

Many missing, 2 bodies recovered

Staff Reporter



An overloaded launch with over 250 passengers on board capsized in the Padma River near Mawa Ghat in Lauhajang upazila of Munshiganj district on Monday. Police and witnesses said the accident took place when the overloaded launch named Pinak-6 carrying over 250 passengers from Kawrakandi sank in the river due to strong current 800 yards off Mawa Ghat (jetty) around 11:15am while it was heading towards the jetty. Contacted, Assistant Superintendent of Police Kutub Uddin of Sreenagar circle said about 150-200 passengers might have been inside the launch during the incident. Locals rescued many of them using speedboats while some managed to swim ashore. Many missing passengers feared dead. The rescue operation was continuing. Only two bodies were rescued till the afternoon yesterday. 2 bodies recovered The bodies of two women were recovered while many people remained missing after the overloaded passenger launch sank. Acting Superintendent of Police Zakir Hossain Majumder told local correspondents that the bodies of two unidentified women were recovered from the river. Md Iqbal Hossain, an official of Launch Owners' Association, said there were 250 passengers in the launch. Deputy Commissioner Md Saiful Hasan said 44 passengers were rescued alive while many others remained missing. BIWTA director Md Shafiqul Haq said a salvage ship, 'Rustom', set out from Narayanganj for

the accident spot.

He said it will take 5-6 hours for the launch to reach the spot due to strong current in the river. Divers from Fire Brigade and Civil Defence, Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard have reached the spot and started the rescue drive.

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Local people said the rescue operation is being hampered due to rough weather and strong currents in the river.

The divers failed to locate the sunken launch till the evening due to bad the weather.

Meanwhile, two bodies were formed to investigate the launch capsized.

The Ministry of Shipping formed a seven-member probe committee while Mercantile Marine Department a four-member committee to probe the incident.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan and BIWTA chairman Dr Khandaker Shamsuddoha visited the accident spot.