



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday demanding demolition of illegal structures on the banks of the rivers Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag and Ramu, to prevent pollution and ensure navigability.

Two JU female students assaulted for not wearing veils

JU CORRESPONDENT

Fundamentalists assaulted two female students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) for not covering their heads with veils on Thursday. Two middle-aged bearded men wearing alkhalla (cloak) and holding bamboo sticks waylaid the victims when they were returning to the campus after buying goods at Chowrongy Super Market in Savar Bazar at 5:30pm, said the victims in a written statement to journalists yesterday. They caught the students by their hands and started hurling abusive words while pedestrians and people at the market only enjoyed the scene, the statement read. "Cover your head with veil. Cover your head at once. Why don't you wear borkha (veil)?" the victims quoted the attackers as saying.

As the students tried to free themselves from the clutches of the fundamentalists, they hit the students on the back with the bamboo sticks and continued chiding until the students boarded a bus towards the campus. After reaching the campus, the students informed Proctor Sayed Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan of the incident over phone. Admitting an incident of 'wacky' assault by two hujurs (Muslim clergyman) in Savar, the proctor said he will file a complaint with the police station today.

Five bombs recovered in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna police yesterday recovered two hand bombs from the city. The bombs were kept in a polythene bag beside a dustbin at Kagajbari Lane. Earlier on Wednesday night, police recovered three hand bombs from a shrimp farm at Paikgachha upazila.

Call to make Skop July 31 programme a success

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra (BTUK) yesterday urged all to make the countrywide 24-hour strike and 12-hour road, rail and waterway blockades on July 31 to be enforced by Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (Skop) a success. Addressing a rally at Muktangan in the city, the BTUK leaders said though one month has passed, the agreement signed between the government, garment owners and workers is yet to be implemented. They said the unwillingness of the government to implement the agreement has proved its apathy towards the workers. BTUK General Secretary Dr Wajedul Islam Khan said the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government has adopted a policy of dilly-dallying in implementing the agreement. He said negligence and non-payment of due wages to workers for years had sparked off the recent

violence in the apparel sector. Dr Wajedul urged the workers to take part in the strike and blockade programme for the sake of their own existence. He also demanded an announcement of Tk 3000 as minimum wage for workers within three months. Presiding over the rally, BTUK President Nurul Islam said there will be more agitation in the country if the government does not pay any attention to the welfare of the workers. He also demanded reopening of all closed factories in the country for the sake of workers. "The garment workers will not return home unless the government meets their demands as stated at the tripartite agreement," he added. He also urged all garment workers to make the July 31 programme a success to save them as well as the industry.

RMCH guard held for stealing electrical cables

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A security guard of Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) was arrested by police for stealing electrical cables on Thursday noon. According to Rajpara police, Sumon Hasan was caught red handed by locals when he was dismantling wire from the wire box of the hospital. Later they handed him over to police. A case has been filed in this connection. Sumon was suspended from his job instantly. Last week, a female staff of the hospital was also held with hospital medicine and other materials. Stealing of electrical wire, medicine, saline, syringe and other materials from the hospital has become a regular feature in the hospital, sources said.



PHOTO: STAR
Karmojibi Nari forms a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting dismissal and repression of workers of Hesang Garments at Uttara.

KHULNA POWER OUTAGE No bill payments from August Citizens' Forum reiterates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Citizens' Forum (KCF) has reiterated its call for stopping payment of electricity bills from August 1 if West Zone Power Distribution Company Limited (WZPDCL) fails to resolve power crisis by July 31. The KCF leaders stressed the need for forming an ad-hoc committee for intensifying its ongoing agitation against loadshedding in the southwestern region of the country. Earlier on Thursday evening,

the forum held a view exchange meeting with leaders of different political and socio-cultural organisations at Khulna Press Club auditorium where matters relating to severe power crisis and the course of agitation were discussed. The meeting was attended by Khulna city AL President Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP, Press Club President Alhaj Liaquat Ali, President of Khulna District Bar Association Advocate Mujibar Rahman and KCF President Shaikh Abdul Kayyum.

BAS gold medal award ceremony tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The Gold Medal Award Ceremony-2006 of Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) will be held at the International Conference Centre in the city tomorrow. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to attend the function as the chief guest while Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, minister for Science and Information and Communication Technology, as the special guest.

In physical sciences category, the gold medal winners for 2003 and 2004 are Prof Dr Arun K Basak of physics department of Rajshahi University, Dr M Kaykobad, visiting professor of the department of computer science and engineering of North South University, Dr M Saidur Rahman, assistant professor of the department of computer science engineering of BUET, and Dr AA Mamun, professor of physics department of Jahangirnagar University.

In biological sciences category, the winners are Prof Dr SM Imamul Huq of the Department of Soil, Water and Environment Sciences, Dhaka University, Dr M Rafiqul Islam of the Department of Pathology, Bangladesh Agricultural Science, Dr M Mukhlesur Rahman Khan, assistant professor of the Department of Fisheries, Biology and Genetics Science of Bangladesh Agricultural University, and Dr M Anwarul Azim Akhand, Department of the Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, Dhaka University.

Dr Hasan Askari M Nazmul Ahsan, professor and head of the Department of Medicine of Khulna Medical College, is the winner of the BAS-Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury Gold Medal-2003.

Dr S Shahnawaz Ahmed, professor in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) of the BUET, has won the BAS-MO Ghani memorial Gold Medal-2003.

The TWAS prizes for the young scientists have gone to Dr AA Mamun and Dr Md Anwarul Azim Akhand, said a press release.

Any outbreak of bird flu may cause a loss of Tk 1,525cr, says expert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's economy could suffer a loss of Tk 1,525 crore if the poultry industry is affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza virus, according to a paper presented at a seminar yesterday. The mortality rate of poultry birds affected by H5N1 virus, which is

responsible for the recent outbreak of avian influenza in neighboring India and Myanmar, is 100 percent, said Dr Pranab Kumar Ghosh in his keynote paper.

The virus can also affect human beings and in that case the mortality rate is 50 percent, he said at the seminar on 'Avian Influenza (Bird flu): Possible Threat for

Bangladesh' at the LGRD auditorium in the city. Jica Alumni Association Bangladesh organised the seminar.

Unless proper steps are taken beforehand to prevent bird flu, around 34 lakh people who are directly involved with the poultry industry would be unemployed, Dr Pranab said.

He also said proper training and logistics supports for live-stock officers, field workers and farmers along with effective surveillance across the country is a must to check the outbreak of bird flu.

He also suggested some preventive measures such as avoiding contact among domestic poultry birds, commercial poultry birds and wild birds, ensuring bio-safety in the poultry farms, allowing only authorised persons into the farms and using internationally recognised disinfectants in the farms.

Dr Jahangir Alam, director general of Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute, said, "We have collected samples of ducks, chickens and migratory birds from across the country and examined those, but neither H5N1 nor its antibody was found." Though the country is free of the virus, there should be an early warning system to guard against the bird flu, he added.

CHO Eiichiro, additional resident representative of Jica Bangladesh, said that Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute and Jica are working together to protect the poultry industry from any potential threat. Kazi Abul Kashem, secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, said the government has already banned the import of poultry birds and products from bird flu-affected countries and introduced strict surveillance programmes in the country to prevent the outbreak of the disease.

Jica Alumni Association President Md Azmal Chowdhury, General Secretary Ejar Uddin and Dr Mofazzal Hossain also spoke at the seminar.



PHOTO: STAR
Jatiya Garments Sramik Jote stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding a minimum wage of Tk 3000.