

Four killed in road accidents in three districts

STAR REPORT

At least four persons, including a woman, were killed and another was injured in separate road accidents in Noakhali, Jhenaidah and Magura districts in the last two days.

In Noakhali, a speeding truck carrying nursery saplings hit a stationary cement-laden covered van around 7:00am yesterday morning, leaving two persons dead and one other critically injured on Noakhali-Feni regional highway in Senbagh upazila.

The deceased are Al Amin, 55, a nursery businessman, and Faisal, 35, the truck driver. Both hailed from Alankarkathi village under Swarupkathi upazila of Pirojpur.

The victims were rushed to Noakhali 250-bed General Hospital, where two succumbed to their injuries around 11:00am, while the injured individual was later sent to Dhaka for advanced treatment, said Milton Mondal, a sub-inspector of Chandraganj Highway Police Station.

The bodies have been sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy, the SI added.

In Jhenaidah town, a woman was crushed to death by a truck in the Arappur area yesterday afternoon.

The victim, Shammi Akter, 42, of Kustia town, fell from her husband's motorcycle in front of Mashiur Rahman Girls' School due to the damaged condition of the Arappur-Chuadanga Stand road. A truck from behind ran her over. She died on the spot.

The body has been sent to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Shamsul Arefin, officer-in-charge of Jhenaidah Sadar Police Station.

In Magura, a man died as an oncoming private car hit a rickshaw in Sabinagar area under Sreepur upazila around 11:00pm on Thursday night.

The deceased, Hafizur Rahman, 42, was a teacher at Hat Fazilpur Secondary School and a resident of Sabinagar village.

Critically injured, Hafizur was rushed to Magura Sadar Hospital, where a duty doctor declared him dead.

Confirming the incident, OC Ataur Rahman of Sreepur Police Station said the car has been seized and legal steps were underway.



A farmer collects drinking water under the blazing sun at Madhyachar in Char Majhardia, Rajshahi, where 28 varieties of rice are ripening on thousands of bighas of land. With diesel shortages crippling irrigation, farmers struggle to water their crops, queuing for oil and enduring drought conditions on the Padma char. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Eight years on, bridge over Karatoa still unfinished

S DILIP ROY

The much-anticipated Joyantipur bridge over the Karatoa River has remained incomplete eight years after work began, leaving nearly 8 lakh people across four upazilas grappling with daily transport hardship.

The 294-metre-long and 9.8-metre-wide bridge was intended to connect Pirganj upazila in Rangpur with Nawabganj, Birampur and Hakimpur in Dinajpur, ensuring direct communication between the regions.

However, prolonged delays have kept the project in limbo, frustrating residents who now face another monsoon without relief.

According to the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), the initiative was first taken in 2015, but administrative hurdles, tender delays and contractor-related complications slowed progress from the outset.

Construction formally began in 2018 under a firm named PPL, with an estimated cost of Tk 29.48 crore. The work came to a halt in 2023 following the contractor's death and ensuing management issues.

After a prolonged pause, LGED retendered the project in 2024, awarding the remaining work to AK SBM (JV) at a cost of Tk 22.24 crore. The revised deadline was set for March 2026, but that timeline has already passed with the project still unfinished.

Pirganj Upazila Engineer Asaduzzaman Bappi said the new contractor has submitted



a letter seeking time until December this year. The higher authorities are considering an extension of the deadline.

Officials say around 60 to 65 percent of the bridge work has been completed. However, approach roads on both sides are yet to be constructed, while only limited work on girders and slab casting is

currently underway.

In the absence of the bridge, residents continue to cross the river at considerable risk. During the dry season, a bamboo footbridge serves as a makeshift crossing, while small boats are the only option during the monsoon. Commuters, including students, patients and traders, are forced to endure long and costly detours.

Although the direct distance between Pirganj and Nawabganj is about 18 kilometres, people now travel nearly 55 kilometres using alternative routes, increasing both travel time and expenses. Transporting goods or accessing emergency services has become particularly difficult.

"Movement of ordinary people, including school and college students, has become very difficult. It is not possible to reach destinations on time. The bridge work should be completed quickly," said farmer Zahir Ali of Sodpur village.

College teacher Abchar Ali echoed the concern, saying, "We have to use an alternative route to travel to Rangpur. This increases both time and cost. We are suffering due to the delay in the work."

Health minister orders withdrawal of three officials Cites dissemination of misinformation to media

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Health Minister Mohammad Sakhawat Hossain yesterday ordered the withdrawal of three hospital officials in Munshiganj, citing the dissemination of incorrect information to the media.

The officials are Munshiganj General Hospital Superintendent Dr Ahammad Kabir, Civil Surgeon Dr Kamrul Zomadder, and stenotypist Md Mizanur Rahman from the Civil Surgeon's Office.

The minister directed the withdrawals during a surprise visit to the 250-bed Munshiganj General Hospital in the evening.

There, addressing the journalists, he said the recent rise in measles cases is due to past governments' failures in ensuring regular vaccination for children.

"No nationwide measles vaccination campaign was carried out in the last six years. Due to this failure, many children were left unvaccinated, leading to the current outbreak," he said.

The minister added that the government has now launched a nationwide measles vaccination drive to contain the situation. Initially introduced in 30 upazilas, the programme has been expanded across the country since the 20th of this month.

"We hope the measles situation will come under control soon with this ongoing campaign," he said.

Earlier, the minister held a meeting to review healthcare services in Munshiganj.

Govt unleashed JCD against Shibir Alleges Golam Parwar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenaidah



Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar yesterday alleged that the government had "unleashed" Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal against Islami Chhatra Shibir amid the ongoing political situation.

Speaking at a Jamaat ward presidents' conference as the chief guest at a programme at Johan Dream Valley Park auditorium in Jhenaidah, he claimed that while the government talks about compromise in parliament, JCD activists have carried out attacks on Shibir members in different parts of the country.

Parwar alleged that Shibir activists were attacked in Chattogram, Cumilla, Pabna and Ishwardi. Student leaders elected by "30,000 votes" at Ducsu were also targeted.

He further claimed that misinformation and "false photo cards" were being used to discredit Shibir and mislead the public.

Garbage piles up as CCC's centralised plan stalls

Residents face irregular services

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

The Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) move to centralise door-to-door waste collection has faltered, leaving large swathes of the port city grappling with uncollected garbage and a resurgence of unauthorised fee collection.

Barely a month after Mayor Shahadat Hossain scrapped the private vendor-based system and declared a "free" service from April, residents say the new arrangement has devolved into "a complete shambles".

In neighbourhoods such as Jamal Khan, Shulakbahar, Patharghata and North Kattali, waste collection has become erratic. Locals report that the daily visits once ensured by private van pullers have largely disappeared, resulting in piles of garbage clogging bins and alleyways.

"The van pullers used to come every morning. Now, we don't see them for three days straight," said Mohammad Ismail of Sholoshahar, adding, "The garbage is piling up, creating an unbearable stench."

Visits to several areas, including Jamal Khan By-Lane, Hem Sen Lane, Momin Road and Anderkillia, found bins overflowing with household waste.

Although CCC Secretary



Mohammad Ashraful Amin has warned that no third party is authorised to collect fees, residents allege that "shadow vendors", including former

workers, are demanding Tk 50-100 per household. Many say they pay out of fear their waste will otherwise be left unattended.

Nasir Ahmed of Bibir Hat said fee collection persists despite the

said Deputy Chief Conservancy Officer Pranab Kanti Sharma. The corporation has deployed around 2,000 cleaners to replace the previous decentralised system.

Yet logistical gaps remain stark. Of the almost 3,000 tonnes of waste generated daily, CCC can handle only about 2,500 tonnes, leaving roughly 500 tonnes accumulating in drains and canals, according to a 2022 study by Cuet's civil engineering department.

Defending the decision, Mayor Shahadat said the fee-based system was scrapped due to public reluctance to pay and multiple complaints. "We have coordinated our employees with the current vendors and are providing subsidies. Now, waste collection is being managed directly by the City Corporation," he said.

With the monsoon approaching, residents fear the situation could get worse. "If the system isn't streamlined immediately, the first heavy rain will wash this garbage into the drainage network, paralysing the streets," warned Soumen Barua of Jamal Khan.

3,000 more fresh faces join NCP

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parliament, specially welcomed Ishaq Sarker, a former Jubo Dal leader expelled from the BNP, noting that many of his followers had also joined the NCP.

He described Ishaq as the main attraction, citing his leadership roles in Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Jubo Dal and his involvement in anti-fascist movements.

"Ishaq is an inspiration who has stood with the people and the youth," Nahid said, adding that around 3,000 of his followers joined the party.

Speaking at the programme, Nahid said the NCP aims to reorganise the country in line with people's aspirations for change and reform.

"Before the election, we told people that this election was meant to change the

country. But after coming to power, the government denied the referendum and turned it into a routine transfer of power," he said.

He alleged that reform initiatives were being scrapped and criticised what he described as renewed politicisation of institutions. "We are seeing bank looters being allowed to return. Institutions are being politicised, and in universities, muscle power

and partisan politics are re-emerging," he said.

Calling for local government polls, Nahid said youth would dominate the upcoming elections.

"There will be a victory of the youth in local government elections, with the support of the NCP," he said.

NCP spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary, Chief

Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam, and other senior leaders were present.

Earlier, on April 19, 44 leaders from the Amar Bangladesh Party (AB Party), United Peoples Bangladesh (UP Bangladesh), and the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement joined the NCP. Most were activists of UP Bangladesh, a platform formed by former Islami Chhatra Shibir leaders.

Tk 9,638cr needed

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are still awaiting disposal, for which about Tk 7,176 crore is required.

The minister said the government has planned to spend Tk 2,462 crore to settle about 20,500 applications in the current 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Already, 6,000 applications have been settled, and about Tk 700 crore has been paid out, he said.

In addition, a welfare allowance continues to be provided regularly through the welfare trust, which is mainly run through a four percent contribution from the salaries of teachers and employees under MPO.

However, while the trust annually raises about Tk 660 crore, the necessary expenditure is about Tk 840 crore, resulting in a deficit of about Tk 180 crore annually.

The minister said they have taken several steps to address this financial

Chicken prices drop

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Broiler chicken also dipped to Tk 180-190 per kg from Tk 200-220, while indigenous chicken eased to Tk 700-720 per kg from Tk 750-780 the previous week.

Egg prices rose by Tk 10-20 per dozen, with a dozen now fetching Tk 130-140 against last week's Tk 120. Loose sugar climbed to Tk 110-115 per kg from Tk 100-105, while onion prices edged up to Tk 40-45 per kg from Tk 35.

Beef prices, which spiked around Eid-ul-Fitr, remain stubbornly high at Tk 820-850 per kg, up from the pre-Eid norm of Tk 750-800, with no sign of retreat after two months. Hilsa prices have

Compensate

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organisations gathered at the site to commemorate those killed in one of the country's deadliest industrial disasters.

They placed flowers at a temporary altar and reiterated demands for justice and compensation.

Rafiqul Islam Sujan, president of the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation, said April 24 should be declared a National Workers' Mourning Day.

He also called for the construction of a memorial monument at the Rana Plaza site, acquisition of the land, rehabilitation of affected workers, maximum punishment for those responsible, and compensation of Tk 4.8 million for injured workers — equivalent to their lifetime income.

Taslima Akhter, president of Bangladesh Garment Workers Solidarity, told The Daily Star that justice has yet to be ensured.

"Even after 13 years, justice has not been ensured for the deaths of so many workers, and their rights have not been established. We hope the present government will fulfil our demands and ensure justice," she said.

Khairul Mamun Mintu, legal affairs secretary of the Bangladesh Garments and Sweater Workers Trade Union Centre, described the collapse as a "planned killing" and said justice for those involved remains elusive.

"The previous government did not fulfil any of the demands of the victims. We hope the present government will ensure justice and fulfil the long-standing demands of the workers," he said.