



PHOTO: STAR
The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal took out a procession in the city yesterday protesting the misrule of the BNP-led alliance government.

Agitation for Padma bridge at Daulatdia continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

The Council for Implementation of Padma Bridge at Daulatdia (CIPBD) staged a rally at 'Janatar Padma Setu Mancha' at Daulatdia under Goalanda upazila in Rajbari district yesterday to press home the demand for Padma bridge at Daulatdia-Paturia point.

Nearly 15,000 people including teachers, students, lawyers, businessmen, journalists, physicians and politicians from 14 districts took part in the rally that began at 3:00pm and continued till 7:30pm.

With Ali Newaj Khaiyam MP in the chair, the rally was addressed by Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain MP, Sorhab Hossain MP, Mehedi Ahmed Rumi MP, Nasirul Haque Sabu MP, Abdul Goni MP, Mozammel Haque MP, CIPBD President and ambassador M M Rezaul Karim and Joint Secretary General Mizanur Rahman.

A fresh programme demanding the bridge at Daulatdia-Paturia point was also announced at the rally.

The programme includes processions and public meetings at union and upazila levels from March 17 to March 28 and mass hunger strike in all the 14 district headquarters on March 30.

The speakers warned that they would call indefinite strike from April 1 if their demand is not met by that time.

Sources said the government's recent announcement that the proposed Padma bridge would be constructed at Mawa-Janjira point has prompted the agitation programme.

Elections to 117 pourasabhas May 5-10

BSS, Dhaka

Elections to 117 pourasabhas will be held on May 5-10, the Election Commission (EC) announced here yesterday.

The last date for submission of nomination papers to returning officers is April 11 and withdrawal of nomination papers April 19. The scrutiny of nomination papers will be held on April 12.

The polls will be held in 117 old

and new pourasabhas on May 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10, says an EC press release. Election of other pourasabhas will be held in phases.

The EC has appointed additional district magistrates as returning officers and district election commissioners as assistant returning officers to conduct the election in the pourasabhas of the district headquarters.

Besides, upazila nirbahi officers and upazila election commission-

ers have been appointed returning officers and assistant returning officers respectively to conduct the election to the pourasabhas at upazila level.

The deputy commissioners have been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the elections. The returning officers after consultation with the deputy commissioners concerned will fix the election date locally.



PHOTO: STAR
Eminent lawyer and Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain inaugurates a room for the court reporters at the newly constructed building of Supreme Court Bar Association in the city yesterday.

Workers' Party public meet today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Workers' Party of Bangladesh will hold a public meeting at Paltan Maidan in the city at 2.00pm today.

The meeting is aimed at mobilising support for 'oust government' movement.

Party leaders, including its President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Bimal Biswas, will address the meeting.

They will also announce a series of programmes as part of the party's movement to topple the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

Citibank marks Women's Day

Citibank NA, the banking arm of Citigroup, organised a discussion on its Gulshan Branch premises recently to mark the International Women's Day, says a press release.

Eminent women entrepreneurs and professionals attended the programme and shared their experiences on achievements and struggles against the odds.

Rokia A Rahman, chairman and managing director of Airlinks Limited, was present as special guest.

Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan, Shireen Sheikh Mainuddin, former banker and managing director of Asaan, Dr Humaira Islam, founder executive director of Shakti Foundation, Tazeen Ahmed, principal of Sunny Dale School, and Fahmida Karim, chairperson of Interspeed, also spoke.

Obituary



Sreemoti Shukhda Das, mother of Krishna Nanda Das, chairman of the Victory Travels Limited, died at her residence on Sunday at the age of 81, says a press release.

Officials and employees of the company prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Proper load management can avert power crisis

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proper load management during peak hours can avert power crisis to a greater extent, speakers at a roundtable said yesterday.

The Forum for Energy Reporters, Bangladesh organised the roundtable on 'Present power crisis and government's preparedness' at the Cirdap auditorium.

"Investment is not the only solution," said State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud.

