

Trader killed in road mishap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A trader was killed and three others were injured in a road accident at Shikabaha under Patiya upazila of the district yesterday.

The dead, identified as Babul Haq, 45, was the owner of a grocery shop, police said.

The accident occurred at around 2.00pm when Babul and two others on board a CNG auto-rickshaw were coming to the city.

As the auto-rickshaw reached Shikabaha, a Cox's Bazaar-bound speeding truck rammed it leaving Babul dead on the spot and injuring others.

Schoolgirl abducted in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A schoolgirl was kidnapped on Saturday when she was going to her house at Islampur Road in the city.

The girl, a student of Pioneer Govt Girls' College at Babukhan Road, was abducted at noon for ransom.

Victim's mother Sabera Parveen filed a case with Khulna Police Station yesterday accusing eight people in this connection. But, Sabera did not mention the amount of ransom the abductors demanded for her daughter's release.

On January 1, a female student of Khulna Azam Khan Govt Commerce College, was abducted by a gang of miscreants in the city.

On January 14, a student of Fatema Girls' High School, was abducted while she was on way to her house at noon.

Police could not rescue any of these girls, abducted from city in broad daylight in three weeks.

Measles vaccination campaign begins Feb 25

BSS, Dhaka

The national measles vaccination campaign will begin on February 25 across the country aimed at reducing child mortality and other complications from the disease.

The government has set a target to bring around 3.35 crore children of the age group of nine months to 10 years under the programme.

The campaign will continue till March 16 spending around Taka 79.10 crore.

Farmer killed over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A farmer was killed and two others were injured yesterday in a clash between the two rivals over a disputed land at village Gobordari in Sadar upazila.

The victim was identified as Rafiquzzaman, 25, son of Abdul Mazed Master of village Gobordari.

Quoting local people, police said the rival group led by Nasir Uddin attacked the victim when he was ploughing a disputed land. The victim died on the spot.

Obituary

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Shafiul Haq Khan Milky, father of NTV Special Correspondent Bajjeed Milky, passed away due to cardiac arrest at his residence in Mymensingh town yesterday at the age of 78.

He left behind his wife, two sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.



Boy missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Shahadat Hossain Rakib, 10, son of Md Abul Kashem, has been missing since January 17, says a press release.

He did not return after he went out of his residence at Sanarpur under Mahmudpur in Narayanjan district.

His complexion is fair and he was wearing a red T-shirt and pant on the day of missing.

He speaks Bangla well. If anyone finds the boy, please contact in the following address: National Press Club, 18 Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000, Phone-9563383, 9563395; Mobile 0192707135, 0176635997 OR Sanarpur, Nitaipur, Mahmudpur, Narayanjan.

Dhaka, Moscow to work for regular contacts at political level

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and Russia have agreed to work for regular contacts at the political level, which might begin with the visit by Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan to the Russian Federation this year.

Some bilateral agreements might be signed during Morshed Khan's visit to Moscow which, officials said, could lead to meetings at the highest level.

These issues were discussed and agreed at the 5th annual bilateral consultation meeting between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries in Moscow on January 20.

The bilateral consultation was held after years since the two countries signed a protocol in this regard in 1992.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexeyev Alexander Yurievich led their respective sides at the meeting in Moscow.

They also agreed that a delegation led by the Executive Chairman of Board of Investment might visit Russia in the second half of this year to explore the possibilities of strengthening economic cooperation.

Message received from Moscow said the entire gamut of bilateral relations was discussed during the

consultation.

Hemayet gave a run down of different aspects of Russia-Bangladesh bilateral relations based on trust and friendship.

He told the Russian side that the people of Bangladesh remember with gratitude the invaluable support of the then Soviet Union to the country's Liberation War and in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged nation.

But despite such historic bonds, the two countries failed to foster bilateral trade and economic relations.

Both the sides agreed that exchange of visits at different levels would help further strengthen the existing bilateral relations.

The Russian Deputy Foreign Minister highly lauded Bangladesh's role in regional and international forum, including the Saarc and the UN.

The two sides exchanged views on regional and international issues, including recent development in South Asia, the recent Saarc summit in Dhaka, Asean Regional Forum (ARF), WTO, UN and UN Reforms, and combating terrorism.

The consultation was held in a very friendly, frank and cordial atmosphere and provided the two sides an opportunity to review the existing bilateral relations and discuss ways and means of further

expanding cooperation in different areas for mutual benefit of the two countries.

Hemayet also launched the official website of the Bangladesh Embassy at a simple ceremony at the Chancery in Moscow, according to a message received here yesterday.

He also had a meeting with the expatriate and non-resident Bangladesh community leaders living in Moscow and listened to their problems and suggestions regarding trade and investments in Bangladesh.

Hemayet urged them to invest and do business in Bangladesh along with their Russian partners and associates.

He was accompanied by Ambassador to Russia M Amir Hussain Sikder, Defence Attache Air Commodore M Shah Alam, Director (Europe) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ruhul Alam Siddique, Counsellor Rezina Ahmed and Commercial Counsellor Muhammad Abdul Quadir.

The Russian delegation headed by the Deputy Foreign Minister included Deputy Director Trotsenko GR Chief of Section Listopadov NA and Desk Officer Christina Byoko of the Second Asia Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Bomb hoax at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two bomb-like objects left at the Civil Aviation canteen of the Zia International Airport (ZIA) sent panic waves among the airport officials, employees and passengers yesterday.

The bomb disposal unit of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), however, confirmed that there were no explosive or bomb materials in the two containers.

Civil Aviation employees discovered the two one-litre containers covered with red tape at the canteen at around 1:00pm and informed police and Rab authorities immediately. The Rab took the two objects to its Headquarters at Kurmitola and found them filled with small stones, marble and soda.



Plan Int'l chief arrives today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Executive Officer of Plan International Headquarters Tom Miller arrives in Dhaka today along with his wife Bonne Miller on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh.

He will visit a number of development projects of Plan Bangladesh and meet government officials as well as representatives of development partners during his stay in the country, a press release said.

Plan Bangladesh, a renowned non-government organisation working for disadvantaged people particularly children in 46 countries, has reached more than 3.5 million people across the country under health, education, micro-finance and social development programmes since 1994.

Caac workshop on translation begins Jan 26

A workshop on the art of translation organised by Centre for Asian Arts and Cultures (Caac) begins in the city on January 26 Friday, says a press release.

The aim of the workshop is to create a pool of expert translators, who can render literary and scientific works of other languages in Bangla and vice versa.

Prominent scholar Dr Salimullah Khan will conduct the workshop. Those who successfully complete the first phase of the course will qualify for the second phase.

For the convenience of working people, there will be only one class in a week on Friday mornings. The last date for collecting enrolment forms is tomorrow.

The classes will be held at the Caac office at 62 Science Laboratory, Dhanmondi in the city.

For further information, interested persons can contact Abdullah Al Mamun, programme officer of Caac at 9668377 or 0189296787.

English course for Rangs executives begins

Speakers at the inauguration of 'Professional English Language Course' for the Rangs Group executives underscored the need for learning English for professional skill development to compete the most competitive present world, says a press release.

The inaugural ceremony was organised by the Dhaka Language Club, a leading multilingual institute on the DLC Dhanmondi Campus.

Shahriar Yusuf, controller of Rangs Group, said, "Our executives will learn English from DLL and utilise it in their professional work efficiently."

Masud A Khan, president and CEO of Dhaka Language Club, said, "We conduct the corporate language course very sincerely and build a skilled human resource. We invite more corporate houses to come DLC."



Sammlita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad stages a demonstration in front of the High Court in the city yesterday demanding removal of chief election commissioner and two newly appointed election commissioners.

Removal of CEC, 2 new ECs demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Sammlita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad (SASP) yesterday demanded the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two newly appointed election commissioners (ECs).

Addressing a rally, they said the next general election would not be free and fair under CEC MA Aziz and two ECs Justice Mahfuzur Rahman and SM Zakaria.

The rally was organised by SASP, a forum of pro-opposition lawyers, at the south hall of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in its Convenor Barrister M Amir-ul-Islam in the chair.

SCBA President Advocate Mahubey Alam said the government has completed all arrangements for holding a planned election like that of February 15, 1996 by appointing its men in all the state institutions.

"The government has been making conspiracy for holding a blueprint election as they have realised very well that they will not be able to come to the power through free and fair election as the people will not cast their votes for BNP-Jamaat alliance for their

misdeeds," he said.

Former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru said the CEC and two 'controversial' ECs would have to be removed from their posts for the sake of transparency and accountability of the Election Commission (EC).

He said the EC has become a farce due to unconstitutional activities of the CEC and appointment of two controversial persons as ECs by the government.

Barrister Amir-ul-Islam said, "The activities of the CEC and the government have pushed the nation into an uncertainty when people have been waiting for a free and fair election."

SASP member-secretary Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, SCBA Secretary Advocate M Enayetur Rahim, and Advocates Layekuzzaman Mollah, Sirajul Haque, Ruhul Kuddus Babu, MA Kuddus, PC Guha, MA Halim, Mahub Ali, and Sirajul Haq also spoke at the rally.

Later, the SASP leaders tried to bring out a procession from the Bar Association Bhaban, but police intercepted it in front of the National Eidgah gate.

Baul Songs 'Masterpiece of Oral, Intangible Heritage of Humanity' Proclaims Unesco

UNB, Dhaka

Baul Songs of Bangladesh have been proclaimed as 'Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity' by Unesco, said an official announcement in Dhaka yesterday.

In a letter to Bangladesh Ambassador Mahmood Hasan in Paris, Rieks Smeets, chief of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity Section of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), congratulated Bangladesh and sent a Diploma signed by the Unesco Director General, Koichiro Matsuura, to this effect.

"The candidature file submitted by your country was evaluated by the competent NGOs prior to its submission to the consideration of the International Jury for the proclamation which met from November 21 to 24 last year," wrote Smeets to Mahmood Hasan, also Permanent Representative to Unesco.

After studying the file, the Jury recommended to the Director General the inscription of this cultural expression on the list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, he said.

Henceforth, 'Baul Songs' genre in the field of music figures among the 90 Masterpieces proclaimed by the UN agency, Unesco, since 2001.

After the Munajat, four special trains will leave for Mymensingh from Tongi at 12:25 pm, 12:40 pm, 2:15pm and 10:00pm.

Dhaka-Chittagong Sabarna Express, Dhaka-Sylhet Parabat Express, Dhaka-Bahadurabad-Dhaka Teesta Express trains will remain suspended temporarily due to Ijtema on the day of Akheri Munajat.

The trains will run on the weekly holidays.

Moreover, Dhaka-Rajshahi-Dhaka Silk City Express, Dhaka-Chittagong Mahanagar Godhuli and Dhaka-Chittagong Prabhati will also run on the holiday on January 29.

Uncle beaten to death by nephew at Rangunia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A man was beaten to death by his nephew over a trifling matter at a village in Rangunia upazila of the district on Saturday.

Police said Nizamuddin, 21, was locked in an altercation with his uncle Abu Taher, 36, over the cutting of a banana tree on their courtyard at Fakirghata village of Shilak union at around 8.00pm and at one

stage hit Taher indiscriminately with a wooden stick.

Neighbours rushed critically injured Taher to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

A case was filed with Rangunia Police Station in this connection. None could be arrested till writing of this report in the evening.



Participants of the 'Professional English Language Course' for the Rangs Group executives pose for photograph with Dhaka Language Club President Masud A Khan and Shahriar Yusuf, controller of Rangs Group.



Awami League and its front organisations bring out processions in the city in support of hartal yesterday.

VICTIM OF DOWRY Female teacher gives up fight for life after 24 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An injured female schoolteacher, stabbed by her husband for dowry, succumbed to her injuries at Apollo Hospital in the city yesterday after 24 days of fighting for life.

She passed away at around 7:00am.

Farzana Yasmin Sonia, 22, former teacher of Sabuj Sangha Kindergarten at Madhyabadda, was stabbed by her husband Shamim Mondol Sagor in a closed room at around 11:30pm on December 29.

She was rushed to the hospital at Baridhara immediately while Sagor was caught red handed.

Family sources said Sonia was married to Sagor in 2002 and since then he had been demanding dowry at different occasions.

Sonia's parents gave in to his

demand several times.

But Sagor continued to make fresh demands for dowry and as a result, Sonia with her six-year-old daughter shifted from his house in Chittagong to her father's residence at Nikunja in the capital.

The relationship between the couple further deteriorated when Sagor demanded Tk 2 lakh for going to Middle East.

On December 29, Sagor visited his father-in-laws' house and chopped Sonia with a sharp knife on that night.

He confessed to stabbing her wife after losing his temper at one stage of quarrel with Sonia but denied the accusation of demanding dowry, police said.

Sagor is now in jail as his father-in-law had lodged a case against him with Khilkhet Police Station.

Council for Interfaith Harmony formed

BSS, Dhaka

A new non-political organisation comprising members of all religions was formed in the city yesterday.

The organisation titled Council for Interfaith Harmony, Bangladesh (CIHB) includes members of civil society and religious leaders of Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Buddhists.

Former Secretary Shah Abdul Hannan and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad have been made chairman and secretary general of the 25-member committee of the organisation.

A four-member presidium of CIHBD was also formed with Shah Abdul Hannan, Professor Dr Paresh Chandra Mandal, Professor Dr Sukumar Barua and Dr Father D Rozano as its members.

The first ever council of the CIHBD will be held at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFCC) on February 4.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the convention as chief guest.

Other members of the CIHBD are: former director general of Islamic Foundation Syed Ashraf Ali, Vice-Chancellor of South-East University Professor Dr M Shamsur Ali, Professor UAB Razia Akhter Banu, Director of Bangladesh Buddhist Light Association Nirpoti Ranjan Barua, Finance Secretary of Bangladesh Buddhist Culture Publicity Organisation Pramoth Barua, Executive President of Bangladesh Buddhist Federation Dr Sukumal Barua, Retired Professor Dr Sunanda Barua, Srimateh Kanti Bandhu Brahmachari of Jagabandhu Mohaprakash Math, Professor Madhabi Rani Chandra of Dhaka University, Dr Martice Hira Chowdhury, General Secretary of Bangladesh Buddhist Memorial of Dhaka unit Swapan Barua Chowdhury, Principal of Notre Dame College Father Benzamin Costa, General Secretary of National Christian Fellowship Rt Rev Denis Philip Datta, Dr Brijete Gomez, Rev Bibal Halkar, Nasima Hasan, Goutam Kumar Mitra, Moulana Mohammad Mukhlesur Rahman, Dr Pradip Kumar Roy, Father Dr Tapan D Rozario, Dr Dola Rani Sarker and Buddhana Khoru.

WEATHER TODAY Dry weather likely UNB, Dhaka Dry weather is likely to prevail over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during late night till morning, Met Office said predicting slight fall in night temperature over northwestern part, while it will remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country. Highest temperature 29.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and Chittagong and lowest 8.5 degrees at Srimongal. The sun sets in the capital at 5:38pm today and rises at 6:42am 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 25.8 13.1 46 50 Chittagong 29.0 15.2 62 63 Rajshahi 26.6 11.2 61 52 Khulna 27.0 14.4 66 48 Barisal 27.4 13.2 74 63 Sylhet 26.5 12.5 80 54 Cox's Bazar 27.8 16.0 57 59