

What's on today . . .

Global Tiger Forum assembly: The inaugural session of the first general assembly meeting of the Global Tiger Forum will be held. Chief guest: Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury. Minister for Environment and Forest. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 10:00 am.

Music and dance festival: Dhrupadi (vocal) recital by Umakant and Ramakant Gundecha will be presented on the 3rd day of the Indian Classical Music and Dance Festival today. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time: 7:00 pm.

Seminar: Chalachitram Film Society will hold a seminar on 'Film in Bangladesh: In Search of Origin.' Jago Huwa Saveria (Day Shall Dawn) will be screened at the end of the seminar. Venue: Goethe Institut. House No 10, Rd No 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:30 pm.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over Rajshahi division and the river basins of the country and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during the morning.

Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country. Met office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 29.8 degree Celsius at Teknaf and the lowest 9.8 degrees at Rangpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:35 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	23.8	16.3
Chittagong	28.0	16.6
Rajshahi	22.5	11.7
Khulna	25.5	14.0
Barisal	25.4	13.5
Sylhet	25.6	13.4
Cox's Bazar	28.5	18.4

Another PW in Rubel murder case cross-examined

By Court Correspondent

The cross examination of Mosharrar Hussain, the fifth prosecution witness in the Shamim Reza Rubel murder case, ended at the Third Additional Metropolitan Session Judge's court yesterday.

Hussain was in detective branch custody when Rubel was brought there on the day of the incident. A witness told the court during yesterday's proceedings. The case was adjourned until 2:30 pm today.

Rubel, a 24-year-old BBA student at Independent University, was picked up by a police near his residence on July 23, 1998. He died in custody the same day.

The CID charged 14 people, including former Awami League leader and Minister for Education, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a local Awami League leader, with murder. Ten of the accused appeared in court yesterday.

Four other accused — Si Nurul Alam, Mong She Oen, Abdul Kalam Azad and Zakir Hossain — are still at large.

Two killed as train hits autorickshaw

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 17:

Two passengers of an autorickshaw were killed and another two critically injured when a train hit the vehicle at Pagla Delpara in Fatulla thana Sunday night, reports UNB.

The vehicle was smashed when the Narayanganj-bound train hit it on Pagla level crossing at about 8 pm.

Police said the injured, one is the autorickshaw driver, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

44 arrested in Ctg on various charges

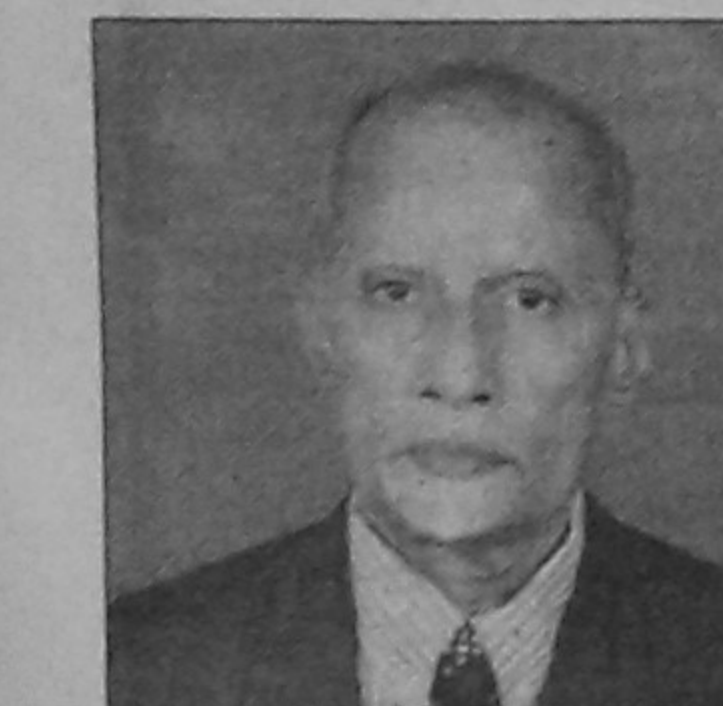
CHITTAGONG, Jan 17:

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) rounded up 44 miscreants including two terrorists from different areas of the city during past 24 hours ending six pm today, reports BSS.

