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Crackers explode near rally at Paltan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cracker explosions on the eastern side of the Bangabandhu National Stadium, created panic among the activists of Islamic Ain Bastabayan Parishad (IABP), which was holding a rally at Paltan Maidan yesterday afternoon.

Witnesses said at least three crackers went off at about 3:25 pm. Panic-stricken IABP activists were running helter-skelter for safety. Police rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area.

UNB adds: IABP at the rally charged the ruling Awami League with "anti-Islamic" activities and directed its activists to make any sacrifice needed in the ousting of the government movement.

Its leaders said "fatwa was always there, it is there and will be there" despite the High Court verdict.

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Riot police cordoned off the meeting venue of Islamic Ain Bastabayan Parishad at Paltan Maidan after three crackers exploded on the eastern side of Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday afternoon.

2 young men murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two young men were murdered in the city.

Miscreeants gunned down Badsha Mia, 25, son of Hera Chand Mia inside his residence in the city's Sutrapur area last night.

Police said a gang of local miscreeants entered Badsha's house at K B Road at about 7:30 pm and shot him point blank while he was watching television. Badsha died on the spot.

He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead. His body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police said Badsha had a feud with some local youths of the area over holding a function on the holy Ashura day.

Police suspect that Badsha might have been killed as a sequel to the rivalry.

Police arrested two youths Bappi.

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Concerted move a must to save Dhaka city from pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A concerted move by the city dwellers is indispensable to save Dhaka city from all kinds of pollution, which have already gone far above the tolerable level thanks to lack of planning as well as accountability of agencies concerned.

Participants at a presentation ceremony of a report titled, Controlling Pollution of Narai, Debdholai Khal and river Balu, and a dialogue on the same issue, which was organised by Dhaka WASA, also observed that people should now insist that the political parties spell out in clear terms their stand on environmental issues.

The ceremony followed a rally at Nandipara on the outskirts of the capital city on March 11 in protest against acute pollution of the three rivers due to indiscriminate disposal of hazardous and untreated wastes.

The rally was organised by Baragram Unnayan Sangstha in

association with POROSH and the Hunger Project Bangladesh.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of Dhaka WASA Prof. Nazrul Islam presided over yesterday's programme with Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed as chief guest. Among other WASA Managing Director Khandakar Azaharul Haq, Atiur Rahman of BIDS, Abdullah Abu Sayed of Biswa Sahitya Kendra, AMA Muhi of POROSH, Barrister Omar Sadat, representatives of relevant agencies and a number of inhabitants of the affected areas participated in the dialogue.

A committee of experts with

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Will journalist Tipu remain disabled?

The Daily Star - প্রথম আলো

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Khaleda's advisor Z A Khan, 2 BNP MPs sued under PSA again

UNB, Dhaka

Two BNP lawmakers and a former army general have been sued again under the Public Safety Act for violence on April 11 evening near BNP central office.

According to party sources, a total of 60 people have been sued under the PSA filed with Motijheel Thana in connection with a bomb explosion near the BNP central office at Nayapaltan at the end of a rally of the party there on the third day of 72-hour hartal.

Among others who were charged are Khaleda's advisor Maj General (Retd) Z A Khan, Najimuddin Alam MP, Joyal Abedin Faruk MP, Khairul Kabir Khokon and Fazul Huq Milon.

Earlier on April 3, a PSA case was filed against Z A Khan. On April 9,

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Although a weekly holiday, city schools remained open yesterday to make up for unscheduled closures due to hartals. Here students of Viqarunnisa Noon School attend a class.

A S M NURUNNABI

Lately some casualties occurred in a city's sewerage manhole from trapped gas pockets. Similar incidents from such causes took place in the past. There were complaints received from people well-acquainted with the simmering hazards that exist in underground waste channels and even in some water reservoirs where noxious gases from pockets below ground level are trapped.

It has been reported that mishaps and fatalities of this nature occur because the city's sewerage system has become unmanageable due to new and unauthorised connections for industrial, human and other wastes, which are congested by non-biodegradable substances such as polythene bags. A poor maintenance of the city's sewerage system is also to blame for this dangerous state of affairs.

Dhaka city's life on the surface is being devilled by several factors, such as tainted environment created by

DOWN TO EARTH

Hazards from underground

constant emission of lead and carbon monoxide from motorised transports, chronic loadshedding, poor garbage disposal, steadily growing slums, etc. The city residents may be unaware that the worsening environmental situation on the surface is not the only factor that is threatening their life. There is bad news creeping from underground also.

There are several dumping sites in the city, aiding entrapment of gases below. There is another aspect: seepage from the toxic waste dumps could seriously contaminate Dhaka's water table and create a serious health hazard for the millions of people living in the capital city. It was recently reported that, according to an official of the

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Mutail is the biggest of several open dumping sites spread over the city. On an average, more than 4,000 tonnes of garbage, including clinical, industrial and pharmaceutical waste is dumped at those sites which are near human living quarters.

According to the findings of researchers, the mix of rainwater and garbage besides creating noxious gases, could also produce stinky liquids which trickle through several layers of soil down to the water table carrying deadly micro-organisms and bacterial and toxic chemicals.

Several tests conducted by a specialist of an international agency have reportedly found

groundwater contamination of varying degrees in different parts of the city, although the results could not be linked to seepage from the waste dump sites or the sewerage system. Although there is no concrete evidence of contamination from seepage from waste dumps, we may still be not far away from a calamity, according to the specialist.

According to a researcher, working in this field, there is little cause for concern for half a century at least, because the rate of seepage in Dhaka is rather slow because of the pressure of the consolidated clay layer, but there is no denying of the entrapment of dangerous toxic gases below produced by the gar

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Several lakhs of taka looted from mazar of Khanjahan Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

Armed cadres of 'Khoka Bahini' of Bagerhat have looted several lakhs of taka from three almirahs of the Mazar of Khanjahan Ali (R).

A tense situation is prevailing in Bagerhat town following this incident.

According to police and caretakers (Khadem) of the Mazar, armed cadres of 'Khoka Bahini' took away the almirahs at gunpoint on Wednesday and took them to the house of Syed Hedayet Ali Khoka, a leader of Awami League and former chairman of Ranbijoypur under Sadar Thana.

They broke locks of almirahs and looted the money receive as donation from the people for development of the Mazar.

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A dozen BCL leaders likely to seek ticket for polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About a dozen leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) intends to seek Awami League (AL) nomination to contest the coming general election.

BCL sources said the aspirants are maintaining 'close contact' with the policy-makers of AL to ensure their nomination. They are also making frequent visits to the constituencies concerned to mobilise public support for them.

These student leaders including the BCL president and its general secretary have planned to enter national politics apparently 'inspired by the success' of their predecessors in the 1996 and 1991 parliament elections and 'frustrated' at the present state of student politics, the sources mentioned.

The BCL leaders' move has now become a subject of discussion by many on the Dhaka University campus. Leaders and activists of different student bodies were seen arguing in favour and against their move and even making forecasts about their victory or defeat in the general election, if nominated to contest.

Some of the aspirants say that the number of student leaders contesting national election may increase as many voters want to see the younger generation in the Jatiya Sangsad.

BCL President Bahadur Bepari plans to seek nomination to contest from Bhedarganj-Damurda (Shariatpur) constituency. Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak is now MP from the constituency.

General Secretary of BCL Ajay Kar Khokon may contest from Bazilpur-Nikli (Kishoreganj) constituency. Sources said he visits the constituency often to create a popular base for him.

Vice President of the organisation Sujit Ray Nandi would seek nomination from a constituency in Chandpur and another Vice President, Balaram Podder, from Babuganj-Uzirpur (Barisal) constituency.

The other BCL leaders to seek AL nomination include Vice President Shahjahan Alam Shaju, Moshir Rahman Humayun, Nazrul Islam Babu and Abdul Matin.

Nor'wester kills 2 in Sunamganj

UNB, Sunamganj

Two people were killed as nor'wester swept the district yesterday afternoon.

The storm hit Sadar upazila, Dirai, Bishwambharpur, Jamalganj, Sadar, Doarabazar, and Jagannathpur upazilas at about 4:30 pm.

Ruptun Nesa, 35, of village Ichchar Char and a 7-year old unidentified child of Islampur village of Sadar upazila died in house collapse during the storm.

Over 500 kutchas houses were damaged and many electric poles and trees uprooted by the storms.

22 AL men sued under PSA in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

City BNP secretary Nazrul Islam Manju has filed a case against 22 leaders and activists of Awami League, Jubo League and Chhatra League for creating panic by bomb explosions and gunshots at PT1 crossing and Tootpara central road on Wednesday.

The case was recorded under the Public Safety Act (PSA) on Thursday.

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Banglar Bani to cease publication 'temporarily'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Management of Banglar Bani is closing down the newspaper 'temporarily', laying off its 169 journalists and employees from Sunday.

According to Banglar Bani sources yesterday the management had unofficially told the journalists and employees that the decision was taken in view of the 'financial trouble' in running the paper.

It would be temporary, the management said. Formal notice of the layoffs would be served on Sunday, the sources said.

Banglar Bani was founded in 1969 by Sheikh Fazul Huq Moni, elder brother of Health Minister Sheikh Selim. Selim edited the Bangla daily till his ministerial appointment.

Sheikh Moni, Chairman of Jubo

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শুভ নববর্ষ ১৪০৮

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বিশেষ সঞ্চয় প্রকল্প
দ্বিগুণ বৃদ্ধি সঞ্চয় প্রকল্প
মাসিক মুনাফা প্রকল্প
মাসিক সঞ্চয় প্রকল্প
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Shrimp cultivation becoming threat to Sundarbans

Experts, environmentalists allege

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Experts and environmental activists at a roundtable in the city yesterday expressed concern over the threat to the Sundarbans -- the World Heritage Site -- due to rampant expansion of shrimp cultivation.

This is also having its adverse impact on the life of local people and the environment, threatening to turn the southwestern region of the country into a saline wasteland, they warned.

The roundtable on shrimp cultivation in the southwestern Bangladesh, held at the Jatiya Press Club, was organised by the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) and the Coalition of Environmental NGOs. ADAB Chairperson Khushi Kabir presided.

A report on the impact of shrimp cultivation in Bangladesh was presented by Ms Meena Raman, a leader of the Industrial Action Network (ISAN). The report was prepared following a visit to the shrimp growing areas by an ISAN delegation comprising representatives from 10 countries -- United States, Canada, Sweden, UK, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The delegates participated in a workshop on "Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact of Industrial Shrimp Cultivation" in Khulna, attended by local people and organised by the Citizens Committee for Conservation of Coastal Environment, Khulna.

They met local people in the

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