

ATTACK ON LENS MEN

NOAB demands punishment of NSI men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB) at a meeting on Saturday condemned the attack on the photojournalists by National Security Intelligence (NSI) men and demanded exemplary punishment to the people responsible.

The meeting presided over by NOAB President Mahbubul Alam also discussed the problems of newspaper industry.

NOAB leaders Anwar Hossain Monju, Atiqullah Khan Masud, Mahfuz Anam, AMM Bahauddin, Taslimuddin Chowdhury, M Mozammel Huq, Motiur Rahman Chowdhury, Motiur Rahman and Wahid Malik were present in the meeting.

7 Indians pushed in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Border Security Force (BSF) of India pushed in seven Hindi speaking Muslims into Bangladesh territory at Santahar border point in Naogaon district early Monday night.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources identified the Indians as Akhtar Hossain, Nowshad, Rafik Uddin and his wife Mustari Begum, Nargis and her daughter Meherunnessa and son Islam.

The BDR men picked them up from Sundoreel village and handed over to Khan Jahanpur police camp.

Quoting the detainees, a senior BDR official said they were arrested in Delhi for nothing but their religion.

Delhi police arrested more than 50 Indian Muslims during last few days and handed them over to the BSF for pushing into Bangladesh territory, sources said.

BDR has tightened security on the border.

Bahrain sentences 2 Bangladeshi killers to death

REUTERS, Manama

A Bahraini court sentenced two Bangladeshis to be executed for killing a Bahraini woman as part of a plan to steal her money, handing down death penalties rare in the Gulf state, newspapers reported yesterday.

Jasmine Anwar Hussain, 23, and her boyfriend Mohammed Hilaluddine, 33, were condemned to death by a firing squad, but allowed to appeal against their sentence.

They were convicted of smashing Latifa Abdulla Abdulaziz's skull with a pickaxe then crushing a plank embedded with nails into the side of her head and face.

Hussain was a maid in Abdulaziz's house, where they searched for valuables, but found little.

Newspapers quoted the judge as saying the crime was the worst he had ever seen in the country.

Prayer Timing		
July 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-57	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

LAUNCH DISASTERS

Empty promises take the toll

RAFIQ HASAN

The government has completely failed in fulfilling its promises to improve the shabby condition of the inland water transportation, causing the wholesale death of hundreds of people in a series of launch disasters on the one hand, and protecting the launch owners from any reasonable punitive measures on the other.

More than 6,000 people have

been killed in launch disasters since independence, with half of the death toll in the last five years, thanks to severe lacks of safety, monitoring and improvement in the sector. The official figures, however, are much less, at 3,120 in 261 major launch disasters since 1977. Since February this year alone, launch disasters have killed over 500 people.

Many dead bodies washed away after the launch-capsizes remained

unrecorded, according to sources.

Mohammad Badiuzzaman Badal, vice-chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Passenger Carriers Association (BIWPCA), claims that the reason behind this increase is the government's failure to fulfill any of its commitments for improving the sector.

Against this colossal number of deaths, there is not a single instance of any launch owner having been

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PHOTO: STAR

Leaders of the 1969 mass uprising pose for a group photograph with Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, fifth from left, after they exchanged views with him at his office yesterday.

100 dead or missing in China mine blast

AFP, Beijing

At least 45 miners died and 56 others are missing after three separate accidents in China's beleaguered coal mine industry, state media and a government agency said yesterday.

The bulk of the casualties came when a gas explosion ripped through a mine in China's northwest Xinjiang region, killing at least 41 and leaving 42 unaccounted for, Xinhua new agency said.

A total of 87 people were working in the Shenlong Coal Mine, in Xinjiang's Fukang city, when the

blast hit the shaft at 4:00 am (2000 GMT) Monday.

Only four miners have been found alive.

"At 8:00 am, rescuers entered the mine to find the missing miners. There are 20 rescuers in the shaft right now, but the situation is unclear. We don't know what the situation is like down there," a man surnamed Hu at the mine's office told AFP.

"There are eight to nine ambulances above ground waiting."

The chances of the missing miners surviving appear slim. Survival rates in gas explosions are

generally low due to the short time it takes for gas inhalation to kill a person, especially with high gas density.

As the cause of the blast was under investigation, Xinhua reported separately that three miners died after a coal mine flooded in Yongzhou city in central China's Hunan province on July 4.

Meanwhile, the State Administration for Work Safety also revealed that one miner died and 14 others were feared dead in a

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Team detects illegal polythene bag factories

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The high-powered taskforce of the Ministry of Environment and Forest, and top officials of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) jointly raided a number of industries at Tejgaon in the capital yesterday, and found six of them producing banned polythene shopping bags that cause environmental degradation.

The six industries have bond

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9 Bangladeshi workers hurt in Malaysia flyover collapse

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian authorities said yesterday they were investigating the collapse of a highway flyover which injured nine construction workers and sent tonnes of concrete and steel crashing onto the road below.

Two sections of the partly-constructed flyover collapsed Sunday onto the New Klang Valley Expressway, a major highway leading

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1-hour work stoppage in Khulna today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee (GKDACC) has called one-hour work stoppage from 11:00am to 12:00noon today in Khulna, Bagerhat and Satkhira districts to protest against "non-allocation of fund" in the current national budget for implementation of different development projects.

GKDACC leaders yesterday

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ALAM MURDER CASE Verdict deferred to July 31

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday re-fixed July 31 for the verdict on the killings of Zurain industrialist Mohammad Alam and three domestic help in January 2002.

The judgement in the sensational case was earlier scheduled to be delivered yesterday.

Judge Mohammad Rabiul Hassan of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court issued the order changing the date as scrutiny of the statements of 57

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Dhaka to see severe flooding unless canal filling stopped

Chair of UN's Disaster and Emergency Response Group tells The Daily Star

REAZ AHMAD

The United Nations' group responsible for responding to any disaster and emergency needs in Bangladesh has warned that a severe flooding could hit Dhaka in near future unless the filling up of canals and lagoons is stopped immediately.

"Last week's waterlogging in

Dhaka when catfish swam to the government's citadel (Bangladesh Secretariat) should be a wake-up call for Bangladesh," said Douglas Casson Coutts, chair of the Disaster and Emergency Response (DER) Group in Dhaka.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Douglas said, "Why should an early monsoon rainfall in the month of June or even in early July inun-

date the nation's capital this way?"

Douglas described the waterlogging in Dhaka as an obvious result of filling up of whatever remaining water bodies and construction of illegal structures on water outlets, faulty drainage system and in a nutshell, "bad water management in the city."

Preferring not to comment on

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DU ARABIC QUESTIONS LEAK OUT

Fresh exams not held even after 6 months

DU CORRESPONDENT

The MA final examinations of the 2002 session of the Arabic Department of Dhaka University (DU), which were cancelled due to question papers leakage, are yet to be held even after six months rolled by, making the students extremely worried and frustrated.

The outgoing MA students sat for

their last examination on January 15. But following newspaper reports on January 14, the authorities went to the exam hall and found, as reported in the newspapers, that the leaked question paper was ditto to the one on which the exam was going on. The authorities immediately cancelled the examination.

A four-member probe committee headed by Arts Faculty Dean Prof

Sadrul Amin was formed following the leakage incident. The committee confirmed leakage of the question papers in its report submitted to the VC on April 16 holding teachers related to the examination committee responsible for it. A Syndicate meeting on May 3 chaired by the DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Fiaz then cancelled all seven examinations of

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