On a secret tip off, Chandgaon police raided two houses at DC Road of Bakolia and arrested alleged terrorists Muhammad Deedar, 23, and Reza. Both were wanted in connection with shooting of one Anil on January 15.

CMP police also recovered 700 bottles of phensidyl worth Taka 50,000 from Mohsin Colony of Hall Shahar. No one was arrested in this connection.

Other police stations of CMP rounded up 42 miscreants on various charges during the period.



Obituary

Dr Mosharrar Hossain, a retired Professor of Dhaka Medical College Hospital and a Nuclear Medicine specialist, died of heart failure on Sunday, at his residence in Shiddheswari, says a press release.

Professor Hossain was buried at Banani Graveyard on Sunday afternoon after his namaz-e-janaza, first at the Central Women's College premises in the morning and at Shiddheswari Jam-e-Masjid after Zuhur prayers.

He is survived by his wife Amatul Khatun Begum, Principal of Central Women's College, three daughters.

Prof Hossain's kulkhwani will be held at his residence on January 20 after Asr prayers.

JP MP calls for holding of UZ polls

An opposition party member in Parliament yesterday asked the government to call UZ polls elections immediately honouring law and people's will, reports UNB.

Participating in the general discussion on presidential address, Jatiya Party (M-M) Whip Advocate Fazle Rabbi cautioned the government from violating the law by not holding the polls on time.

The people have accepted the UZ poll system. Declare the schedule of UZ polls elections immediately," he said.

Rabbi, whose party leader Anwar Hossain Manju is a minister of Awami League, observed with resentment that the BNP government has gone. AL government is on its way out, but the UZ poll election is yet to be held.

"It's a gross violation of law," the JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Rabbi also demanded that the government scrap the Special Powers Act immediately as the law violates human rights.

The JP whip told the House as the government apparently paused from declaring UZ poll schedule in view of threatened resistance from the four-party opposition alliance. The BNP-led alliance also groups the other faction of JP of former president HM Ershad.

Khaleda briefs French envoy about political economic situation

France's new ambassador, Alain Briottet, called on Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia at her official residence yesterday evening, reports UNB.

Khaleda told the ambassador good relation between Bangladesh and France have existed since the 1971 War of Liberation. She noted with happiness the direct and indirect support of French government and its people during and after the independence.

Khaleda's advisor, M M Rezaul Karim, briefed newsmen after the meeting.

Khaleda briefed the diplomat about the economic and political situation and other problems facing the country.

She also explained the opposition parties principals and their demand for the government's resignation.

She said her party wants to resolve the problems through discussion. She alleged the government has ignored the opposition since it came to power.

She said it's the government's responsibility to create an atmosphere conducive to meaningful dialogue to overcome the political impasse.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.

Khaleda assured the ambassador of her co-operation to discharge his responsibilities. The envoy said Bangladesh is a good friend and that France will help the people of Bangladesh achieve prosperity.



Police women arrest a supporter (C) of ousted Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif outside an anti-terrorism court in Karachi yesterday. Sharif and six other officials, who were detained after army chief General Pervez Musharraf seized power in a coup three months ago, have still not been charged as the case was postponed again until January 18. — AFP photo

JICA chief identifies four priority areas of cooperation

The visiting Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) President Kimio Fujita identified four priority areas of cooperation with Bangladesh and hoped that fruits of cooperation would be best utilised here without hurdles.

In an interview with the United News of Bangladesh yesterday he hoped that none of the projects funded by JICA would be affected by the political situation.

"We hope that all joint projects should be implemented smoothly on time."

The priority areas are agricultural production, infrastructure development, private investment, health and medicine and disaster control.

Fujita, who came here Saturday on the first leg of his five-nation tour of South Asia, spoke highly of the achievements Bangladesh has made in the field of economy and technical development during the past decade.

"I am impressed with your leaders' strong sense of direction and clear focuses on priority areas in social and economic sectors," he said referring to his talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Cabinet colleagues, Finance Minister S A M S Kibria and Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak.

Asked about any problem facing the Japanese agency in implementing its projects, he said there are always difficulties in development cooperation.

