



PHOTO: STAR

The Bangladesh Krishak League formed a human chain in the city yesterday demanding steps to ensure fair price of agricultural produces.

'River erosion devours 10,000 hectares of land a year'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

River erosion devours ten thousand hectares of cultivable land every year, revealed a water resources

ministry statistics yesterday. According to the statistics, the Water Development Board (WDB) rehabilitated 2,000 landless families under its Coastal Embankment

Rehabilitation Project while another 4,500 landless families under its Shoal Development and Rehabilitation project.

The ministry presented the statistics at an opinion sharing meeting with the members of the media and civil society over its performance in last two years and its future plan for water resources management and development.

In a presentation, Water Resources Secretary Saif Uddin said the ministry implemented 17 out of total 101 projects during 2001-02 fiscal and spent Tk 664.15 crore out of the allocated Tk 756.78 crore.

In 2002-03 fiscal, it implemented 11 out of 72 projects spending Tk 626.58 crore out of the allocated Tk 711.00 crore, he added.

Saifuddin said poverty level at Jessore-Khulna Drainage Rehabilitation Project area has been reduced from 75 percent to 53 percent due to annual increase of food grains by 1.94 lakh metric tons in the area.

The secretary said the WDB constructed 680 km embankment and excavated 816 km canal under the Food for Work programme during the 2001-02 fiscal.

In 2002-03 fiscal, the board constructed 899.44 km embankment and excavated 787.27 km canal at a cost of Tk 93.62 crore, he added.

"The government must pay due attention to conserve and develop water resources for the sake of the country's existence," said Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmad.

Journalist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury suggested more funds for water development sector on priority basis.

Symposium on vaccination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A scientific symposium on 'Vaccination at crossroads - Bangladesh perspective' was held in the city yesterday to mark the launching of Centre for Child Life and Health Research, Bangladesh (CCLHR, B).

Speaking as chief guest, National Professor Nurul Islam called for raising mass awareness and involving imams of the mosques to make the Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI) a success.

Prof. Nazmun Nahar, president of Bangladesh Neonatal Forum, presided over the symposium.

Former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University AK Azad Chowdhury also took part in the discussion.

JCD rivals strengthen positions at DU halls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rival factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) have strengthened their positions at different halls of Dhaka University following Wednesday's clashes between two rival groups of Shahidullah Hall unit of the party.

Tension has been prevailing between two factions at different halls after the clash.

The central and DU unit leaders of the organisation are divided over the clash, said party sources requesting anonymity. They said the DU unit of JCD is irked on the central committee for its intervention in the clash.

Some senior central leaders are giving shelter to a faction who have been dominating the campus politics while another faction led by a top DU unit leader and a top central leader are trying to protect their supporters at different halls.

The JCD is now divided into two factions--- one led by JCD

President Sahabuddin Laltu and the other led by Safiul Bari Babu, Monir Hossain, Asaduzzaman Asad and Mustafizul Islam Mamun.

On Wednesday night, JCD President Shahabuddin Laltu and General Secretary Azizul Bari Helal suspended the JCD committee of Shahidullah Hall unit and expelled one Sohag for his involvement in anti-organisational activities.

At least 10 leaders and workers of JCD and two policemen were injured in clashes between the two rival factions of the hall.

The clashes took place between supporters of the two factions -- one led by JCD hall unit acting president Amjad Hossain Jewel and the other by its General Secretary Zakaria Al Mamun over the occupation of seats at the hall.

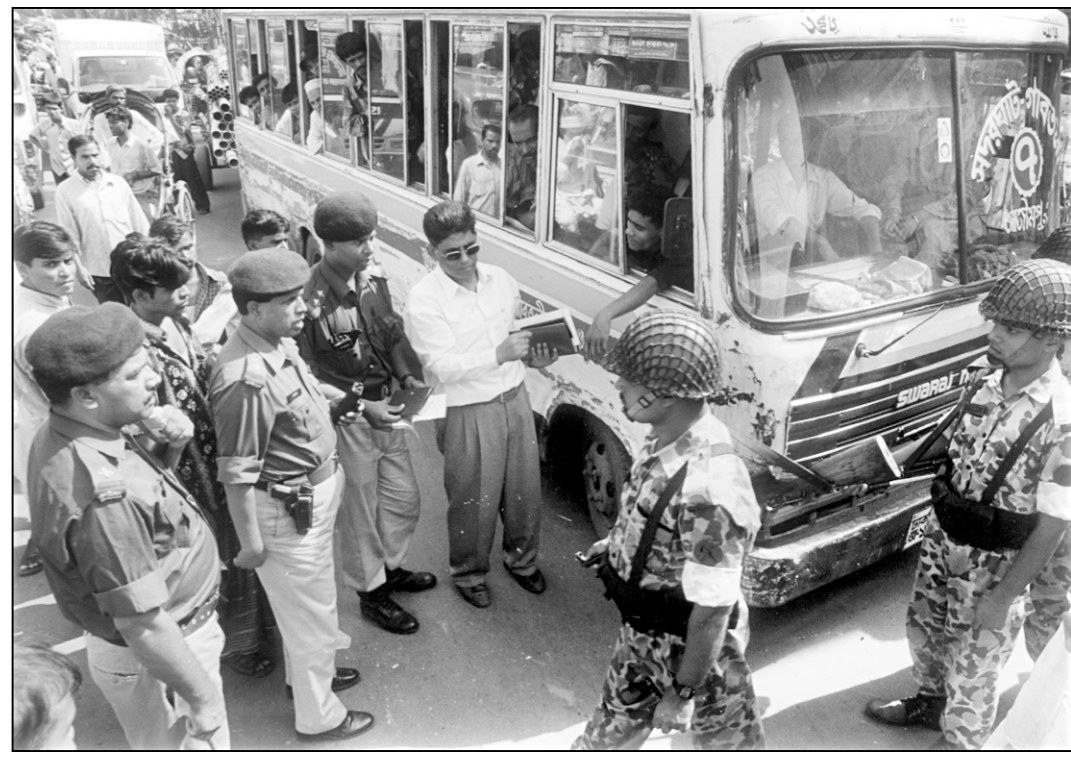


PHOTO: STAR

Members of joint forces of police and BDR check documents of a minibus during a drive against unfit vehicles at Nayabazar in the city yesterday.

Grounded pilot to be sent to S'pore for medical

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Biman Bangladesh Airlines authorities yesterday decided to send a pilot grounded on health reasons to Singapore tomorrow for a medical check-up.

He will be examined by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)-approved doctors in Singapore. If found fit, Biman will put him on the pilots' list and if not, he will remain grounded.

The decision was taken at a meeting between the authorities and the Biman Steering Committee, a platform of seven unions of Biman staff.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, who attended the meeting held at the Biman headquarters, also assured the staff of meeting their other demands by November 20, sources said.

The minister convened the meeting following an ultimatum by the steering committee on Monday to withdraw suspension of the pilot within 72 hours.

Capt. SM Nasimul Haque, Airbus commander and president of Bangladesh Airlines Pilots' Association (BAPA), was earlier declared unfit on health grounds to fly aircraft.

Association (BAPA), was earlier declared unfit on health grounds to fly aircraft.

The Directorate of Medical Services of Bangladesh Air Force, which conducts medicals of all Biman pilots every six months, declared him unfit due to diabetes. Under the ICAO guidelines, pilots with controlled diabetes can fly aircraft.

After the meeting yesterday, Nasimul Haque said he was sure he would be 'cleared' by the doctors in Singapore.

Fakhrul Alam Bhuiyan, president of the steering committee, said the minister has formed three committees to meet their longstanding demands, which include 60 per cent dearness allowance, non-extension of costly lease agreement of two Boeing 737s and permanent agreements with pilots and flight attendants.

The meeting was attended by Civil Aviation Secretary Shaiful Islam, Biman Managing Director Lutfur Rahman, directors of Biman and representatives of the steering committee.

3 get life term for raping woman

BSS, Rajshahi

Three persons were yesterday given life in prison for raping one woman in February this year.

The court also fined them each Tk one lakh to pay to the victims.

