

'Wage strong movement for safe river route'

496 launch accidents took place in 26 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called for a strong movement for safe river routes aiming to check launch disasters.

"It has become essential to wage a strong movement to put an end to the anarchy in the shipping sector," said Golam Sarwar, editor of the daily Samakal.

"The shipping minister made a number of promises to check launch accidents last year, but none of these has been implemented as yet," he added.

The Safe River Route Implementation Alliance organised the press conference in the city to mark the launching of a research

book on launch disasters and the 2nd anniversary of the capsizing of MV Nasrin.

"Travelling on waterways has become risky due to corruption and non-professional and profit-first attitude of the launch owners," said Shamsuddin Doha, a member of the alliance, while presenting the research findings.

Most of the vessels, out of about 20,000, have no government registration, he said.

A total of 496 launches capsized in the rivers in the last 26 years and 70 percent of them were built on faulty design, he added.

Also, unskilled master and crew, overloading and violation of rules are major factors responsible for

launch disasters, Doha said.

The Alliance strongly recommended that the government should assign a single agency, instead of several ones, who will approve the vessels' design and monitor the construction work.

It also urged the government to give the authority to the government bodies concerned to confiscate the unfit vessels.

Dr Tofail Ahmed, a professor of Chittagong University, Azizul Haque, former chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Alliance President Syed Nurul Alam and Convenor Aminur Rasul Babul also spoke.

Jail warder killed by husband

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A warder of Khulna District Jail was slaughtered by her husband in her bedroom of jail staff quarters under Khulna Police Station early yesterday.

Tandra Das, 38, was having strained relations with her second husband Samir Das alias Sagor who made several abortive advances towards Chanda Rani Das, 18, Tandra's daughter by her first husband, jail sources said.

Sagor, allegedly linked with an underground party, married Tandra Rani Das two years back after she divorced her first husband.

Tandra Das, who joined Khulna District Jail from Jessore Central Jail two months back, was placed under suspension on June 28 on grounds of negligence in official duties, Jail Super Farhad Mian said.

But a reliable source of the district jail said she was suspended for passing secret letters from criminals to their associates and relatives outside.

Soon after slaughtering Tandra Das, Sagor escaped keeping bedroom doors under lock and key from outside, police said.

Deputy Jailor Shujon Barua lodged a First Information Report (FIR) with the Khulna Police Station yesterday accusing Sagor of the murder.

Security measures have been stepped up in and outside the district jail following the incident.

Jamaat trying to eradicate madrasa edn: Charmonai Pir

BDNEWS, Barisal

Islami Shasantantra Andolan Ameer Charmonai Pir Maulana Syed Fazlul Karim yesterday said that Islamic values would be trampled if Jamaat-e-Islami assumes power again as it has been trying to eradicate madrasa education system in the country.

He was speaking at the divisional Alia Madrasa representatives' conference organised by Barisal District Unit of Islami Chhatra Andolon.

The Charmonai Pir said Jamaat persuaded the government to enact the illegitimate law of mandatory appointment of 30 percent female teachers in every madrasa.

He urged the students of all educational institutions and the concerned people to be united to prevent it. Mohammad Kefayatullah presided.



Covering their faces with black cloths, photojournalists stage a demonstration in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday protesting assault on their colleagues by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) men on Thursday.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Eclampsia major culprit for maternal death

ICDDR'B study says

BSS, Dhaka

Eclampsia is the main cause of maternal death in the country after haemorrhage, an ICDDR'B sponsored study revealed here on Thursday.

Abortion, tetanus, ruptured uterus and obstruction are the other reasons to cause high number of maternal mortality, the study added.

The study conducted over seven districts with support from Belgium government said the essential obstetric care (EOC) and increased number of caesarean cases have reduced maternal deaths in a limited scale, but the social taboo and misconception has still been causing deaths to majority of women in the country.

The eclampsia, a curable disease, is considered in the rural Bangladesh as a sequence of "Alga Batash" or a disease caused from air, said Dr Greet Dieltjens

during her presentation of the study findings at Sasakawa Auditorium of International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR'B).