"The process of development cooperation is equal to the process overcoming difficulties. In any case we have problems but we take it quite naturally."

Fujita avoided making any comment on the current political situation in Bangladesh that might have affected the utilisation of Japanese aid.

He, however, hastened to say: "I have not received any negative comment from my Japanese colleagues here. Democracy does expect competition and confrontation."

The visiting Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) President Kimio Fujita identified four priority areas of cooperation with Bangladesh and hoped that fruits of cooperation would be best utilised here without hurdles.

In an interview with the United News of Bangladesh yesterday he hoped that none of the projects funded by JICA would be affected by the political situation.

"We hope that all joint projects should be implemented smoothly on time."

The priority areas are agricultural production, infrastructure development, private investment, health and medicine and disaster control.

Fujita, who came here Saturday on the first leg of his five-nation tour of South Asia, spoke highly of the achievements Bangladesh has made in the field of economy and technical development during the past decade.

"I am impressed with your leaders' strong sense of direction and clear focuses on priority areas in social and economic sectors," he said referring to his talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Cabinet colleagues, Finance Minister S A M S Kibria and Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak.

Asked about any problem facing the Japanese agency in implementing its projects, he said there are always difficulties in development cooperation.

"The process of development cooperation is equal to the process overcoming difficulties. In any case we have problems but we take it quite naturally."

Fujita avoided making any comment on the current political situation in Bangladesh that might have affected the utilisation of Japanese aid.

He, however, hastened to say: "I have not received any negative comment from my Japanese colleagues here. Democracy does expect competition and confrontation."

In reply to a question about future aid flow to Bangladesh, he said ODA is not increasing under present circumstances, but they would maintain the present volume.

Japan, the largest bilateral donor to Bangladesh, provides US dollar 300 million annually on average in development finance.

"My visit won't negatively affect Japanese aid operation in Bangladesh," he retorted, responding to a query about his appraisal trip.

Fujita said a second feasibility study by the Japanese experts on the Rupsha Bridge would be submitted to the Bangladesh government before March this year.

He gave a broad hint of an agreement between Bangladesh and Japan on the construction of the bridge after receiving formal request from Dhaka.

About the Dhaka Eastern bypass project, he said it also came up for discussion with government leaders.

Experts warn over rising tide of natural disasters

VIENNA, Jan 17: The growth of mass Alpine tourism and unregulated development of unstable environmental zones are fuelling a rising tide of natural disasters like avalanches and mudslides, experts warned Monday, reports AFP.

Global climate change may also be responsible for the growing toll from such catastrophes, which has grown threefold since the 1990s, according to figures presented to a UN and EU-backed conference here.

The three-day conference, entitled "Living with Natural Hazards," opened Monday and brings together scientific, environmental and sociological experts to discuss the problem.

Governments must act to stem the increase in catastrophes like snowslides in Europe's Alpine heartland and the land slides which struck Venezuela last month, the conference was told.

These natural disasters not only bring about inexpressible human suffering but may also result in serious environmental damage and shake the economic foundation of the entire population living in the region affected," Austrian Science and Transport Minister Caspar Eimerl told the conference.

"While some landslides and avalanches can be traced back to the overexploitation of environmentally sensitive areas, other catastrophes are consequences of the apparent change in global climate," he said.

The meeting's Austrian hosts are all too aware of the consequences of avalanches. Last year the country suffered its most deadly snowslide tragedy in decades when two avalanches killed 38 people near the village of Galtuer.

The growth of so-called extreme sports, such as canyoning and endurance rock-climbing, can also only increase casualty rates, they said.

"The problem with modern tourism is that we can't just sell beds in five-star hotels anymore," said Walter Ender of tourism department of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce.

"We must sell experiences. People are seeking sensations, and that can bring problems," he added, while noting that the February 1999 Galtuer tragedy had only cost about one percent in the village's annual tourism revenues.

Professor Ernst Gehrmacher, an expert on the social consequences of natural disasters, agreed that the growing toll gave serious cause for concern.

The flag meeting was held at a point between Bhatsala Border Outpost (BOP) under Debhat Thana and Soyedpur BSF camp in West Bengal between BDR Debhat Company Command and BSF Hassanabad Company Command. Commander Subedar Shamsul Haque led the BDR team.

Meanwhile BSF handed over the boats and nets of seven Bangladeshi fishermen seized earlier. BSF had kidnapped the seven Bangladeshi fishermen from Debhat border area on January 11 and released them after five days on Saturday without any flag meeting.

The handing over took place during the two-hour long flag meeting.

BDR had earlier protested the BSF activities and fishing in the Bangladesh water territory by the Indian fishermen. BSF promised to abstain from such activities in future.

The growth of so-called extreme sports, such as canyoning and endurance rock-climbing, can also only increase casualty rates, they said.

"The problem with modern tourism is that we can't just sell beds in five-star hotels anymore," said Walter Ender of tourism department of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce.

"We must sell experiences. People are seeking sensations, and that can bring problems," he added, while noting that the February 1999 Galtuer tragedy had only cost about one percent in the village's annual tourism revenues.

Professor Ernst Gehrmacher, an expert on the social consequences of natural disasters, agreed that the growing toll gave serious cause for concern.

The flag meeting was held at a point between Bhatsala Border Outpost (BOP) under Debhat Thana and Soyedpur BSF camp in West Bengal between BDR Debhat Company Command and BSF Hassanabad Company Command. Commander Subedar Shamsul Haque led the BDR team.

Meanwhile BSF handed over the boats and nets of seven Bangladeshi fishermen seized earlier. BSF had kidnapped the seven Bangladeshi fishermen from Debhat border area on January 11 and released them after five days on Saturday without any flag meeting.

The handing over took place during the two-hour long flag meeting.

BDR had earlier protested the BSF activities and fishing in the Bangladesh water territory by the Indian fishermen. BSF promised to abstain from such activities in future.

7 killed in separate incidents in Gazipur

GAZIPUR, Jan 17: Five people were killed in separate road accidents, one was murdered and another electrocuted in the district in the last two days, reports UNB.

Hospital and police sources said store-keeper of Rajendra-pur cantonment Sarafat Ali, 28, died on the spot when a My-mensingh bound speedy truck rammed over him near Sreepur Textile Mill on Dhaka-My-mensingh highway this morning.

A garments factory worker Seema, 14, of Peerganj thana of Rangpur district, was crushed under the wheel of a Pajero Jeep at Bashon area on the highway at 10 pm Sunday night.

Abdus Samad, 30, of Nizama village under Sreepur thana died on the spot when he fell from the rooftop of a speeding bus at Uttara Azampur.

A head-on collision between a tempo and a Dhaka bound bus in front of the Rice Research Institute on Gazipur-Dhaka road left one Rezia Begum, 70, of Chanpara village dead on the spot and wounded eight others also on Sunday.

Kaliganj police recovered the slaughtered body of an unidentified teenage girl from Haridevpur village on Sunday.

Nurul Islam of Itahata village in Sadar thana was electrocuted in his house.

Autopsies of all the bodies were performed at Sadar Hospital today.

The muggers were given a mass beating before being handed over to the police.

Two muggers caught in Pirojpur

PIROJPUR, Jan 17: Two young men were caught red-handed with a pipe gun and ammunition when they attempted to snatch money from Grameen Bank officials at Purbao Bhandaria at about 11:30 am today, reports UNB.

Police said that the villagers caught Awlad Howlader and Dulal Sikder as they tried to make away with Tk 6,000 mugged from Grameen Bank officials when they were handing over the money to group members in the village.

The muggers were given a mass beating before being handed over to the police.

Public Safety Bill

From page 1

cles to traffic movement in the streets, rivers, railways or in the air ways, or diverting the route of a vehicle against the will of the operator concerned by illegal force or by threat —

"Or, any person or any organised group terrorising people, suddenly or in an organised manner, by creating panic or applying force, at any place including markets, streets, vehicles or on any premises... will be awarded imprisonment for life, or rigorous prison terms for not more than twenty years."

Under the proposed law, "The minimum punishment will not be less than five years of imprisonment, while he/she will also be awarded financial penalty. Besides, the Tribunal or the High Court may direct the convict concerned to pay compensation to the affected person