

EDEN COLLEGE VIOLENCE Strike called in educational institutions for Mar 22

DU CORRESPONDENT

Chhatra Sangram Parishad, a combine of opposition backed student organisations, called a strike at educational institutions across the country on March 22 demanding resignation of Eden College Principal Prof Feroza Begum.

At a rally on the Dhaka University (DU) campus yesterday, they demanded an end to illegal hostel seat dealings by ruling BNP's student front Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders, punishment to the JCD leaders responsible for the

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FIRE SAFETY BGMEA inspects 120 factories

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has so far inspected 120 factories as part of its ongoing drive to ensure that the industrial units are equipped with fire safety measures.

During the inspection, the BGMEA awarded penalty to some factories on charge of allowing child labour.

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Girl falls from building roof, dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 18-year-old girl died after she fell from the roof of a seven-storey building in the city's Dhanmondi area yesterday.

The victim Romana Rahman, an A level student of Marie Curie School, was the daughter of Rafiqur Rahman, a Reuters photojournalist in Bangladesh.

Locals found her lying in an alley next to her home in Naim Road after the fatal fall. They took her to Central Hospital and later to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where on duty doctors declared her dead.

Family members assume annoyed at power cuts she might have gone to the rooftop for fresh air in the afternoon and sat on the railings of the building which she used to do.

On contact New Market Police Station told The Daily Star the body has been sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy and they are investigating how she fell from the roof.

Prayer Timing

March 19		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-18
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Irregularities in Rupali loans to BNP leaders

Case filed against 2 bank officials

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The authorities of Rupali Bank filed a case against two officials of its Nathulabad branch in Barisal for irregularities in sanctioning loans of Tk 25 crore to 16 BNP leaders.

Jannatun Nesa Nayon, secretary of Barisal City Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha also president of ward no 18 of Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal, alone received a loan of Tk 21.47 crore.

Shahidul Huq, deputy general

manager of Rupali Bank's Barisal region filed the case with Barisal Kotwali Police Station on March 16 based on a report submitted by an inquiry committee of the bank.

Shamsur Rahman, manager, and Makbul Hossain, senior principal officer of the branch, were accused in the first information report (FIR) and were suspended. Shahidul Huq was closed from his post and called back to the bank's head office.

The suspended officials claimed

that they are victims of circumstances for following instructions of higher authorities and the board of directors of the bank to approve the loans.

The police and bank sources said an inquiry committee formed by the bank's head office was sent to Barisal to investigate the irregularities after it had been reported in the media.

Abdul Mannan, assistant general manager, and Abul Kashem, STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hamas forms cabinet Moderate Palestinian factions refuse to be in govt

REUTERS, Gaza

Hamas yesterday completed forming a Palestinian cabinet that will put loyal members of the Islamic militant group in charge of key ministries, including interior, foreign affairs and finance, Hamas officials said.

More moderate factions, including President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah movement, refused to form a government with Hamas.

Hamas's inability to win coalition partners and its decision to appoint its own members to the three key ministries could bolster US and Israeli efforts to isolate the new government diplomatically and

economically.

"Hamas has ended the formation of the government. The cabinet is ready to be presented to President Mahmoud Abbas in a meeting to be agreed with him," Hamas official spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters.

He said Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas's prime minister designate, would make the announcement at a news conference in Gaza at 1600 local (1400 GMT), although the group does not plan to unveil its line-up publicly before presenting it to Abbas.

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Housewife dies after in-laws set fire to her body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife, who sustained severe burns as her in-laws allegedly set fire to her body, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday.

Shefali Rani Shipu, 22, was rushed to the DMCH when her in-laws set fire to her body after pouring kerosene at their house at Tanepur village in Keraniganj at around 8:00pm on Friday in presence of her husband.

Police arrested Bhajan Ghosh, brother of Shefali's Saudi expatriate husband Badal Ghosh, at the DMCH as the victim told the law enforcers posted at the hospital before succumbing to her wounds that Bhajan set her on fire. Bhajan brought the injured Shefali to the DMCH.

Brother of the victim Sumon Ghosh filed a case with the Keraniganj police station accusing

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40 shanties gutted in Ctg fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A fire gutted at least 40 shanties, a godown of electronic goods and a liquor shop at Sadarghat in the port city last night.

Fourteen fire fighting units were engaged in taming the raging flames till 9:00pm with locals claiming some children at the slum were trapped inside it.

Fire service men and police however could not confirm the locals' claim.

The fire originated from a shanty at the slum at Kazi Nazrul Islam Road around 7:00pm and quickly engulfed the entire slum and the adjoining liquor shop and four-storied godown, locals said.

The slum dwellers and others escaped unhurt but some children were trapped in the blaze, they said.

Local Ward Commissioner of the city corporation Iqbal Hafiz Juboraj and Woman Commissioner Rekha Alam Chowdhury however said they don't think anybody was trapped there.



Traffic crawls on English Road in the old part of Dhaka yesterday as a long queue of illegally parked trucks occupies almost half of the road.

PHOTO: STAR

UN close to accord on Iran draft

AFP, United Nations

The Security Council is inching toward agreeing a revised Franco-British draft urging Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, diplomats said Friday as China suggested that Tehran be given up to six weeks to do so.

The 15-member council met for over one hour Friday to review the

revised text, which incorporated comments made by members after a series of informal sessions earlier this week. Members agreed to meet again Tuesday after getting reactions from their capitals.

"The response we got from our colleagues today suggests that we are pretty close to where they wanted us to be," Britain's UN envoy

Emyr Jones Parry told reporters.

"Our wish remains that the council should act expeditiously on this text and send the clearest possible signal (to Tehran) ... to reinforce the activities of the (International Atomic Energy Agency) Agency," he added.

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16 die in Taliban attacks

Former Afghan governor among victims

AFP, Kandahar

At least 16 people including nine policemen and a former provincial governor were killed in attacks across southern Afghanistan blamed on Taliban militants, officials said yesterday.

A bomb blast Friday claimed the lives of nine policemen who were escorting the bodies of four

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Manpower strategy report on cards

PORIMOL PALMA

The government has taken steps to prepare a comprehensive report on availability and potentiality of manpower in the country and to formulate a strategy to negotiate with foreign countries on manpower exports.

A committee for negotiations and facilitation for liberalising temporary movement of natural persons, chaired by secretary to the expatriate ministry, was formed last year under mode four of General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS).

The committee, considering it a matter of prime importance, recently asked the commerce ministry to arrange funds to prepare a concept paper for the study.

The mode four of GATS, a section of the World Trade Organization document, deals with temporary migration of workers between countries. It also allows migrant workers from least developed countries (LDC) to work in developed countries temporarily. But it has ambiguities in its definition and certain requirements make LDCs'

export of manpower to those countries difficult.

The proposed study by the expatriate ministry, though belated, will suggest the government how to develop skilled human resource to meet the demands of the developed countries, a committee member said. "Most importantly, we have to complete negotiations launched in Doha rounds within this year," he added.

Abdul Alim, a member of the committee and also a recruiting agent, said, "Our manpower exports are based on bilateral arrangements. Once we succeed in liberalising mode four it will be easier to export our manpower."

Agencies dealing with overseas employment appreciated the government move.

"Widening the scope for workers to migrate to developed countries is the lifeline of our economy. The \$4 billion contribution of expatriates through official remittance and almost the equal amount through informal sources add up to the GDP and gives the economy

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PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka City Corporation is renovating for the first time the memorial for martyrs of the 1857 Sepoy Uprising set up at Bahadur Shah Park in the city.