

GOPALGANJ ACCIDENT Willes teacher doing better

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of Willes Little Flower School and College teacher Syeda Fahima Begum, whose left arm was reattached after being severed in an accident in Gopalganj on Tuesday, improved considerably yesterday.

"Her condition has improved. She was eating, and talking to relatives," Prof Abul Kalam, director of Sheikh Hasina National Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute -- where she is being treated -- told The Daily Star last evening.

"She will be kept at the intensive care unit today and possibly shifted to a cabin tomorrow [today]," he added.

Prof Kalam said they would keep Fahima under close observation for four or five days more.

"She may need several more surgeries to improve the functionality of her hand," he added.

On Tuesday, hours after the accident, a team of 18 doctors in a six-hour surgery reattached her left arm, which had been severed below the elbow.

Fahima and her 15

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PHOTO OF THE DAY

SHEIKH NASIR



One of the lesser known attractions of spring lies in Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila, near the banks of the Jadukata river. For the last seven or eight years, a cotton tree garden in the area has become quite the tourist spot. Started by former UP chairman Joyanal Abedin when he planted 3,000 seedlings across a 100 bigha land, the garden was later bequeathed another 4,000, with a total of 3,400 bearing flowers this season. That Sunamganj boasts visitor sites such as Barik Tila, Meghalaya Hills, Tanguar Haor only helps attract more people to the garden. This photo was taken on Friday.

SUSPENSION OF CLASSES

11 Sust students on hunger strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Eleven students of the physics department of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) started a hunger strike from 11am yesterday, protesting a March 4 circular that declared all classes and examinations of the department suspended.

Demanding immediate resumption of classes, more than a hundred students of the department joined them in a sit-in in front of the academic building-A of the university.

Head of the department Prof Shumsun Naher Begum, who signed the circular, said, "A misunderstanding took place between students and some teachers during the 30-year celebration of the department on February 29. On March 3, some students misbehaved with us [teachers] while we were in a discussion with them to solve the misunderstanding."

"To protest this behaviour, all teachers [of the department] agreed to not conduct classes and called an indefinite suspension," she added.

However, some students allege that the saga began after the department head's husband misbehaved with a female student at the celebration programme.

"When we demanded an apology, no one cared; even the student advisor of the department insulted some students there," a protesting student said.

After the altercation, the students placed a four-point demand on March 3, including resignation of the student advisor; appointment of a new advisor from a provided list; the head and the advisor can not conduct any classes and examinations of the victim student; and the department head must accept accountability for the incident.

Prof Shumsun Naher said, "My husband is a teacher of Murari Chand College and an alumnus of the department. On the day of the programme, it was merely a misunderstanding and we assured the students of sorting this out. But they were rude with us then, and again later at a meeting to discuss the incident," adding, "We formed a

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An eco-friendly campaign

CCC councillor candidate decides to go poster-free

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Come election time, one thing remains common among all candidates -- using posters for publicity.

These polls-time posters -- made of paper or plastic -- put up by activists and supporters can be seen everywhere -- on lampposts, walls, flyover pillars and footbridges.

Not only are these campaign materials an eyesore, they are also harmful to the environment. Even more worrisome is the task of clearing up this clutter, which eventually find their way into the drains while the laminated ones do not degrade in landfills.

Amid such circumstances, a councillor candidate for the March 29 Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) polls has decided to run a poster-free campaign in the city.

Awami League candidate Shailbal Das Sumon said he will campaign online and in other platforms to seek vote

from residents of Jamal Khan -- his constituency (ward 21).

Sumon is also the ward's incumbent councillor, which he proudly terms a "Healthy Ward".

Mentionable, the Election Commission has banned using laminated posters during the campaign.

On Tuesday night, Sumon uploaded a video message in his Facebook where he pledged a poster-free digital campaign. The 1.02-minute clip went viral and was seen shared over a thousand times before midnight yesterday.

In the video, Sumon said he is doing this to keep his ward clean. "I pledge to you that no poster will not be used in the green Jamal Khan ward...." he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, councillor Sumon said, "We always speak of saving nature but are doing little about it. That's why I decided to shun the poster culture and raise awareness among people..."

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Woman dies after brick falls on her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman died after a brick fell on her from a building in Kamrangirchar yesterday.

The deceased, Rashida Begum (30), used to live in Munshihati area of Dhaka.

The accident took place when Rashida was going to a nearby tea stall owned by her husband.

A brick fell on her from a three-storey building in the area, said her husband Alamgir.

She was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared her dead around 2pm, he added.

Garment workers on fast-unto-death in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers of Asian Apparel Limited in Chattogram began a fast-unto-death movement over the alleged sacking of their fellows without giving notice. The workers staged their protest at Chattogram Press Club yesterday.

Hundreds of workers joined the sit-in which began at 10am and continued till 4pm.

Hira Begum, a worker of Asian Apparel Limited, alleged to The Daily Star that the movement was called as their management kept firing workers over silly matters and roughening them up for the slightest mistake.

The company fired 28 workers on March 3 and another 17 on March 8, Hira said, adding that another 400 workers have been enlisted for sacking.