The convicts are Abdus Salam, 25, Abdur Razaque, 28, and Tozom Ali, 26, all from Uttar Sarutia village under Sirajganj Sadar thana.

The court also asked the Deputy Commissioner of Sirajganj to collect the fined money by selling their movable and immovable assets and pay that to the victims.

Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge AFM Aminul Islam found the convicts guilty under Women and Children Repression Control Special Act-1999 and handed down the punishment in a crowded court room.

According to the case story, the convicts intercepted the way of Sharifunnessa Khatun, 45, wife of Khalilur Rahman, and Sonabhan, 42, wife of Shah Jahan in front of Sarutia High School under Sirajganj Sadar police at about 10.30 at night on February 15, 2003 while they were returning home from a nearby village.

They beat the women indiscriminately and took Sharifunnessa to a nearby Mango garden and raped her there one after another.

Victim's husband lodged a case with Sirajganj police accusing three persons.

Special Public Prosecutor Ketab Uddin aided by Advocate Hamidul Haque defended the case on behalf of the state while Advocates Syed Ekramur Rasul, Saiful Islam and Aslam Sarker appeared for the convicts.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6pm today. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and the lowest 21.5 degree Celsius at Srirangol.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:20 pm today and rises at 6:05 am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	24.0	65	64
Chittagong	34.4	24.3	64	66
Rajshahi	32.2	23.4	73	92
Khulna	33.2	24.8	79	77
Barisal	32.5	24.2	83	86
Sylhet	32.5	23.5	83	--
Cox's Bazar	33.6	26.2	76	77

'86 women, children raped this month'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 86 women and children were raped across the country in the last 30 days since October 1, according to a study report released yesterday.

Of the victims, 11 are children. Seven of the rape victims were killed and three others committed suicide, the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) said in its report.

Some police and administration personnel are also responsible for the rape of five victims, it added.

The report also said 201 people became victims of repression by police and four of them died in police custody.

DBBF donates Tk 1 lakh

Dutch-Bangla Bank Foundation has donated Tk one lakh for the treatment of Syed Faiyaz Kabir Sangeet, a student of class five, who has been suffering from a rare disease 'Myosities Osfificans Progressiva', says a press release.

Mid Yeasin Ali, managing director of the bank, handed over a payment order for the amount to S A Kabir, father of the patient.

Faiyaz is reportedly the only in the subcontinent and one of the few patients of the world who has been suffering from this rare disease which turns the muscles into bones gradually.

Abul Hashem Khan, deputy managing director (Operation), AAM Zakaria, deputy managing director (Administration) and Dr Mozammel Hossain Khan, administrator of Dutch-Bangla Bank Foundation, were present on the occasion.

custody.

A total of 22 women were tortured for dowry and 14 of them died. Twenty-seven people also became victims of acid attack.

Political violence claimed 21 people and three others were killed in bordering areas this month, the report said.

Four domestic helps were also killed and 10 women and children were trafficked.

Besides, 133 people were killed in different accidents.

Twenty journalists were also attacked by muggers, criminals and extortionists and some of them received death threats for publishing reports on crimes.

40 arrested while being trafficked to India

UNB, Benapole

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel yesterday held 40 people, including girls and children, near Sadipur border while they were being trafficked to India.

The alleged traffickers managed to flee, police said.

BDR later handed them over to the Benapole police. They told police that they each paid the agents Tk 1500 to 2000 for employment abroad.

They further told police that the agents brought them from remote villages of Barisal, Jhalakati and Narail districts.

Nat'l Cooperatives Day tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The 32nd National Cooperatives Day will be observed in the country tomorrow with a call to strengthen the cooperatives movement.

This year's theme of the day is "Cooperatives for Employment and Poverty Alleviation".

The Cooperatives Department has taken a three-day programmes to mark the day which include hoisting of national and cooperatives flags, distribution of cooperatives award, discussion, essay writing competition, and painting competition for children.

Death anniversary

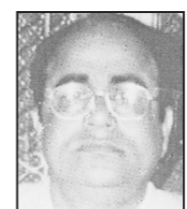


Today is the first death anniversary of Achiya Farveen, wife of former secretary MAM Ziauddin, says a press release.

