

Tongi power plant trips

UNB, Dhaka

The 80-megawatt Tongi power plant was temporarily shut down on Thursday due to shortage of air-filters.

Power Development Board (PDB) officials said the air-filters used in the plant were exhausted ahead of the schedule, leading to the closure of the plant.

They feared the closure will add to the ongoing power crisis in and around the city, particularly in Tongi Industrial Area.

According to PDB sources, the peaking plant had been facing various problems since its installation last year by the China-based Harbin Power Engineering.

Soon after its inauguration by the prime minister in September last year, the plant abruptly stopped functioning. However, when the plant resumed generation, it again faced problem in gas supply.

At one stage, the plant remained closed for a number of days because of "low pressure in gas supply line."

For the last few months, the plant was generating between 40 and 50-MW instead of its original capacity of 80-MW.

Recently, the PDB officials detected that the air filters of the plant were getting non-functional due to heavy air pollution in Tongi area. They particularly mentioned that dust from a nearby rubber factory caused this problem.

PDB sources said a team from GE of France, the gas turbine manufacturer of the plant, will visit the power plant to identify its problems.

Chief Engineer (Generation) of PDB Khajir Khan admitted the multi-dimensional problems of the plant. He said the plant is expected to resume generation on February 20 if the air filters are available.

PDB has already informed the Department of Environment to take measures to check air pollution in the power plant area, Khan added.

3,300 Phensidyl bottles seized in city, six arrested

UNB, Dhaka

A team of Narcotics Control Department seized 3,300 bottles of Phensidyl syrup and arrested six people from a truck at Jatrabari in the city early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Narcotics Control team, led by assistant deputy director Hafiz, challenged the truck near Jatrabari crossing at about 3:00am and recovered the huge quantity of India-made contraband syrup.

Hafiz said the bottles were hidden inside 14 pieces of hollowed timbers, which were loaded from Alamdanga border of Chuadanga.

As per spot statement by the arrested persons, they were instructed to deliver the consignment to 'Boddiner spot' at Munshirtek in Sayedabad area.

The arrested were identified as Joynal, 33, Titu, 24, Amir, 32, Sumon, 20, truck driver Zahid, 26, and his helper Ekhtas, 22.

The 'Boddiner phensidyl spot' is allegedly run by Munir and Boddin, brothers of Jasim who was earlier killed by rivals in the drug trade.

The Narcotics department officials suspected that Munir, who is now staying in a neighbouring country, had sent the consignment from the bordering area.



PHOTO: STAR

Noted Professor Abdul Khaleque speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day course for fresh doctors organised by Bangladesh Epilepsy Foundation (BEF) on the occasion of its 15th founding anniversary at Biam auditorium in the city yesterday.

'20 lakh suffer from epilepsy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There are at least 15 to 20 lakh epileptic patients, popularly known as mirigori, in the country, said the experts at the inauguration of an international teaching course on epilepsy in the city yesterday.

They said neither the doctors nor the people are aware of the fact that epilepsy is a disease.

Moreover, many superstitions exist over the disease in the society, they added.

The two-day course for fresh doctors has been organised by Bangladesh Epilepsy Foundation (BEF) on the occasion of its 15th

founding anniversary at Biam auditorium.

Asian Epilepsy Academy, Epilepsy Association of Bangladesh and Neurology Foundation of Dhaka are the cosponsors of the course.

The speakers stressed the need for public awareness about epilepsy which is a curable disease with long term treatment.

Noted Professor Abdul Khaleque attended the inaugural session as chief guest while National Professor Dr AKM Aminul Haque was the special guest.

Prof Din Mohamud, head of Neurology department of Dhaka

Medical College and Hospital (DMCH), said a neurology care centre is needed in the country as neurology patients have significantly increased in last 15 to 20 years.

BEF President Prof MA Mannan MP, renowned psychiatrist Prof Hedayetul Islam and Asaduzzaman Noor MP also spoke at the inaugural ceremony.

BEF has been treating epileptic patients free of cost at Kolabagn in the capital on every Friday.

The organisation has so far treated at least 15,000 epileptic patients, said the organisers.

Three killed in road crashes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

Rafiqul Islam, a rikshawpuller, was run over by a covered-van loaded with cement in front of Malibagh Community Centre and died on the spot.

Being agitated at the incident, the mob seized the van and vandalised a number of vehicles. However, the van-driver managed to flee.

Khilgaon Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy and filed a case in this connection.

Muhammad Zahid, 28, a rickshaw-van driver, died on the spot as a speeding truck crushed him at Kolapara in Demra in the city at around 5:30am while he was pulling his van loaded with eggs.

He hailed from Lalmonirhat. His body was sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for autopsy.

In another incident, Ali Hossain, 30, was seriously injured when a Savar bound speeding bus knocked him down near Gabtoli bus stand at around 4:30pm yesterday. His nephew Abdur Rahim rushed the injured Ali to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where attending doctors declared him dead.

CPR Training Workshop today

A daylong CPR Training Workshop, jointly organised by Shabab Murshid Foundation and Birdem, will be held on the Birdem premises today, says a press release.

Eleven schools will participate in the workshop aimed at training representatives from local schools. The participating schools are: Sunbeams, Scholastica, South Breeze, Green Herald, Sir John Wilson, Dawn Grammar, Amity British Academy, Mastermind, Shaheen School, The Laurels and the Society for Welfare of Autistic Children.

CPR stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a combination of rescue breathing (mouth-to-mouth resuscitation) and chest compressions. If a child (or adult) is not breathing or circulating blood adequately, CPR can restore circulation of oxygen-rich blood to the brain. Without oxygen, permanent brain damage or death can occur in less than eight minutes.

Shabab Murshid Foundation was formed when Shabab Murshid, 15, son of economist Dr KAS Murshid and artist Shameem Subrana, died while playing basketball during lunch recess at his school in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The foundation aims to promote health awareness among children as well as to promote music and sports.

Shabab Murshid Foundation members believe that CPR is an essential tool to save children in the face of danger and all schools and care providers of children must be trained in CPR. When performed correctly, CPR can save a child's life by restoring breathing and circulation until advanced life support can be given by medical care providers.

Death anniversary of Shamsuzzoha today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The death anniversary of Prof Dr Shamsuzzoha, a martyred intellectual, will be observed today.

On this day in 1969, Pakistani military shot dead Shamsuzzoha in front of the Rajshahi University main gate, accelerating the mass movement to protest the Agartala conspiracy case.

A popular teacher, Dr Zoha was the RU proctor and reader of chemistry department. His death sparked violent protests across the then East Pakistan, leading to the fall of Ayub.

Rajshahi University will hold programmes, including hoisting black flags at administrative building and departments and placing wreaths at Zoha memorial.

Apart from milad mahfil and doa, a six-day exhibition of RU publications will also begin today. RU Teachers Association and Officers' Samity will organise discussions separately.

RU Martyred Memorial Archive will remain open from 7:00am to 5:00pm.

Sakina Siraj



The 4th death anniversary of Sakina Siraj, wife of former vice-chancellor of Islamic University Dr Md Sirajul Islam, will be observed today, says a press release.

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

Call to formulate policy for ship breaking industry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday demanded formulation of a policy for ship breaking industry, its strict implementation and strong monitoring of the coastal environment for the sake of public health.

The demands were made from a rally organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) in front of the National Museum in the city.

A number of environmentalists and NGOs expressed their solidarity with the demands.

Speakers at the rally also demanded a permanent ban on the

entering of ships with toxic waste in the coastal waters of Bangladesh and workplace safety of 50,000 workers engaged in hazardous ship breaking job.

They said during ship breaking the emitted gas, especially Sulfur Di Oxide, spreads over the surrounding areas. When any ship carrying asbestos and other toxic elements is cut into pieces the situation worsens further as the emitted gas may cause cancer and withering of trees.

Bapa President Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said the environmental disaster in our country is all-inclusive.

Although the level of pollution is increasing day by day, the government is quite apathetic in this regard, he added.

Prof Abu Sayeed said the environment department with only 220 officials is not capable of checking environmental catastrophe.

He proposed a special institutional structure to monitor the implementation of environmental regulations.

Earlier, a human chain was formed in support of the demands. Sharifuzzaman of Nagorik Sanghati conducted the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday to press home their seven-point demand including formulation of a policy for ship breaking industry and strong monitoring of the coastal environment for the sake of public health.

'Formulate nat'l youth policy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists, political leaders and youth leaders at a meeting yesterday urged the government to formulate a national youth policy for turning the youth forces into human resources in the country.

They also urged all political parties to highlight the youth unemployment problem in their election manifesto and take effective measures to eradicate youth poverty so that the country achieves the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in time.

"One third people of the country are youth. Among them, there are about three and half crores unemployed youth and every year thirty lakh youths become unemployed but the government did not allocate enough budget for them," said Renowned Economist Prof Abul Barkat, general secretary of Bangladesh Economic Society

while addressing Bangladesh Jubo Union convention.

The convention was held at the seminar room of Planning and Development Academy in the city where a number of youths vowed to resist militancy and fundamentalism for safeguarding the country and its constitution.

Taking the opportunity of youth's unemployment, masterminds of militants can easily motivate and use them to operate their anti-human activities, Prof Barkat said.

"Around 15 lakh illegal arms are being used through youth forces and a vested quarters ruined youth society through drugs," he said pointing that around 15 crores phensidyle bottles comes to the country every year.

Renowned Economist and Former Finance Minister Abul Mal Abdul Mohit said that unemployment problem could be resolved through building up industries.

"BNP-Jamaat alliance government did not give due importance on corruption and employment issues and it has no long-term policy to resolve the unemployment problem," said Mohit, also member of main opposition Awami League Advisory Committee.

Economist MM Akash said that leaders of political parties use the youth society as a tool of going to power.

Communist Party General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim urged youth society to come forward to resist the four-party alliance government for safeguarding the country from the grip of militancy.

Jubo Union General Secretary Mahbubul Islam presided over the convention where leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra League and Bangladesh Jubo Union spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Das Deb Prasad, managing director of Delta Life Insurance Company, gives away prizes among winners of a book reading contest organised by Bishwa Sahitya Kendra in the city yesterday.

Govt trying to wipe out history of independence

Says Jalil

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday protested the renaming of a bridge which was earlier named after freedom fighter and former MP Shaheed Mosejuddin Ahmed.

The bridge was constructed

during the tenure of previous AL government. The authorities have recently named it Ghorashal Bridge.

In a press statement, Jalil said the alliance government after coming to power has exposed its 'extreme meanness' by renaming Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge,

Bangabandhu Novo Theatre, Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Bridge in Bhairab and Shaheed Mansur Ali Bridge in Paksey.

"The move by the BNP-Jamaat government to change the names of important installations constructed during the AL rule is a ploy to erase the history of liberation struggle and independence war," he said.

Jalil said, "Having failed to govern the country and being mired in corruption, this government could not initiate and implement any new project. Rather, they are amassing wealth through plunder."

He said the time is very near when the people will unitedly give a befitting reply to the "corrupt and inefficient alliance government through toppling it."

Hasina visits ailing AL leader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited her party's organising secretary Abdul Mannan who is undergoing treatment at LabAid Cardiac Hospital in the city.

Mannan is suffering from heart ailment. The Awami League chief inquired about his treatment and said he could be sent abroad for better treatment, if necessary.

Obituary

UNB, Sathkira

Former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Kazi Shamsur Rahman died at Ibne Sina Hospital in Dhaka yesterday at the age of 67.

Shamsur Rahman, organising secretary of the Jamaat, had been elected MP thrice from Sathkira-2 constituency.

He left behind his wife, six sons, four daughters and a host of friends and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Alhaj Sirajul Islam, son of Shamsul Islam, will be held at his residence at House # 2, Road # 5, Sector # 13, Uttara, after Asr prayers today, February 18, says a press release.

He passed away at Shikder Cardiac Hospital due to old-age ailments on Thursday evening.

He is survived by his wife, one son and a daughter.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the qulkhwani.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said, predicting that night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 16.5 degrees at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:55pm today and rises at 6:29am tomorrow.

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

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

DHAKA TODAY banner with event listings: Condolence meeting for Jurno Mukul, Discussion on film, Memorial meet, Discussion on river linking plan, Rotary meet, Discussion.

Vivekananda's birth anniversary celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 143th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated yesterday.

An elaborate programme including rally, discussion and cultural function marked the day.

A colourful procession was brought out from the premises of Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University (DU) in the morning that paraded different city streets.

Vivekananda Shiksha O Sangskriti Parishad organised a meeting at the auditorium of Bangladesh Shishu Academy in the afternoon.

DU Pro-Vice-chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider inaugurated the programme where Prof Zillur Rahman was present as chief guest.