"Eight hundred MW of electricity can be saved if proper load management can be ensured during the peak hours - from 6.00pm to 11.00pm," he said and sought cooperation of

the consumers in this regard.

Frugal use of electricity by the consumers can help avert power crisis, he added.

The state minister said if the shopping centres in the city can be divided into seven zones with the markets of each zone keeping their shutters down on a particular day of the week by turn, 200 to 250 MW electricity can be saved.

Mahmud also suggested keeping the markets close after 7.00pm but Shop Owners' Association President Amir Hossain Khan did not agree with him, saying that evening is the peak hour for sales as the city dwellers usually go for shopping at that time.

The state minister also blamed illegal power connections and excess use of electricity for the power crisis.

He said 99.5 percent of consum-

ers use more electricity than they are entitled to.

He also disclosed long- and short-term schemes to turn the Power Development Board (PDB) into a holding company and set up five power distribution companies in and outside Dhaka.

PDB Chairman S A Mueyed said the PDB could not generate more power to meet the growing demand due to some technical difficulties.

In summer, the daily demand for power jumps to 3600 MW some time, he said.

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority chairperson Brigadier General M A Rab Mozammel Haq MP, Tofazzal Hossain of BGMEA, Javed Iqbal of FICCI, Golam Kibria of Biswa Sahitya Kendra, and journalist Molla Anjad Hossain also spoke.

Journalist Badiul Alam presided.

Duta to make arrangements for sending Azad abroad

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) requested DU Vice-Chancellor Prof. SMA Faiz to collect medical records of prominent writer Humayun Azad for arranging his treatment at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore.

Azad, who was injured seriously in a butcher's knife attack on February 27, has been undergoing treatment at the Combined Military Hospital.

The request came from the Duta executive committee meeting held on Sunday night with its President Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair.

The meeting decided that the Duta would make arrangements for sending the injured writer abroad in consultation with his family.

The Duta leaders also expressed concern over the threat given to Prof. Mesbah Kamal of history department over cell phone.

Condemning the threat, the leaders urged the authorities concerned to identify and punish the culprits.

The association will hold a general meeting on March 18 to discuss the overall situation.

Adab chief granted anticipatory bail

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail for three months to Adab President Kazi Farooq Ahmed and four of his associates in a criminal case.

Syed Mosaddeq Hossain, a sacked employee of Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (Adab), filed the case with Dhammondi police accusing Kazi Farooq and his associates of attacking the demonstrating employees on March 12.

The attack came when the sacked employees tried to place their demands at the annual general meeting of Adab, it was alleged in the case.

The High Court bench also issued rule upon the government to explain why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail.

The petitioners appeared before the bench seeking anticipatory bail to avert arrest.

Dr Kamal Hossain moved the bail petitions.

Maid murder creates sensation in Rajshahi

Housewife, her businessman husband arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Maid Shirin murder case at Rajarhata created a sensation in the city after the housewife gave her confessional statement to first class magistrate yesterday.

Shirin, a 14-year old girl of Bandhan Kharikbhanga village of Niamatpur upazila of Naogaon, was found hanging from the ceiling of a room at the house of businessman Faruk Zamil on Sunday morning. She was working as maid at the house of Faruk.

Her body bore marks of human nail scratches and bites on the face, hands, breasts and lower part of her body.

Shirin was strangled after rape



The Best Western La Vinci Hotel accorded a reception to US Ambassador Harry K Thomas (second from left) at the hotel in the city recently. On his left are Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Italian Ambassador Dr Pietro Ballero and on his right is ATM Saidul Alam, managing director of the hotel.

Ties with India excellent

Bhuiyan tells Veena Sikri

UNB, Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri called on LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at the latter's office yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest in addition to various aspects of rural development and local government organisations of both the countries.

They also underscored the need

for regularly exchanging delegation between the two neighbouring countries.

Termining the existing friendly relations between the two countries as excellent, the LGRD minister hoped that such relations would be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of the two peoples in the days ahead.

Political secretary of Indian High Commission Gaddam Dharmendra was present.

BDRCS warns against abuse of emblem

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) has renewed its warning against the abuse or misuse of the red cross and red crescent emblem.

The warning came at a press conference organised jointly by the BDRCS and International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

"We are taking an initiative to raise the fine for abusing or misusing the emblem to Tk 10,000," said BDRCS Chairman Major General Z A Khan adding that at present a person or an organisation is liable to be fined only Tk 50 for misusing the emblem.

"Drug stores, private clinics, commercial ambulances, pharmaceutical companies and vehicles used by doctors are using the emblem knowingly or unknowingly that they are not authorised to do so," he added.

The BDRCS chairman said the

emblem is largely used by Armed Forces Medical Services and to identify persons, installations or vehicles belonging to Red Cross or Red Crescent societies that enjoy immunity from hostilities under the Geneva Convention.

Tony Marvon, Ofor Nwobodo and Vincent Nicod of the ICRC and BRCS Secretary General AFM Obaidur Rahman and member Khandakar Abdus Salam also spoke on the occasion.

1371 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,371 people, including two listed criminals, during their countrywide drive in last 24 hours ending at 6am yesterday.

During the drive, they also recovered eight firearms and three other weapons and filed six cases against nine people.

Press enjoys full freedom

President says

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed said that newspapers and mass media in the country are now enjoying full freedom.

He said this when a delegation of Narayanganj Press Club made a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday. Narayanganj Press Club President Mahbubur Rahman Masum led the delegation.

The president advised the journalists to play a significant role in regional development alongside depicting real picture of the society.

The delegation underscored the need for building a "Twin

City" comprising the district towns of Narayanganj and Munshiganj.

They drew the president's attention in implementing the programme of establishing an IT village and a medical college and construct a container terminal in Narayanganj.

Balanced development in areas adjacent to Dhaka would help reduce pressure on the capital and play a vital role in national development, he said.

Other members of the delegation were Narayanganj Press Club Vice-President Abu Saud Masud, General Secretary Mostafa Karim and Joint Secretary Maksudur Rahman Kamal.

Premiere show
DRIK organises the premiere show of 'Listen to the Children', a documentary capturing inspiring stories from four South Asian countries- India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh- on ensuring child participation. Venue: Goethe Institut auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.30pm.

Francois Ozon retrospective
Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two films in a retrospective to young French filmmaker Francois Ozon. The films are '8 Femmes' (8 Women) (2002) and 'Swimmingpool' (Swimming Pool) (2003). Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Mirpur Road. Time: 5.00pm and 7.00pm.

Film show
Academy Film Society will screen a German film titled 'Hiroshima Mon Amour' (1959). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Medal award ceremony
Bangladesh Academy of Sciences organises Dr Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury Gold Medal Award Ceremony for outstanding contribution in medical sciences with President Iajuddin Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 11.00am.

Musical evening
Under its 'Save Arsenic Victims Initiatives', NGO Forum organises a musical evening. Noted Indian singer Mousumi Bhowmik will perform at the function. Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh. Time: 6.00pm.

Jubo League meeting
A meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh Awami Jubo League will be held. Venue: 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 11.00am.

Certificate giving ceremony
Bangladesh Skill Development Institute organises a certificate giving ceremony with State Minister for Finance M Anwarul Kabir Talukder as chief guest. Venue: DIT auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 11.00am.

Conference
The second national conference of Bangladesh Society of Allergy and Immunology will be held with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: BCPS auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 9.30am.

Seminar
A seminar on 'Importance and Prospect of Pharmacy Education in Bangladesh' will be held with State Minister for Education A N M Ehsanul Haq Milon as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 6.00pm.

Council session
The council session of the 8th National Congress of Bangladesh Sanjuktta Sramik Federation will be held. Venue: Mohanagar Natya Mancha, Gulistan. Time: 10.00am.

Rotary meeting
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Ramna will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.