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Candles in the wind



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

They were lost when the nation fought a bloody battle for independence; thirty-one years on, their dear ones try to reach out to them with elegies in the lights and shadows of candles at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Mirpur Road off-limits to rickshaws from tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Mirpur Road between Gabtali and Russel Square points will be made off-limits to rickshaws from tomorrow.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) were seen announcing the decision through loudspeakers at different points of the Mirpur Road. This will be the seventh attempt to ban plying of all non-mechanised vehicles between 6:00am and 10:00pm on the patch of the road.

All previous attempts went in vain as angry rickshawpullers demonstrated and fought pitch battle with the police.

Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) of police Abu Musa Fakrul Islam Chowdhury told The Daily Star that this time the authorities are firm to go ahead with the ban. But he said

The World Bank (WB) aided Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) has started installing proper signboards at different intersections, reminding people on the ban on movement of non-mechanised vehicles.

The DTCB plans to free the entire stretch of the Mirpur Road between Gabtali and Azimpur Baby Ice-cream crossing of rickshaws in t

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Dhaka, Yangon to establish joint trade commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With high hopes to open up new horizon in bilateral trade, Bangladesh and Myanmar yesterday agreed to establish a joint trade commission and introduce accounts trade and coastal shipping link.

Moreover, the two neighbours will also revise the existing border trade agreement signed in 1994 to prohibit trading of third-country products. At present, the border trade agreement, which is in place since 1995, does not contain any specific provision to prevent trade in goods of third-country origin.

Under the agreements on

accounts trade and revised border trade, third-country products will not be exchanged between the two countries and manufactured goods will require at least 30 per cent value addition to be traded.

The agreements are expected to be signed next March in Myanmar where Bangladesh will hold a single-country fair, said officials.

The proposed joint trade commission to be headed by commerce ministers of the two countries will regularly review trade and identify products for trade. The commission will also identify and resolve the problems in bilateral trade.

Bangladesh Commerce Minister

Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury and visiting Myanmar Commerce Minister Brigadier General Pyi Sone in a 45-minute exclusive meeting at a local hotel yesterday finalised the deals.

"Implementation of the agreements will substantially increase bilateral trade, while the current informal trade will be gradually turned into formal trade," Khosru told reporters at his secretariat office after the meeting.

He said an expected increase in trade between the two countries would help Bangladesh earn more

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Shahriar, Muntasir, Shafi & Pricilla get ad-interim bail

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to writer Shahriar Kabir, columnist Prof Muntasir Mamoon, Awami League leader Shafi Ahmed and NGO activist Pricilla Raj.

The Court also issued rule upon the government to show cause why Shahriar Kabir and Pricilla Raj should not be granted regular bail.

The Court further issued rule upon the government as to why the arrest of Muntasir Mamoon and Shafi Ahmed under Section 54 of CrPC and subsequent police remand for interrogation should not be declared without lawful authority.

Journalist Shahriar Kabir was

granted ad-interim bail in connection with a sedition charge filed against two foreign journalists of UK-based TV network Channel-4.

He was shown arrested in this case while Pricilla Raj was detained on November 25 for helping the Channel-4 journalists to gather information on Islamic fundamentalism and Al-Qaeda activities in Bangladesh.

Writer-journalist Shahriar Kabir, columnist Muntasir Mamoon and Awami League leader Shafi Ahmed were picked up without any specific charge on December 8 from their residences in the capital.

The Court order came following separate petitions filed on behalf of

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Newsmen clubbed for protesting fellow arrests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police in the city yesterday clubbed newsmen who were protesting indiscriminate arrest of and torture on journalists across the country.

The incident took place when the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) attempted to take out a procession from the Jatiya Press Club at about 3:30p.m.

Earlier, the BFUJ held a rally at the press club premises to register their protest against the recent harassment on journalists. The rally over, the BFUJ members prepared to get on the street. But police intercepted it at the main gate of the press club.

The journalists had a heated

argument with police as the policemen asked them not to take to the street. When the journalists refused to oblige, the policemen charged baton on them. A large number of policemen cordoned the press club for 15 minutes.

The BFUJ said that several members were injured during the police action.

Later, in a statement, the BFUJ and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) strongly condemned the police interference into their peaceful programme and the subsequent assault on journalists without any instigation.

Leaders of the country's two premier organisations of journalists

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Nobel laureate for compromise strategy on gas utilisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Professor John Kenneth Arrow believes Bangladesh should opt for a compromise strategy for its natural resources including gas.

"I exactly don't know about it but as there has been an uncertainty and both Bangladesh and the oil companies find interest in it, a compromise (mixed) strategy may be followed in this regard," he noted.

He made the observation responding to a query of a World Bank economist after delivering a public lecture at the National Museum in the city yesterday.

There is no specific model based on which decisions can be made but indication may be found from data analysis, he said.

Professor Arrow was delivering the 'Public Lecture 2002 on Some Paradoxes of Sustainability: Empirical and Theoretical'.

The Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) in association with the South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE) arranged the lecture.

The economist said everything is running out and the world is going to starve. Oil and other minerals are being rapidly exhausted. The capacity of the atmosphere to absorb carbon dioxide and other g r e e n

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PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh all-rounder Alok Kapali pulls one over mid-wicket for a six as West Indies wicketkeeper-captain Ridley Jacobs looks on during the third day of the final test at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Caribbean clean sweep

HASAN MASOOD, Chittagong

West Indies completed a clean sweep when they won the second and final Test by seven wickets at the MA Aziz Stadium here yesterday.

It was yet another three-day defeat for Bangladesh in their 17th Test but not before young Alok Kapali entertained the boisterous home crowd with 85, his highest score in the five-day game.

The 18-year-old batsman led a spectacular recovery after the home team, resuming the day on 40 for no loss, slumped to 126-5.

His scintillating 111-ball knock that contained a dozen boundaries and two sixes including a magnificent

pull off paceman Vasbert Drakes over mid-wicket kept Bangladesh in the hunt against a gradually frustrated West Indies pace battery.

Kapali's half-century in successive Tests helped Bangladesh score 212 in their second innings, giving the visitors an easy 110 runs to chase.

The homesick Caribbeans were in no mood to take the match into the fourth day as they overhauled the target in only 21.3 overs. Marlon Samuels hit the winning runs with a four off Kapali through mid-wicket, and with that the young guns of West Indies brought an end t o

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Murder case against army personnel HC rule against harassment of complainant & her family men

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday directed government authorities and the army camp-in-charge at Savar to refrain from arresting or harassing the family members of a person who reportedly died after arrest by army personnel.

A division bench of the High Court comprising Justice Tafazzul Islam and Justice M Anwarul Huq issued a rule restraining the authorities from arresting without due legal process or harassing the widow or other members of the family of deceased Litu.

The orders came following a writ

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3 to die for attack on Indian parliament

AFP, New Delhi

A special court yesterday sentenced three men to death on charges related to a deadly attack on the Indian parliament last year.

The court had on Monday found the three guilty helping five militants, who were all killed at the scene, carry out the attack last December which killed nine.

A woman who was found guilty of not disclosing information to police was sentenced to five years in jail.

Judge S N Dhinra handed down death sentences to Mohammed Afzal, a 35-year-old fruit merchant, Shaikat Hussain, a former student at Delhi University and SAR Geelani, a New Delhi college teacher.

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