

4 brick kilns knocked down in Barishal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

The Department of Environment (DoE) in Barishal demolished four illegal brick kilns on the banks of Arial Kha on Thursday afternoon.

A team of DoE led by its Director (Barishal) and Executive Magistrate Mohammad Halim started the drive around 1pm with the help of Rab and fire service officials.

Managers of M/S Sowa Bricks and Daian Bricks -- Tarikul Islam and Aktaruzzaman -- were sentenced to jail for a year and six months respectively for causing severe environmental pollution. The businesses were also fined Tk 20 lakh each.

The other brick kilns the DoE team demolished are Khan Bricks and Ideal Bricks, said the executive magistrate. He said they also destroyed over 12 lakh raw bricks during the drive. "We will continue our drives against such brick kilns," he added.



DoE in a drive dismantled four illegal brick kilns in Barishal on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

Fazilatun Nasa Bappy

FROM PAGE 5
the coffin of Bappy.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid tributes to Bappy by placing wreaths on her coffin. The premier stood in solemn silence for some time as a mark of profound respect to her memory.

Besides, JS Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Mian placed wreaths on the coffin of the deceased.

On behalf of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Begum Raushan Ershad and Jatiya Party lawmaker Fakhru Imam placed wreaths on the coffin. JS Chief Whip Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury also placed wreaths on her coffin.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister and Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud joined the namaz-e-janaza among others. Housing and Public Works Minister SM Rezaul Karim read out a short biography of Bappy.

Born on December 31 in 1970, Fazilatun Nasa Bappy was elected MP in the 9th and 10th parliament from reserved seat. She was also an International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor and an Assistant Attorney General of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

Strict security measures

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Senior Secretary of Public Security Division for Home Affairs Ministry Mostafa Kamal conducted the programme, where State Minister for Religious Affairs Advocate Sheikh Md Abdullah, State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russell, Inspector General of Police Dr Javed Patwari and Director General of Rab Benazir Ahmed, among others, also spoke.

The second phase of Biswa Jtema will begin on January 17. The religious event has been taking place every year on the bank of Turag river in Tongi since 1967.

'An ideal politician'

FROM PAGE 3
Shamsun Nahar Chapa, Agriculture and Cooperative Affairs Secretary Faridunnahar Laili and Central Working Committee members Riazul Kabir Kawsar and Marufa Akhter Poppy.

Afterwards, leaders and activists of Dhaka north and south units of AL, Jubo League, Chhatra League, Swechhasebak League, Krishak League, Mahila Awami League, Jubo Mahila League and Syed Ashraf Smiriy Parishad paid their tributes.

During the time, Kishoreganj-1 constituency lawmaker Dr Syeda Zakia Noor, younger sister of Syed Ashraf, offered prayers seeking eternal peace of the departed soul of her late brother.

SYED ASHRAF REMEMBERED IN M'SINGH

Mymensingh district and city unit of AL also observed the day in a befitting manner.

AL leaders placed wreaths at the portrait of Syed Ashraf at his hometown in Mymensingh in the morning. Special prayers were held marking the occasion, followed by discussions, reports our correspondent.

Syed Ashraf was the eldest son of Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of the 1971 Mujibnagar government.

Born in Mymensingh in 1952, Ashraf started his political career during his student years with Chhatra League and became general secretary of its greater Mymensingh district unit. He was a member of the Mukti Bahini during the Liberation War.

Following the killing of his father on

November 3, 1975, inside Dhaka Central Jail along with three other national leaders, he left the country for the UK. There, he engaged in activism with the Bangladeshi community, and worked to organise AL in the UK.

On his return home in 1996, he was elected MP and served as the state minister for civil aviation and tourism ministry from 1996-2001. During his second term in parliament from 2001-2006, he was a member of the House committee on foreign affairs.

After the 2008 election win, he became minister for the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. Later in July 2015, he was given the charge of the public administration ministry, a post he held till his death.

During the turbulent times of the 1/11 changeover, Ashraf, together with another AL veteran Zillur Rahman, ran the party when Sheikh Hasina was in jail.

One of the brightest stars in Bangladesh politics, Ashraf was known for his honesty, humility and simplicity. He was a charismatic leader too, but more than anything else, he commanded respect from across the political spectrum, a rarity in politics.

Ashraf, who stood by his party -- Awami League -- in good times and bad, died on January 3, 2019 at Bumrungrad International Hospital in Thailand at the age of 68.

His death came just four days after he was elected MP from Kishoreganj-1, a constituency he represented since 1996.

Cumilla hospital

FROM PAGE 5
at the emergency unit and it goes out of order most of the times for lack of maintenance. Often times, people get stuck inside, said attendees.

Roksana Akhter, relative of a patient, said, "I came to the hospital with a baby suffering from respiratory problems but the hospital authorities could not admit the child for lack of a warmer."

Manwar Hossain Rubel, a patient, said, "There's no equipment to provide life support to critical patients, even though thousands through this hospital for treatment."

Dr Mohammad Azizul Hossain, chief of pediatric department, said, "The number of patients with cold-related illness has increased in winter and some 7-8 children are born at the hospital every day. But we're struggling to provide healthcare services as we do not have necessary equipment."

When asked if they have taken any step in this regard, he said, "We're trying to get some necessary machineries." Dr Amin Ahmed Khan, director of the hospital, said there are 629 staff members against 709 posts at the hospital. Seventy-nine posts have been lying vacant for a long time, he added.

"We're contacting the higher authorities to come up with a solution in this regard. We're also taking initiatives to set up an ICU at the hospital soon," the director said.

Punishment not

FROM PAGE 3
"But the war is not over. Now the young will have to fight against drugs, militancy and communalism," he said.

Jafor Raja Chowdhury, registrar of copyrights at Copyright Office Bangladesh; and Shahidul Alam Sachchu, general secretary of Darshak Shrota Pathak Foundation spoke at the programme, among others.

Exposed to fatal cylinder blasts

Peoples' lives at high risk as hundreds of vehicles in Laxmipur use expired cylinders

UNB, Laxmipur

Widespread use of expired gas cylinders in vehicles ignoring official directives is leading to a high number of accidents across Laxmipur district but the administration is doing little to address the problem, according to locals.

There were 15 gas cylinder-related accidents in the district last year.

Residents said gas cylinders are being used in around 15,000 vehicles in the district and most of those are well beyond their expiry dates.

Though gas cylinders are supposed to be examined after five years, owners and drivers are not following the rules, they added.

When asked, most drivers said they were unaware of rules and lifespan of cylinders. They, however, accused Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) of giving fitness certificates in exchange for money instead of inspecting vehicles properly.

Contacted, BRTA officials refuted the allegation.

Forkan Chowdhury, assistant director

of BRTA, said they issue a fitness certificate after checking date of the gas cylinder and retesting certificate.

"We don't give fitness certificate if the vehicle uses a locally-made cylinder," he said, adding, "Explosion-related accidents occur due to using such cylinders."

He claimed that they inspect vehicles thoroughly when drivers come to BRTA to take fitness certificates every year.

"Also, we examine retesting certificates after five years. After checking certificates and gas cylinders, we provide them with fitness certificates," said the assistant director.

"In addition, we often conduct mobile court drives," he said, urging everyone to be aware of rules while using gas cylinders.

Md Iqbal Hossain, deputy director of Laxmipur fire service and civil defence, said gas cylinders explode when they are past their expiry dates.

"It's necessary to retest gas cylinders before the expiry date. If everyone follows rules on how to use such cylinders, the number of accidents will reduce," he said.

Sanwar Huda passes away



CITY DESK

Brig Gen Sanwar Huda, psc (ret'd), passed away at his residence on Wednesday. He was 72.

His namaz-e-janaza was held the same day at the Army Central Mosque, Dhaka Cantonment.

Born in 1947, Huda was a student of Fauzdarhat Cadet College and was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in 1966. He twice served as director at the Army Headquarters and once in the Supreme Command Headquarters (now AFD). He was also the defence advisor at Bangladesh High Commission, London.

Siblings could never

FROM PAGE 5
approached from the opposite direction at very high speed and hit their microbus.

This killed the siblings on the spot. The injured have been taken to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

OC of Kishoreganj Police Station Harun-Rashid confirmed the accident and said the driver and supervisor of the night-coach immediately fled the scene, leaving behind their damaged vehicle. A case has been lodged in this regard, he added.

In Gopalganj, two people were killed and another two were injured in two separate road accidents.

The deceased were identified as Biswajit

Mandal (25), from Bagerhat, and Laboni Begum (26), reports a correspondent.

In Pathalia area, Biswajit died after a vegetable-laden truck crashed into a three-wheeler carrying him on Dhaka-Khulna highway yesterday morning. This also injured two passengers of the three-wheeler, Gopalganj Sadar Police Station OC Monirul Islam said.

In Ghonapara area, Laboni Begum was initially critically injured after a microbus ran over her while she was crossing the Dhaka-Khulna highway on Thursday night. Locals rushed her to Gopalganj General Hospital, where on-duty doctors later pronounced her dead.

Journalists protest attack

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general secretary of Govindasi Union Truckers Association. They threatened tougher agitations if the ultimatum is not met.

Among others, Shah Alam Pramanik, president of Bhuapur Press Club spoke at the human chain.

On Thursday afternoon, gamblers attacked four journalists at Govindasi area in Bhuapur when they went there to cover a news on gambling.

The injured journalists are: Sohel Talukder, Tangail correspondent of private television channel DBC; Ashikur Rahman,

camera person of DBC; Ovijit Ghosh, Bhuapur upazila correspondent of Daily Ittefaq; and Mohaimenul Islam, local correspondent of Daily Ekusher Bani. Two of them were injured seriously.

In this regard, Sohel Talukder filed a case with Bhuapur Police Station on the same night, accusing eight people by name and 30 others as unidentified.

Rashidul Islam, officer-in-charge of Bhuapur Police Station, said police have arrested three of the accused--Samad, Salam and Ramjan--on Thursday night. "Drives are going on at different places to arrest the other accused of the case," he added.

Fertilizer-laden vessel gets stuck in shoal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A lighter vessel got stuck in a shoal near Meher Ali Char in the Bay of Bengal in Bagerhat yesterday.

Coastguards, however, managed to rescue all 14 crew from MV New Parveen-2 in Sharonkhola while it was carrying 950 tonnes of fertilizer, said a press release of the force.

The crew members include Jamal Hossain from Gopalganj, Uzzal Hossain from Narail, Arafat Hossain from Kishoreganj, Shahdath Hossain from Chattogram, Harun Mollah from Narail, Jahangir from Feni and Rabib Sheikh from Narail.

They will be handed over to the ship owner's representative, said the press release.

Initiative from the owner to take steps to rescue the lighter vessel is underway, it added.

Qulkhwani

FROM PAGE 3
a genuine friend of India, reports UNB.

On December 24, Muazzem was admitted to CMH after he had fallen ill. He was diagnosed with pneumonia and was showing early signs of recovery.

However, he suddenly died after suffering a cardiac arrest on Monday, his elder sister Prof Fawzia Ali told The Daily Star.

He was buried at Banani graveyard in the capital on Wednesday.

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Safe veggies

FROM PAGE 3
sufficiency in granular food, production of vegetables has also increased by a record quantity in Bangladesh, he added. The president urged all concerned to be more active in the development, expansion and marketing system of agro-products so that the ongoing development trend will continue in days to come.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in her message, said Awami League government has implemented various agriculture-friendly policies in the country for the development of the sector.

Special importance has been given to some particular matters like reducing price of agricultural commodities including fertilisers and seeds, providing easy-term loans to farmers, opening a bank account at Tk 10, cash assistance to farmers, mechanisation of agriculture and expansion of e-agriculture, the premier added.

The marketing system has been further modernised, she said, adding that fair price of agro-products has also been ensured by establishing a "farmers' market" in the country.



Gas cylinders are being used in around 15,000 vehicles in the district and most of those are well beyond their expiry dates.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Late Al-Hajj Md. Jahed Ali Chowdhury
Ex Whip & M.P
Bangladesh Parliament
&
Managing Director
Pubali Construction Co. Ltd.
In loving memory of
Husband, Brother, Father & Grandfather
Nine years have passed without you here,
Placed in our hearts you are always near.
We miss you.
May Allah bless your departed soul.