Parveen, a teacher of Eskaton Garden High School, died at Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok at the age of 52 following a brain stroke last year.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Obituary



Niharendu Sarkar, principal officer of Pubali Bank, Sadarghat branch, died at Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital yesterday at the age of 52, says a press release.

A freedom fighter, he is survived by his mother, wife and one daughter.

He was cremated at Razzabagh crematorium.

Mazeda Begum

Mosammam Mazeda Begum, wife of late Moulana AKM Moslem and mother of SMA Zafar, commercial manager of Gemini Group, died at a clinic in Patuakhali on October 29 at the age of 78, says a press release.

A director of Moulana Moslem Foundation, she is survived by four sons and three daughters.

She was buried at her family graveyard in Telikhali, Patuakhali.



Managing Director of Dutch-Bangla Bank MD Yeasin Ali hands over a payment order worth Tk one lakh to SA Kabir, father of Syed Faiyaz Kabir Sangeet who has been suffering from a rare disease.

DHAKA TODAY

Roundtable

A roundtable on 'Education crisis and way to overcome', organised by Dhaka-based Habiganj Association, will be held. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.

Inauguration

The inauguration of the 17th exclusive mega sales and display centre of Jordana Color Cosmetics of USA will be held with Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: Prince Plaza, Sobhanbagh. Time: 3.30pm.

Film show

Alliance Francaise will screen a film titled 'Les rivieres pourpres' directed by Mathieu Kassovitz (2000). Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.30am and 6.00pm.

Movie show

Academy Film Society will screen a movie titled 'How to lose a guy in 10 days'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 7.00pm.

Discussion

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal will hold a discussion on the occasion of its 31st founding anniversary with ASM Abdur Rab as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.

JUAAB programme

Japanese Universities Alumni Association in Bangladesh (JUAAB) will hold a milad mahfil for the salvation of the departed soul of Sheikh Ahmed Jalal, former advisor of the organisation. It will be followed by a condolence meeting and iftar. Venue: JUAAB office, Rowshan Tower, Green Road. Time: 4.30pm.

Meeting

A meeting of the central executive committee of National Poetry Council will be held. Venue: Teachers' lounge of TSC, Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm.

Rally

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon organises a rally demanding a ban on the use of poisonous colour in different food items. Venue: Shahbagh crossing. Time: 10.30am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Award giving ceremony

The award giving ceremony of National Cooperatives Award will be held with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia as chief guest. Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall. Time: 11.00am.

Conference

The inaugural ceremony of first conference of editors and working journalists of SAARC countries, organised by the information ministry, will be held with Minister Tariqul Islam as chief guest. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 9.30am.

Seminar

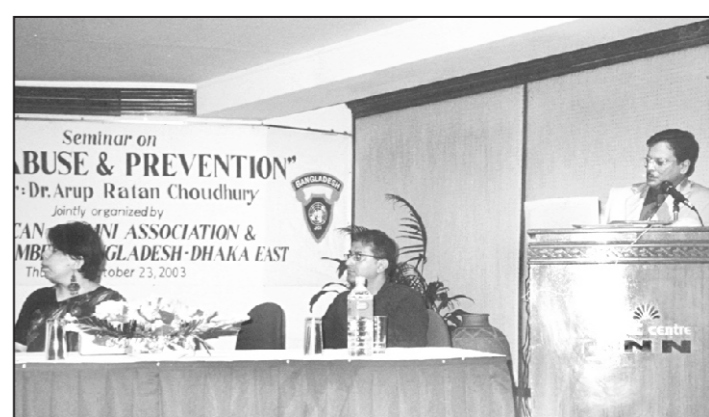
A seminar on 'Full ratification of CEDAW by Bangladesh: problems and possibilities', organised by Women for Women: a research and study group, will be held. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.30am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'The taking of Pelham one two three'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 7.00pm.

Art exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of an art exhibition titled 'Spell of Weeping'



Dr Arup Ratan Choudhury speaks at a seminar on 'Drug abuse and prevention' in the city recently. The American Alumni Association and Junior Chamber Bangladesh - Dhaka East jointly organised the seminar.