



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXX No. 54

FALGUN 23, 1426 BS

www.thedailystar.net
Your Right to Know

PLUS 4 PAGE JACKET ON "7TH MARCH"

RAJAB 11, 1441 HJRI

16 PAGES PLUS SHOWBIZ PRICE : Tk12.00



Jaya Chakma, a winner of "Unsung Women: Nation Builders Awards 2020", speaks at the award-giving ceremony as Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, *middle*, BGMEA President Rubana Huq, IPDC Finance MD and CEO Mominul Islam, *right*, and other awardees look on. The event was jointly organised by IPDC Finance Limited and The Daily Star at Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden last night.

PHOTO: STAR

Saluting unsung women heroes

The Daily Star IPDC *honour 9 outstanding women*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There was not a single person in the audience who would disagree that the award-giving ceremony, "Unsung Women: Nation Builders Awards 2020" organised jointly by The Daily Star and IPDC Finance yesterday, was difficult to watch dry-eyed.

Thakurgaon's Tepri Rani was a young bride, only 14 years old, when

she was kidnapped by the Pakistani army. She was kept at a camp for six months and tortured. She managed to come back after the Liberation War, only to find her husband would not accept her.

Her parents tried to marry her off elsewhere, but she was already pregnant with a war baby. She then decided to hold her ground and started living alone with her child. It

was only in 2017 that the Bangladesh government recognised her as a Muktiyoddha.

"I endured so much pain, so much sadness. Nobody has gone through the pain I did," Tepri said while being honoured as an unsung woman at the event yesterday. She broke down in tears and wailed over and over, "I have nobody, I have nobody."

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UNsung Women
NATION BUILDERS
AWARDS 2020

HISTORIC 7TH MARCH TODAY



When thunder roars at Race Course

Defining moment for our freedom

BSS, Dhaka

The nation is set to observe the historic March 7 today, commemorating the landmark speech of Bangabandhu.

This year, the observance will be more significant as the nation is getting ready to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17.

The landmark fiery speech inspired the Bangalees to prepare for the Liberation War.

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Nirmalendu Goon recalls the epic speech of Bangabandhu



PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The swell of the crowd rose as the sunny day of March 7, 1971 progressed.

By noon, the then Race Course Ground (now Suhrawardy Udyan) had turned into a sea of people, with participants spilling out onto the streets. They were all waiting to hear the undisputed leader of the Bangalees, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Among the massive crowd was a young journalist and a budding poet, Nirmalendu Goon, who was covering

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ROAD CRASHES IN 7 DISTRICTS

23 lives lost in a single day

STAR REPORT

Imon Ahmed recently returned home from abroad after years. He and his family members were going to his engagement ceremony at the bride's home in Sunamganj yesterday.

But the journey ended fatally when their microbus crashed into a roadside tree in Habiganj's Nabiganj, leaving Imon, 24, and nine others dead and three injured.

At least 23 people were killed and nine others injured in crashes in the capital, Habiganj, Brahmanbaria, Cumilla, Savar, Feni and Mymensingh yesterday.

The other crashes left six dead in Brahmanbaria, two each in Feni and Mymensingh, and one each in Savar, Cumilla, and the capital, our correspondents report.

In Habiganj, Imon's father Abbas Uddin and other family members Asma Begum, Rajib Mia, Rabbi, Mohsin, Sumona Begum and her six-year-old daughter Khadiza



Begum got killed. The two other deceased could not be identified until yesterday evening.

Imon's brother-in-law Rafiqul Islam, 40, who survived the crash, said the crash occurred at dawn. He lost consciousness due to the impact and woke up at a hospital later.

ErsHADUL Haque Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Sherpur Highway Police Outpost, said the microbus carrying 12 passengers crashed into a roadside tree at Kandigaon on Dhaka-Sylhet highway around 6:00am.

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3 Bangladeshis recover from coronavirus in Singapore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three Bangladeshi nationals who were diagnosed with coronavirus in Singapore last month have left hospital after recovery.

Two more Bangladeshis were still receiving treatment at a hospital in Singapore, according to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

IEDCR Director Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora yesterday said out of the two one was in critical condition whereas another was expected to be discharged from the hospital soon.

Addressing a press briefing at the IEDCR office in the capital's Mohakhali, Flora said, "His [Bangladeshi] who was in

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WHO urges more serious response

Cases soar in Italy, France, Greece, Iran; stock markets in Asia succumb to virus fears

AGENCIES

World health officials have warned that countries are not taking the coronavirus crisis seriously enough, as outbreaks surged across Europe and in the United States where medical workers sounded warnings over a "disturbing" lack of hospital preparedness.

Global markets tumbled again over concerns about the impact on the economy and as countries took more drastic steps to prevent contagion of a disease that has killed more than 3,400 people and infected over 100,000 in about 91 nations.

Cases soared in Italy, France, Greece and Iran, while a cruise ship was held off the Californian coast to test passengers showing symptoms of the disease -- echoing a harrowing episode in Japan several weeks ago that saw hundreds infected on a luxury liner.

The epidemic has wreaked havoc on

international business, tourism, sports events and schools, with almost 300 million students sent home worldwide.

Even religion is affected: The Vatican said Pope Francis may change his schedule, Bethlehem was placed under lockdown, and Saudi Arabia emptied Islam's holiest site in Makkah to sterilise it.

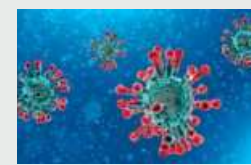
In India the world's biggest film industry called off its equivalent of the Oscars that had been set for the end of the month, with organisers citing the "sensitivity" of the health crisis.

Fears about the economic fallout caused stock markets in Asia to sink yesterday and European health ministers launched crisis talks on how to slow the spread of the pathogen.

Bhutan said yesterday it had banned the entry of tourists for two weeks after it confirmed its first case of the coronavirus,

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COVID-19 UPDATE



3,406 DEATHS

1,00,002 confirmed cases in 91 countries

Bhutan, Vatican, Cameroon, Serbia, Bethlehem confirm first cases

India's total number of confirmed cases rises to 31

Netherlands record first death

US announces \$8.3b in coronavirus funding

Adviser to Iran's foreign minister dies

Govt to form commission to stop rape

Law minister says related law to be amended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is considering formation of a commission to prevent rape and violence against women as the number of such incidents is on the rise.

"We will very soon start working to constitute a commission in line with the High Court directive to stop rape and violence against women," Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

In reply to a question, he said, "We will bring necessary amendment to the Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain [Women and Children Repression Prevention Act]-2000 to ensure proper punishment for the offenders."

The number of rape victims in Bangladesh doubled in 2019 from the previous year as 1,413 women were either gang-raped or subjected to rape last year. Of them, 76

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Tamim Iqbal carries the man who bore the burden of Bangladesh cricket since 2015 as the Tigers celebrated Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's last match as captain by winning the third ODI against Zimbabwe by 123 runs in Sylhet yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tamim, Liton gift Mash his 50th

Liton hits Bangladesh's highest individual score

MAZHAR UDDIN from Sylhet

It was set to be a special game and Bangladesh made it even more so as they gave skipper Mashrafe a fitting send-off by completing a 3-0 whitewash of Zimbabwe when they won the third ODI by 123 runs amid a festive atmosphere at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

The scenes in Sylhet were incredible and indelible. Tamim Iqbal lifted Mashrafe on his shoulders as the team gave their beloved leader, Bangladesh's most successful, the perfect farewell.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) marked the special occasion with BCB President Nazmul Hassan handing Mashrafe -- who announced that he would step down from captaincy after the series -- a souvenir during the presentation ceremony.

His teammates stood near him, wearing specially made t-shirts saying 'Thank You Mashrafe', and they also gave the 36-year-old a t-shirt signed by all members of the team.

With the win, Mashrafe passes on the baton as the most successful captain in the format for the Tigers with 50 wins in 88 matches.

Perhaps Mashrafe's teammates put in extra effort to give a fitting farewell to their captain fantastic as blistering centuries from openers Liton Das and Tamim Iqbal during a Bangladesh-record opening stand in a huge total of 322 for 3 in 43 overs, after rain during the Bangladesh innings curtailed the game.



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