind those attacks on Benapole and Mohanganj Express.

Bangladesh Railway has incurred financial losses of around Tk 10 crore due to the arson attacks on the two trains that killed eight people and left scores injured.

The committees, who submitted their report early this month, gave several recommendations, including increasing CCTV vigilance to improve the safety and security of rail operations.

The rail authority did not make the findings public, but this correspondent came to know about them while talking to the committee members.

At least four passengers, including a woman and her three-year-old son, were killed as arsonists

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AL's power comes from India, not people: Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday said Awami League's power comes from India, not the people of Bangladesh.

"Awami League leaders' remarks make it clear that India, not the people, is the party's actual source of power," he said at a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office.

"The Indian government's strength keeps Sheikh Hasina in power. Awami League is right now a commodity in India, which goes against the rights and honour of an independent, sovereign country," said Rizvi.

He claimed that with India's help, AL "seized power" again through a "mock election".

The BNP leader also accused the AL government of not protesting the "ruthless killings" on the India-Bangladesh border.

He said law enforcers arrested over 2,75,026 BNP leaders and activists in

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No one can oust the elected govt Says Quader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said no one has the power to topple the constitutionally elected government.

He said this in a press conference at the party president's Dhanmondi office.

BNP has to pay for the mistake it made by not coming to the election, said Quader, also the Road Transport and Bridges Minister.

"The 12th national parliament is going to commence its journey tomorrow (today) following the Constitution," he said.

AL believes in democracy and will deal with political issues on the streets, he said, adding that no evil force will be tolerated for the sake of the country's interest.

Pointing out to BNP Standing Committee member Moyeen Khan, Quader said by killing Bangabandhu and four national leaders in 1975 and carrying out a grenade attack on AL

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Farmers harvesting mustard seeds in Narail's Birgram yesterday. The yield has brought smiles to the faces of cultivators, who are selling each mound for Tk 3,500. According to the Department of Agricultural Extension, the crop has been planted on 13,888 hectares of land in the district.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN