

## Four killed in road accidents in two districts

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed in separate road accidents in Dinajpur and Chuadanga districts yesterday and on Friday night, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Dinajpur, a woman was killed as an unidentified speeding vehicle hit a motorcycle from behind in Egaromile Mile area under Kaharol upazila around 9:25am yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Halima Khatun, 60, wife of Afsar Ali of Askarpur village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila.

Afsar, who was riding the motorcycle, escaped unhurt, while Halima fell from the pillion seat and went under the vehicle's wheels, dying on the spot.

Confirming the incident, Md Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Dashmile Highway Police Station, said a case has been filed with Kaharol Police Station under the Road Transport Act.

Police are working to identify the vehicle, which fled the scene, the OC added.

In Chuadanga, an oil tanker hit a battery-run easy-bike coming from the opposite direction in front of the camp of BGB 6 Battalion at Jafarpur on Friday night, leaving three passengers dead and four others injured.

One of the victims died on the spot, while two others succumbed to their injuries after being taken to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital, said OC Khaledur Rahman of Chuadanga Sadar Police Station.

The bodies of the deceased – two men and one woman – were kept at the hospital morgue, while two of the injured were undergoing treatment at the hospital's surgery ward, the OC also said.

"The identities of the deceased are yet to be ascertained. Legal procedures are underway," he added.

## Jamaat doesn't

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"We don't want an election for the sake of it," he said.

The Jamaat chief addressed four roadside rallies on his way to Feni to attend a party event.

Shafiq warned, "We are observing how some parties are looting and grabbing everything. We urge them to restrain themselves; otherwise, people will resist them."

The rally was presided over by Jamaat's central executive council member and Cumilla city Ameer Qazi Din Mohammad, and was attended by senior party leaders.



Naeem Sardar sells drums door to door, carrying them on his shoulder. He purchases them at wholesale prices from factories and sells them in various villages. The drums are commonly used for storing rice, water, or for household and shop use, each priced at Tk 550. Naeem manages to sell 25 to 30 drums daily by traveling across the city and nearby villages. The photo was taken in Islamnagar area of Batiaghata, Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## KALNI RIVER IN HABIGANJ

# Hundreds displaced as erosion worsens

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

"I thought, perhaps, I would be able to spend my few remaining days in peace at my late husband's village home. Kalni devoured it all. Only a part of the door now remains," said Suniti Rani Sutradhar, 87, of Badarpur village under Ajmeriganj upazila of Habiganj. Recently, the elderly woman was having a meal when a crack suddenly appeared on her floor, and moments later, almost the entire house was washed away by the river.

While some neighbours offered her a place to sleep temporarily, Suniti knows she cannot expect them to continue supporting her for long.

"Where will I seek shelter at this age?"

At least 500 families across eight villages – including Kalnipara, Badarpur, Nadipur, Soulari, Manipur, and Sahanager – have been displaced due to persistent erosion of the Kalni River over

the years. Hundreds of homes, religious institutions, and other establishments have also disappeared.

Locals said the erosion worsened in recent years, particularly intensifying during the monsoon season.

They alleged that despite repeated assurances from the authorities concerned, no sustainable river protection measures have been implemented. Only temporary steps have been taken sporadically, including the

dumping of geo-bags in some areas like Soulari, which have had no lasting impact.

"In the past two and a half years, geo-bags were dumped in only a few places, leaving much of the riverbank areas unprotected in the

another victim.

Local union parishad member Md Mohibur Rahman said the matter has been repeatedly reported to the Water Development Board, but no visible action has been taken so far.

According to sources, more than Tk 3 crore was allocated in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years for river erosion prevention in Ajmeriganj.

Yet, the situation has hardly improved, said locals.

Ajmeriganj UNO Nibhip Ranjan Talukder said, "BWDB informed us that a project has been sent for approval, while emergency measures will be taken if necessary."

Contacted, Shamim Hasnain Mahmud, executive engineer of BWDB in Habiganj, said a project to construct a permanent embankment has been submitted to the Planning Commission. Work will begin once the project is approved and tenders are offered, he added.



eight villages," said Shankar Sutradhar, a resident of Badarpur. "We are surviving in a temporary shelter behind someone else's house after our house was lost to erosion," said Sandhya Rani Sutradhar,

## Yunus calls for equality Bangladesh

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"On this somber day of Holy Ashura, I pay my deepest respects to Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), the beloved grandson of the greatest Prophet and Messenger Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), and all those who were tragically martyred in the desert of Karbala," said the chief adviser.

He said Islam is the religion of truth, justice and peace and in order to uphold this great ideal of Islam, on 10th Muharram of 61 AH, Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), his family members and close companions were martyred in the desert of

Karbala.

Apart from the tragic incident of Karbala, the holy day of Ashura stands as one of the most virtuous and significant days in Islamic history, said the chief adviser.

Yunus said it is narrated in the Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasised the observance of fasting on Ashura, recommending a two-day fast as a mark of devotion.

"Let us all recognise the profound significance of this blessed day and increase our good deeds to draw closer to Allah Almighty," he said.

## Jamaat trying to fish

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The BNP leader said an elected parliament with public representatives, who are accountable to people, is essential to speed up political progress in the country.

"But instead of supporting such elections, you [Jamaat] are trying to delay them under the pretext of political rhetoric. You are questioning the election atmosphere, but we know your history. You had no hesitation in joining an election under an autocrat [in 1986], following Sheikh Hasina's footsteps," he said. Earlier on Friday, Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman said a neutral election is not possible in Bangladesh under the current circumstances.

"Under the current circumstances, a neutral election is impossible.

We must first create an environment for credible elections, and that requires fundamental reforms," said Shafiqur while addressing a rally in Rangpur.

Referring to the Jamaat ameer's remark, Rizvi said, "Suddenly, you have become an 'environmentalist'! If you are so concerned about the environment, then work on the global environmental decline we are all witnessing."

He stressed that the country now needs an elected government to restore people's rightful political, democratic and human rights.

"That is why we are calling upon the interim government to arrange a free and fair election by completing the necessary reforms within a very reasonable timeframe," Rizvi said.

## 50% of bank directors

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and a proposal can be made with the Bangladesh Bank's approval." But if just anyone is proposed, the BB will not grant approval.

"Their educational qualifications, experience, and knowledge of the banking sector will be taken into account. In other words, a professional will be appointed to the position."

Asked about the planned merger of weak banks, he said that in the initial phase, five private banks will be merged.

"State-owned banks will also be included in the merger process. Some state-owned banks are nearly bankrupt and must be included, while others are in relatively good condition and will be merged with them."

The matter will be discussed with the government and the BB is currently making some procedural preparations.

"We see this as an ongoing process, as I have mentioned before. It will remain in place permanently and has nothing to do with a change in government or the government staying in power. Whenever any bank or multiple banks face problems, we will intervene. That is our policy."

Sponsor-directors of banks must understand that the BB can remove them as early as tomorrow, and they will be removed if they fail to manage the bank properly, said Mansur, also a former economist of the International Monetary

## Hope for Gaza truce

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Trump said it was good that Hamas said it had responded in "a positive spirit" to a US brokered Gaza ceasefire proposal.

He told reporters aboard Air Force One there could be a deal on a Gaza ceasefire by next week but that he had not been briefed on the current state of negotiations.

Two previous ceasefires mediated by Qatar, Egypt and the United States have seen temporary halts in fighting, coupled with the return of Israeli hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

Efforts to broker a new truce have repeatedly failed, with the primary point of contention being Israel's rejection of Hamas's demand for guarantees that any new ceasefire will be lasting.

A Palestinian source familiar with the negotiations told AFP earlier this week that the latest proposal included "a 60-day truce, during which Hamas would release half of the living Israeli captives in the Gaza Strip" – thought to number 22 – "in exchange for Israel releasing a number of Palestinian prisoners and detainees".

Out of 251 hostages seized by Palestinian militants during the October 2023 attack, 49 are still held in Gaza, including 27 the Israeli military says are dead.

## Mob justice

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In his remarks, Debate for Democracy Chairman Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron said the Awami League cannot evade responsibility for the July killings.

"No assassination during the July movement happened without the consent of fugitive Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Over the past 15 years, the Awami regime has built torture cells, disappeared citizens, and committed acts of violence that are unforgivable," he said.

"We see this as an ongoing process, as I have mentioned before. It will remain in place permanently and has nothing to do with a change in government or the government staying in power. Whenever any bank or multiple banks face problems, we will intervene. That is our policy."

Sponsor-directors of banks must understand that the BB can remove them as early as tomorrow, and they will be removed if they fail to manage the bank properly, said Mansur, also a former economist of the International Monetary

Fund. "Just being an owner doesn't mean they bear all responsibilities, nor does it give them the power to do whatever they want. They have no right to plunder. Banks operate with the people's money. The owners are merely custodians of that public money."

If they deviate from this role, the central bank will take action and remove them.

"That's why we have established a dedicated department. It's a constant warning: if you don't act responsibly, we are here to intervene."

While discussing the ailing situation of the non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs), Mansur said the central bank had already conducted an assessment and the findings show that at least 15 financial institutions are completely non-functional.

"They have no capacity to operate. Their NPLs [non-performing loans] might be 80 percent or even 100 percent."

As many as 10 NBFIs are in good condition. "For the remaining 20 institutions, we have issued notices asking why their licences should not be suspended."

Show-cause notices have been served to the 20 NBFIs.

"We are moving towards a resolution in their cases – whether through liquidation or merger, something must be done."

There are some financial costs involved: about Tk 9,000 crore will be

## Former CEC Shamsul

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He assumed office as chief election commissioner on February 5, 2007 amid a volatile political situation.

Just a month before, on January 11, 2007, a state of emergency was declared due to growing political unrest and violence, eventually causing the indefinite suspension of the ninth parliamentary polls scheduled for January 22.

The state of emergency backed by the armed forces led to the formation of a caretaker government headed by Fakhruddin Ahmed.

When Huda took charge of the EC, it was mired in controversy due to actions by his predecessor Justice MA Aziz. The flawed voter list prepared during Aziz's tenure had only deepened the crisis.

With the army's help, the Huda commission prepared a largely error-free voter list with photographs – considered one of the major achievements of the EC under his leadership.

He also oversaw the introduction of National Identity Cards as a by-product, said Abdul Alim, an election expert.

The Huda-led EC introduced party registration requirements, an electoral code of conduct for parties and candidates, and transparent ballot boxes. It also piloted the use of electronic voting machines, and held a successful election on December 30, 2008.

However, the

commission drew flak when it initially invited the Saifur Rahman-led BNP faction for talks on electoral reforms. The matter was later resolved when it also invited the Khaleda Zia-led faction.

It was under this commission that the practice of consulting political parties, non-government organisations and eminent citizens began.

Under Huda's leadership, the commission implemented reforms in the EC Secretariat by having it removed from the direct supervision of the Prime Minister's Office.

Huda remained chief election commissioner till 2012.

Yesterday, the Election Commission expressed its condolences over his demise.

Born on July 10, 1943 in Faridpur, Huda completed his graduation and post-graduation in history from Dhaka University, earning top positions in both. He also held a doctorate in public administration and a Master of Public Administration from Syracuse University in the USA.

After a 34-year civil service career, he retired in 2000.

In the course of his career, Huda served as secretary at the water resources ministry from 1996 to 2000, and at the Banking Division from 1994 to 1996.

He is survived by his wife and daughter.

## Survivor facing death

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Officer-in-Charge Md Shaheen Miah confirmed the filing of the GD to this correspondent. "Primary investigation found the allegation to be true, and we submitted a report to the court on March 4. However, we have not received any directive yet."

The survivor said Munshi and relatives of other accused visited her house multiple times, offering incentives to withdraw the case. When she rejected the offers, the threats began.

"Even after the last hearing on June 24, Munshi told me he has money, so the court verdict will go in his favour. We are living in constant fear. Last week, we sold our house and our 20-decimal land. We are moving elsewhere, or they will kill us," she

added. So far, four witnesses have testified in court. "The accused and their relatives are also threatening the witnesses," she claimed.

Her lawyer, Habibur Rasul Mamun, confirmed that the accused have been trying to intimidate the family.

On February 6 last year, the survivor and her 12-year-old daughter were gang-raped at their home. She filed a case with Char Jabbar Police Station the same day, and three days later, Munshi and two others – Md Harun and Mehraj Uddin – were arrested.

Prime accused Munshi was released on bail on November 6, while the two others remain in jail.

Despite repeated attempts, Munshi could not be reached for comments.

**PRAYER TIMING**  
JULY 6

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-55	8-17
JAMAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION