

15 transgender people get opportunity to enroll at Bangladesh Open Univ

STAR REPORT
Bangladesh Open University (BOU) has given 15 members of transgender or hijra community an opportunity to enrol at its SSC programme this year.

As per the decision, the transgender students from Cox's Bazar are going to be admitted to Cox's Bazar Government Girls' High School under the Cox's Bazar sub-centre of the public university.

Marking their admission, a programme was organised at the auditorium of the high school on Friday afternoon with the initiative of Hatkhola Foundation and Joydhwani.

Hatkhola Foundation and Joydhwani are two non-government organisations working for the overall development of the third gender population.

Cox's Bazar Awami League organising secretary Nazneen Sarwar Kaberi, Open University Cox's Bazar Deputy Regional Director Shyam Ranjan Karmakar, Cox's Bazar Government Girls' High School Headmaster Mohammad Nasir Uddin, Cox's Bazar Customs and VAT Deputy Commissioner Sushant Pal, Joydhwani CEO Helal Morshed Sohag and Hatkhola CEO Jannatul Ferdous were present among others at the event.

Speakers at the event said an extraordinary journey in the field of education in Bangladesh has started from Cox's Bazar and will be a milestone in the formation of an egalitarian, non-discriminatory and happy-prosperous country.

The 15 third gender students including Ankhi, Mohammad Hasan, Zakir Uddin, Rahim Ullah, Maina, Jonaki, Hasan Mahmud Abdullah, Abul Mansur and Ankhimani spoke at the event.

Expressing gratitude to the university authorities for opening the door to higher education, the students said they will be able to put an end to the discrimination against them if an equity based society can be created.



Around 29,000 rotten eggs, seized by Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection from a business in Barishal, being destroyed on the bank of Jail Canal at the city's Kawnia Puranpara Moilakhola yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Two businesses fined for selling rotten eggs, low-quality food

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection (DNCRP) fined two enterprises Tk 80,000 in Barishal city yesterday, for supplying rotten eggs and selling substandard food items.

The drive was led by DNCRP assistant directors at Barishal divisional unit Md Shah Soyab and Sumi Rani Mitra.

They said they fined an egg-supplying business Tk 50,000 and seized 28,000-29,000 rotten eggs from it at the city's Najirpole. The seized eggs were destroyed on the bank of the Jail Canal.

"Its owner confessed that they used to supply rotten eggs to bakeries," said Soyab.

In another drive, they fined Tk 30,000 to Mokhushi Bakery in BSCIC area.

Sumi Rani told The Daily Star that stale ingredients and rotten eggs were being used to make food items at the bakery.

Water transport workers to go on strike from Monday

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

To press home their 11-point demand -- which includes tri-party contracts, compensation for death on duty, and increased social safety nets -- water transport workers have announced to go on strike from the early hours of Monday.

The strike will be carried out across the country, as per the call of Bangladesh Noujan Shramik Federation (BNSF), said its president Shah E Alma Bunyan.

Water transport workers in Barishal held a rally at Barishal River Port and brought out a procession yesterday noon.

Sk Abul Hashem, secretary of Barishal unit BNSF, said water transport owners have failed to implement the tripartite contract signed in 2016 between owners, government

and water transport workers. He said they will continue their strike until the contract is enacted. Initially, it will be workers of cargo and oil tanker-type water transports who will sit for the strike. If anyone tries to thwart the programme or creates an obstacle in the fulfilment of the 11-point demand, then passenger-carrying water transport staffers will also join, said organisers.

Meanwhile, Saidur Rahman Rintu, vice president of Bangladesh Launch Owners Association, said "We requested transport workers to not observe the strike as the owners are trying everything within our capacity to implement the treaty."

However, he said launches are ready to ply during the strike if authorities can provide safety, security and skilled workers to operate vessels and passengers are willing.

Lalon's death anniversary event postponed

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Programmes marking death anniversary of baul mystic Lalon Shah has been postponed this year to avert spread of Covid-19.

Local administration locked all entrances to Lalon's shrine in Kushtia, and only a small group of Lalon followers were allowed inside to perform rituals following specific health guidelines.

Some bauls went inside the shrine and performed their rituals as per the Baul traditions on the first day of Bengali month Kartik, the day Lalon passed away.

Every year, a three-day Baul Mela is hosted at the shrine in association with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

On October 4, Lalon Academy, the governing body of Lalon's shrine, decided not to hold any function due to coronavirus. Selim Haque, member of the convening committee of Lalon Academy, said the decision was taken officially as Covid-19 could spread through the gathering.

Trees, hills

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adding that DoE gave them another reminder on August 31 this year.

But before getting any approval, Sanmar Properties started cutting greenery and hills, which had a rich biodiversity as it was habitat for a wide range of snake species.

They razed around 100 trees there, he added.

The tree cutting took place on the hills and hill slope, which may end up impacting the binding capacity of the soil. It could even prompt a massive landslide there in case of downpour, he said.

"As they did not comply with our instruction, we issued them a notice, asking to stop the work and appear at DoE office on October 18 for a hearing," the deputy director said.

Contacted, Mainul Haque, senior manager (admin) of Sanmar Properties Limited, said the hills and trees belonged

to them. "That's why we do not need any permission to cut the trees."

"The allegation will only arise when we will cut the hills, which did not happen yet," he claimed.

Mentionable, Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act 1995 (amended in 2000) clearly states cutting hills without having approval from the environment authorities is prohibited.

Also, many locals alleged that Sanmar Properties razed trees and hills for the ongoing project.

When pointed out, Mainul Haque said, "We obtained permission from CDA for the project. Approval from DoE is under process with its Dhaka office. They served us a notice, we will give our explanation then."

He kept on repeating the same statement to all the questions this correspondent had afterwards.

Amir Ahmed Chowdhury passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

Eminent educationist, cultural and sports organiser Prof Amir Ahmed Chowdhury Ratan died of old age complications at a Dhaka hospital on Thursday night. He was 79.

The valiant freedom fighter was president of Sammilito Sangskritik Jote Mymensingh unit and was affiliated with Awami League. He was also founder and ex-headteacher of Mukul Niketon High School.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the city's Anjuman Eidgah ground after Juma prayers, following which he was laid to rest at his village in Hasanpur of Phulgazi upazila in Feni.

Even

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Vegetables -- such as, potato, brinjal and gourd -- have deep marks or bruises, because they fell off trucks. Therefore, prices are usually one-third of that of the actual market. According to locals, the bazaar was set up in the early 80s by slum people, who would collect rotten vegetables and sell them at a minimal price.

Afsa Begum, a resident of Poschim Nakhhalpara for 12 years, has been going to the bazaar to buy essentials for a long time, while her husband goes out for his carpentry job.

"There was a time when my bag would be full with veggies after spending Tk 100 here. Now, it barely fills half the bag. Half rotten vegetables are getting pricier too," Afsa said.

While low-income customers are struggling to make ends meet due to high prices, vendors are also seeing decreasing sales. As a result, their long-running business is facing uncertainty.

Vendor Md Sohel has been in the business for about five years. He must spend Tk 300 daily to maintain his makeshift stall, and Tk 3,000 per month for house rent. Now, it is getting difficult for him to manage both.

"I used to sell goods worth Tk 6,000-7,000 every day six months back, but now, it has come down to Tk 3,000-4,000. I barely make any profit, so it's getting tough to take care of my family in Dhaka," he grieved.

While talking about the reason for hiked prices, he said, "We would get half-rotten or non-fresh vegetables at minimal prices from retailers, but now we don't. We need to spend a good amount of money to buy them, and the process also involves transportation costs."

Nurjahan Begum is another vendor who is selling vegetables for 20 years. She also echoed Sohel while explaining the price hike.

"We would sell non-fresh potatoes for Tk 15 per kg, but now we've to do so for Tk 30, while in regular markets they go for Tk 40. The retailers from the main market are now selling half-rotten potatoes at higher prices to us," she argued.

"Due to this, customers are haggling more than before and buying fewer goods from us. I could profit Tk 25-30 per Tk 100 sale, but now the profit came down to Tk 10-15. Not only customers, we are victims of the price hike as well," Nurjahan said.

Newborn

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baby dead after Yeasin's wife Shahinur Akter gave birth to her around 4:45am, after six and a half months' pregnancy.

Hospital staffers later put the baby in an abandoned box of gloves and asked Yeasin to take her to Azimpur graveyard, Yeasin, a driver by profession, alleged.

He took the baby to the graveyard, but since he did not have Tk 1,500 for burial, he was advised to go to Rayerbazar graveyard where the burial cost is comparatively lower.

Yeasin took the baby to the graveyard, a grave was dug but a couple of minutes before the burial, the box in Yeasin's hand moved and she showed signs of being alive.

He took the baby back to the hospital.

The DMCH director said the baby was put under observation for a couple of hours but was declared dead as there was no pulse after her premature birth.

Dr Kamal's

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instances in Gonoforum that many people earlier deserted the party and joined other ones. So, it's nothing new," Reza observed. He alleged those who left Gonoforum are now trying to harm the party.

"I think it's our good luck that we could identify them at the right time. They've long been trying to harm the party staying in it, but their motive has got exposed now," he said, expressing resolve to strengthen and reorganise the party afresh in consultation with the party leaders at all levels.

Mostak said 130 party leaders, including 70 members of the convening committee, joined the meeting.

Earlier on September 26, a faction of Gonoforum leaders, led by Montu, decided to hold the party's national council on December 26 next.

At an "extended meeting of Gonoforum's central committee", he also formed a 201-member preparatory committee, led by party former general secretary Mostafa Mohsin Montu, to hold the council.

The meeting also decided to expel party general secretary Dr Reza Kibria, presidium members AOM Shafique Ullah, Advocate Mohsin Rashid and organising secretary Mostaque Ahmed for violating party discipline and constitution, and indulging in activities that go against the party's interests and organisational unity.

They claimed that 283 leaders, including representatives from 52 districts, were present at the meeting.

DEMOCRACY MUST BE FUNCTIONAL: DR KAMAL Speaking virtually at the event yesterday, Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain said democracy must be made functional so that the country's people can exercise their basic rights.

As his party is facing a split, he suggested party leaders to organise its grassroots incorporating youths and women.

He also suggested Gonoforum leaders launch a campaign to make people aware of democracy and their rights.

"We must increase the number of members of our party, not for raising our fund, but for working to bring a change. Many people are showing interest in different districts to become our party members. This is a good sign," Dr Kamal said.

Muted

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Earlier, the parishad gave a 26-point directive on August 26 on limited-scale celebration of the festival.

It urged everyone to cooperate with law enforcement personnel deployed to ensure security.

According to Hindu scriptures and Bangla almanac, Durga Puja is observed in sync with the moon's cycle. The five-day festivity and prayers begin on the sixth day of full moon and ends on tenth day, or Bijoya Dashami.

Durga, the slayer of demon Mahishashur, appears to be riding a lion and accompanied by her children Ganesh, Kartik, Lakshmi and Saraswati with 10 weapons in 10 hands.

At the invocation of the devotees, she descends on the earth, stays for the next four days and leaves after slaying all evil forces and blessing the devotees.

Every year, Goddess Durga arrives on a carrier and chooses another bearer for her departure, a choice seen to predict how the next year will fare for the world.

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বারিধারা বঙ্গবন্ধু এক্সপ্রেস জে-রুকে ৩০০ ফিটের কাছে ১নং রোডে এখনই বাড়ী করার উপযোগী ৫ কাটার প্লট বিক্রয় হইবে। যোগাযোগ-০১৭১১-৪৭২৪১৮

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রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের Tourism & Hospitality Management বিভাগে নিম্নবর্ণিত পদসমূহ পূরণের জন্য বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।
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(খ) স্থায়ী সহযোগী অধ্যাপকের পদের বিপরীতে অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে = ০১ (একটি) অস্থায়ী প্রভাষক পদ।
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15th death anniversary of MA Samad

CITY DESK



Yesterday was the 15th death anniversary of MA Samad, an influential figure in the insurance industry.

He was the founder Director of Bangladesh Insurance Academy and former Chairman of Bangladesh Insurance Association. After his retirement as Managing Director of Jiban Bima Corporation, Samad founded Bangladesh General Insurance Company Ltd (BGIC), the first private sector insurance company in the country.

MA Samad was also an author, who wrote textbooks on insurance-related topics. He was an enlisted International Expert in the Technical Assistance Program on Trade and Development of the United Nations.



Rowdy CNG auto-rickshaw drivers take up most of the Sylhet-Companyganj road outside the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, without regards for traffic discipline. Haphazard driving by these small vehicles often creates chaos on the road, locals said. The photo was taken earlier this week.

PHOTO: SHEKH NASIR