"Not only this, but the management roughens us up over silly mistakes and always looks for a reason to fire us," Joinab Begum, another worker of the company, said.

In addition to this, the workers have not been paid for a month, Joinab added.

Mohammed Mainuddin, head of human resource department of Asian Apparel, told The Daily Star that they do not have enough order to engage the workers in eight hours duty.

"As foreign orders plummeted, we decided to lay off 28 workers, clearing up all their dues in compliance with the labour law," Mainuddin said.

"We have issued show-cause to 17 workers recently for their misbehaviour with the management and fired them for not being able to clarify their actions," he added.



Supporters of Awami League mayor candidate Rezaul Karim bring out a motorcycle rally in Kalurghat industrial area yesterday afternoon. Such brazen act is a clear violation of electoral code of conduct, according to Munir Hossain Khan, Chattogram district election officer and assistant returning officer of CCC polls.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Stand-released Pirojpur judge transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pirojpur District and Sessions Judge Md Abdul Mannan, who was stand released from his duties and attached to the law ministry on March 3, has been transferred to Kurigram.

His release came hours after he had passed an order to send former Awami League lawmaker AKMA Awal and his wife Laila Parvin to jail in three corruption cases. The incident drew widespread criticism from the civil society and media.

The law ministry made the transfer under the advice from the Supreme Court, said a law ministry notification issued on March 10. It said Judge Abdul Mannan has been transferred as the district and sessions judge of Kurigram on public interest. On March 4, the High Court issued a rule asking the law and justice division secretary of the law ministry to explain why the decision to stand release Abdul Mannan should not be declared illegal.

The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir had come up with the suo moto rule after newspapers published reports on the law ministry decision.

Papia, husband remanded for 15 days again

JNU CORRESPONDENT

Jubo Mohila League's suspended leader Shamima Nur Papia and her husband Mofizur Rahman Sumon were each freshly remanded for 15 days in three cases yesterday.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Sarafuzzaman Ansary placed the couple on 10-day remand each in two cases filed with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

Another court, of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Debabrata Biswas, granted five-day remand for them in a case filed with Biman Bandar Police Station.

Papia and Sumon were produced before the courts with 30-day remand prayers for each yesterday noon.

Earlier, both Papia and Sumon were placed on 15-day police remand in the same three cases on February 24.

Independence Day celebrations on small scale

Says home minister; one-minute 'blackout' to mark Genocide Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Independence Day celebrations will be held on a smaller scale this year in wake of the recently confirmed coronavirus cases in the country, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said yesterday.

"The programme at the National Martyrs' Memorial will be held with only a few guests," the minister said while addressing a press conference.

Large gatherings have been discouraged on March 25 and 26 and people are advised to arrange programmes informally.

"The PMO will announce later whether the national parade and other events will be held on March 26. The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs will also be requested to hold a gun-salute at the same time across the country," the minister added.

Speaking on security measures, he said law enforcement agencies are prepared to face any untoward incident.

On March 25, a one-minute "blackout" will be observed at 9pm, marking Genocide Day.

CORONAVIRUS SCARE

RU suspends public events

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday decided to suspend all public events on campus following the first reported cases of coronavirus in the country.

The university authorities also circulated a list of directives to raise awareness on the virus among students.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the university's Mujib Borsho celebration committee.

All major events on March 17 -- marking Bangabandhu's birth centenary -- were also postponed, said Prof Malay Bhowmick, a member of the committee.

The decision created mixed reactions among students, who argued that students come in close contact with each other anyway, in classes, dorms and at other areas on campus.

RU Proctor Lutfor Rahman said, "We are trying to ensure maximum safety measures on campus from our side."

Test-ride goes horribly wrong for Tangail teen

10th-grader dies after crashing motorbike

STAR REPORT

What began as an exciting experience ended in tragedy when Mohammad Nayeem (15), a 10th grader of Tangail's Momtaz Ali High School, died after crashing the motorbike he was learning to ride.

The accident took place at Tangail's Dhanbari upazila yesterday afternoon, reports our Tangail correspondent.

Quoting locals, Chan Miah, officer-in-charge of Dhanbari Police Station, said Nayeem had borrowed the vehicle from one of his friends to learn how to ride it. However, as he was doing so, he lost control of the steering and crashed into a roadside tree. The collision threw him off the vehicle and he received serious injuries to his head, the OC said.

Locals who were nearby rescued and rushed him to Dhanbari Upazila Health Complex. But the injuries proved to be too much; he was eventually declared dead by on-duty doctors.

Following Nayeem's demise, a shroud of mourning prevailed across the area.

In Patuakhali, two people were killed and seven others were seriously injured in a collision between a microbus and a battery-run auto-rickshaw at Gabua area under Sadar upazila.

The incident took place around 6pm yesterday on Patuakhali-Barishal highway, reports our Patuakhali correspondent.

Passengers of the auto-rickshaw were part of a wedding entourage, returning to their homes at Bauphal upazila after attending the wedding

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Sylhet city Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury fires mosquito repellent from a fogger to inaugurate a cleanliness drive across the city.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR