

Bus salvaged after plunging into Padma, no casualties reported

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Online Desk : A bus that plunged into the Padma River from the pontoon of the Daulatdia Ferry Terminal in Goalanda upazila of Rajbari on Friday morning was salvaged several hours later, with no casualties reported. The rescue vessel Hamza recovered the submerged bus from the riverbed around 12:00pm, said Mohammad Salah Uddin, assistant general manager of the BIWTC's Daulatdia office. The accident occurred around 9:25am at Terminal-7 when the Dhaka-bound 'SB Super Deluxe' bus from Kushtia lost control and fell into the river while attempting to board the ferry Bir Shreshtha Jahangir, officials and witnesses said. According to local authorities, passengers had already disembarked before the bus approached the pontoon, preventing what could have been a major tragedy.

Goalanda Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Sathi Das said there were no reports of deaths or missing persons. "All passengers got off the bus before it moved toward the pontoon. We have not received any reports of missing persons," she said. The driver and his assistants, who were inside the vehicle at the time of the accident, were rescued with the help of locals and taken to Goalanda Upazila Health Complex for treatment. Barak Sheikh, supervisor of the transport company at Daulatdia Ghat, said the bus was carrying 37 passengers, while the driver, supervisor, and helper remained on board when the accident occurred.

He said the bus was attempting to board the ferry when it suddenly lost control, struck the ramp of another medium-sized ferry stationed nearby, broke through it, and then plunged into the river. Immediately after the incident, members of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), River Police, and other agencies launched a rescue operation. The vessel Hamza also rushed to the spot to assist in the rescue efforts.

The latest incident has revived memories of a deadly accident at the same ferry terminal on March 25 this year, when a bus plunged into the Padma River from the pontoon, leaving at least 26 people dead.