Executive Director of ICDDR'B Dr David A Sack, Secretary General of Bangladesh Medical Association Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, Professor Latifa Shamsuddin of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), Dr Dulal Poddar of Kumudini Hospital and Head of External Affairs of ICDDR'B Dr Ishiaque Zaman also spoke.

Dr Latifa said about 600,000 women die of eclampsia all over the world with 99 percent in the developing world, including Bangladesh. At least 29 percent of the total maternal deaths are caused from eclampsia in the country, while haemorrhage causes 34 percent.

She, however, said the deaths could be halved with a simple and

affordable solution of magnesium sulfate (MgSO4) drug in a low-income country like Bangladesh. The cost for such treatment would be hardly Tk 100 during pregnancy of a woman, she said. Adding the drug alone could not be able to arrest maternal death. It should be accompanied by the supports like education, awareness and community mobilisation programmes.

A field level NGO worker said the drug might be a solution if it is available at the upazila and union levels at times of need. He said the drug was supposed to be available at public hospitals, but the doctors were reluctant to preserve it.

So, it is necessary to ensure drug availability at all levels and make people aware of the disease and its solution. He also suggested for strengthening of EOC services to arrest maternal and child mortality, one of millennium development goals (MDGs) to be attained by 2015.

BAIRA to train domestic helps for Saudi Arabia

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Following Saudi Arabia's request to increase the professionalism of the immigrant domestic helps, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) will soon open a training centre to equip the future employees with better skill before they leave for the Kingdom.

"We are going to launch orientation programmes for the Saudi-bound domestic helps that will help them fit into the social, cultural and work environment of the Kingdom," Muhammad Mosharrar Hossain MP, President of BAIRA said yesterday.

"Many of our domestic helps sent abroad do not know how to work in the new workplace keeping pace with an unfamiliar society, cultural and work environment," he said. "I think the initiative will obviously help produce quality of domestic helps who can easily fit into Saudi homes and will reduce the complaints from Saudi sponsors," he added.

Waleed Al-Swaidan, chairman of the Saudi Arabian National Recruitment Committee (SANARCOM), is likely to inaugurate the new facility offered to the domestic helps in Dhaka in next month, he said.

The Saudi recruitment bureau has said that it will work on an agreement with BAIRA regarding the conditions of domestic staff in Saudi Arabia, fixing the monthly salary at 500 SR (more than 100 dollars) on a contract of three years.

Currently, Saudi Arabia needs 2 million Bangladeshi domestic helps a year, BAIRA sources said.

"Main objective of the orientation programme is to make them familiar with the social, cultural and work environment and create awareness in this regard," BAIRA president said.

"We have already set up a training centre at Kakrail area in the city and very much hopeful that we can open it by mid-August," he added.

The US-based right group Human Rights Watch has repeatedly denounced Saudi Arabia for abusing its immigrant workers. The international organisation has gathered many first hand accounts of non-payment of wages, lack of communication and harassment.

2 Bangladeshis shot dead by BSF

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead two Bangladeshi youths at Raghunathpur border in Jessore district early yesterday.

The incident occurred at 5.20am near Raghunathpur border outpost near the pillar No. 20.

Benapole BDR company sources quoting Benapole UP chairman Masudur Rahman Milon and other non-government agencies said the two were identified as Abdul Jabbar, 25, son of Nausader Ali of Goira village and Abdul Kader, 26, son of Monu Mia of Narayanpur

Porabari under Benapole up. The Adjutant of the battalion Captain Salahuddin admitted the incident of firing but could not give the identity of the youths.

The Commanding Officer (CO) and the Deputy Commanding Officer of the 25th battalion of Bangladesh Rifles could not be contacted as they were outside Jessore.

The Bongaon police in West Bengal took away the bodies as none claimed those. The BDR have not yet demanded return of the bodies as no Bangladeshi claimed

those. Situation in the border areas is calm and quiet, BDR sources said.

Road accident kills one in Keraniganj

UNB, Keraniganj

An unidentified rickshawpuller was killed and two others were injured when a passenger bus hit a rickshaw at Ramerkanda here yesterday.

The Nawabganj-bound bus from Dhaka knocked the rickshaw at about 11:00am killing its driver, aged about 35, on the spot and injuring two passengers.

Police sent the body to Salimullah Medical College Hospital morgue. Two wounded were admitted to a local clinic.

Workshop on women's studies ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day regional curriculum development workshop of the women's studies concluded at a city hotel yesterday, says a press release.

The Department of Women's Studies of Dhaka University organised the workshop in collaboration with Institute of Social Science (ISS), Netherlands.

The workshop discussed the current course curriculum of the women's studies department. Noted academics and researchers from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, The Netherlands and the USA took part in the workshop.

Dr Najma Chowdhury, founding chairperson of the department, addressed the concluding session.

Runa Laila, convener of the women studies department curriculum development committee, chairperson of the department Prof. Nazmunnessa Mahtab and ISS counterpart Dr. Amrita Chhachhi spoke at the inaugural session of the workshop on Wednesday.



PHOTO: STAR

Paribesh Bachao Andolon (Save Environment Movement) forms a human chain at Shahbagh yesterday demanding an end to waterlogging in the city.

Reclamation of 43 city canals demanded

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Paribesh Bachao Andolon (Save Environment Movement) at a rally in the city yesterday demanded reclamation of some 43 canals of the capital city to eliminate its waterlogging.

The speakers at the rally urged the authorities to recover 6,000 acres of occupied land and other water bodies from the illegal grabbers to save the city from persistent waterlogging problem in future.

Referring to the recent dismal situation of water stagnation in the city after a few days of rains, they warned that Dhaka would be turned into a city of waterlogging in near future if adequate measures were not taken immediately.

The rally was also addressed by former Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Bishaw Sahitya Kendro coordinator Golam Kibria and Dhaka Samity leader Md Nazim Uddin.

Paribesh Bachao Andolon convener Abu Naser Khan presided.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the country till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.8 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:18am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature (Max, Min), Humidity (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Mathematics Olympiad team leaves for Mexico today

UNB, Dhaka

An eight-member team leaves Dhaka for Mexico today to participate in the 46th International Mathematics Olympiad for the first time.

The competition will be held at Merida, Mexico on July 9-19, says a Dhaka University press release.

The Bangladesh team consists of six participants, two of which are girls and four boys, and two officials.

The Bangladesh Olympiad Committee (BMO) has nominated Professor Munibur Rahman Chowdhury of Mathematics Department of Dhaka University as team leader while General Secretary of Bangladesh Olympiad Committee Munir Hasan as deputy leader.

Meanwhile, Prof Chowdhury left Dhaka for Mexico on Thursday to participate in the meetings of the International Jury Board of the 46th International Mathematics Olympiad.

Congratulations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

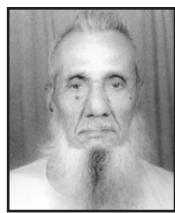


Md Nizam Uddin Khan, a student of Dhaka University, has obtained first class second position in the MSS final examination held in

2004 under the Institute of Social Welfare and Research, says a press release.

He is the eldest son of Shahna Firoz of Gopalganj.

Obituary



Sheikh Abdul Hamid, a social worker of Faridabad, died at the Shamaria Hospital in the city on Friday at the age of 90, says a press release.

His kulkhwani will be held at Faridabad High School after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Curriculum Development Workshop

WS Collaborative Project of Women's Studies University of Dhaka



Dr Zhang Hong of China speaks at a three-day regional curriculum development workshop organised by Department of Women's Studies of Dhaka University. On her right is Dr Amrita Chhachhi of Institute of Social Science, Netherlands and on her left is Women's Studies Department Curriculum Development Committee Convenor Runa Laila.