



PHOTO: STAR

A truck crashes into a road median at Mugdapara in the city yesterday after its driver lost control over the steering due to reckless driving.

SAARC SUMMIT

Hawkers to be evicted from footpaths after Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hawkers will be evicted from the footpaths of main thoroughfares in the capital and vagrants and beggars forced into shelter homes after the Eid-ul-Fitr and ahead of the forthcoming Saarc summit scheduled for November 12 and 13.

Besides, the work for beautification of road medians and repair of footpaths will be completed by October 25.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) took the decisions at a meeting yesterday with a view to keeping Dhaka city clean and ensuring uninterrupted utility services for the foreign guests during the Saarc conference.

The meeting also decided that all unauthorised billboards would be dismantled.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka presided over the meeting attended by the representatives of utility service providers and the organisations concerned.

"We are trying to maintain cleanliness of the city as far as possible to present a clean Dhaka to the foreign guests," said the mayor.

Representatives of the utility service providers will make the rounds of the thoroughfares on October 25 to monitor the beautification work.

Additional Secretary of the foreign ministry Moniruzzaman, Rajuk Chairman Shaheed Alam, Managing Director of Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority Dr Kazi Ali Azam and DCC Chief Executive Officer M Saifuddin Ahmed attended the meeting.

Officials of the Titas Gas, Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority were also present.



Arsenault takes over as Unicef Representative

UNB, Dhaka

Louis-Georges Arsenault, a Canadian national, took over charge yesterday as new Unicef Representative in Bangladesh.

Prior to his arrival here, Arsenault was the Deputy Director, Programme Division in Unicef New York where he provided leadership in the organisation's efforts in developing a new Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2006-2009), according to a Unicef release.

Arsenault joined Unicef in Mali in 1995.

US Embassy closed Sunday

UNB, Dhaka

The American Embassy offices, including its public affairs section, American centre library, and student counselling service, will remain closed on Sunday on the occasion of the Columbus Day, an American national holiday, says a US Embassy release.

Jinnah House in Mumbai to be made Saarc cultural centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has decided to convert the residence of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, in Mumbai into a Saarc cultural centre and clarified that it would not be handed over to Pakistan.

"It has been assured to Pakistan that the current design and structure of the Jinnah House would not be changed, but it would be renovated according to its current design," visiting Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh told newsmen in Islamabad on Tuesday.

Earlier, Pakistan had asked India to hand over the Victorian house to it so that it could be converted into Pakistan consulate.

According to press reports in India and Pakistan, Natwar Singh said the Jinnah House is being renovated, but no structural changes were being made in the building considering the sentiments of Pakistani people.

Asked whether the decision meant all doors were closed for Pakistan to acquire it, Natwar Singh said, "In diplomacy, you never close all doors."

The Rs. 65 crore mansion is a centre of claims by the Indian and Pakistani governments, apart from Jinnah's New York-based daughter Dina Wadia and grandson Nusli Wadia, an industrialist.

The issue has repeatedly been raised by Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Foreign Minister Khurshid M Kasuri with the Indian leadership in the last two years.

Built by Jinnah in 1936 on his return from England to take charge of the Muslim League, the Victorian house with rich interiors and marble flooring, wood panelling and exquisite furniture and the surrounding gardens are perfect for a cultural centre.

Jinnah had left the house to his sister Fatima Jinnah, who remained the legal owner of the house until 1985, when the Maharashtra government claimed it as 'evacuee property'.

With regard to a place for Pakistan consulate in Mumbai, which is expected to reopen in January, the Pakistan High Commission has identified a property to be taken on rent.

According to Mumbai-based web agency Cybernoon, this was a long-

standing proposal that has finally seen the light of day -- the conversion of the Jinnah House at Malabar Hill into a cultural centre.

Hidden in the thick foliage of green trees, the house now remains under tight security. The locked gate now had a placard that reads 'Proposed site of Saarc Sub-Regional Cultural Centre'.

Earlier in the '90s, there was a proposal that the Jinnah's house be converted into the ICCR's (Indian Centre for Cultural Relations) Cultural Centre.

In 1991, during the Indo-Pak summit, the Jinnah House was also claimed by Dina Wadia, who strongly opposed the Pakistan government's proposal to hand over the house to Pakistan for converting it into the Pakistan consulate.

When Jinnah left India after its partition, he left behind this property and asked for similar property in Pakistan. So, he was given the Mota House, a palatial building at Clifton, which, visitors say, was bigger and more beautiful.

3 murdered in two days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were stabbed to death in the small hours of yesterday while another was murdered on Wednesday night in and around the city.

Police recovered the body of Nure Alam, 24, from the bathroom of a dormitory at Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture Training Institute in Tejaogaon.

Marks of several deep cuts were found all over the body.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Alam's brother-in-law Hafizur Rahman told the journalists that Alam used to sell lottery tickets and live along with his elder brother Pappu at Taltola in Agargaon. He did not return home Wednesday night.

Tejaogaon police said the victim's father worked at the training institute and Alam used to go there off and on.

Police are yet to make any arrest in

this connection.

The body of an unidentified youth, aged around 20, was recovered by police in the early hours of yesterday from near Bhagalpur bridge in Savar.

More than 20 stab marks were found all over the body, and tendons of hands and legs were found severed.

In another incident, a youth named Rana, was shot and stabbed to death at around 10:00pm on Wednesday at Doyaganj.

Locals said Rana had been involved in criminal activities.

Meanwhile Haji Golam Mostofa, manager of Masud Iron Store at North South Road, succumbed to his injuries at a clinic in Dhanmondi on Wednesday evening.

Mostofa was on his way home from his workplace on September 29 when a gang of muggers intercepted him at Bangshal at around 8:30pm.

They shot him when he refused to part with Tk 2 lakh he was carrying with him.

Damaged aircraft to be turned into restaurant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

The body of the F-28 craft of Bangladesh Biman, that suffered a serious accident at the Osmani International Airport in Sylhet last year, will be transported to Dhakasoon.

A private firm named Western Grill had bought it from Biman at a cost of Tk 11 lakh in July this year through tender.

The authorities of Western Grill, a popular restaurant in Dhaka, will turn the aircraft into a restaurant and set it up at the Gulshan Avenue in Dhaka, said an official of the firm at a press conference in Sylhet Press Club yesterday afternoon.

It will be the first aircraft shaped restaurant in Asia and an attractive tourist spot in the capital, said the official.

They will start separating the aircraft body into pieces from today, he added.

On October 8 in 2004, the craft with 82 passengers on board skidded off into a narrow canal, about 300 feet off the runway. 40 passengers sustained injuries in the accident. The accident badly damaged the cockpit and some other parts of the craft while both the engines and some other valuable parts remained in good condition. Biman authorities took out all the valuable parts of the aircraft and sold the body to the private firm.

Road blockade on Jessore-Benapole highway

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Transport workers blocked the Jessore-Benapole highway after a bus driver was assaulted by the miscreants at Gadhkhal of Jhikargachha upazila in Jessore yesterday morning.

The miscreants beat up bus driver Ali Mia, 35, of Jhikargachha as he filed a case against them. When the transport workers knew that their fellow worker was assaulted, they blocked the road at around 3:00pm and blockade was continuing till filing of this report at 5:30pm.

KILLING OF BOGRA BUSINESSMAN

Wife cries for justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wife of a slain businessman of Bogra yesterday demanded of the government to immediately arrest and punish the murderers of her husband.

Hosne Ara Begum Seema, wife of Nurul Islam Thandu, a reputed business of Bogra, who was killed by some miscreants on September 12, made the demands at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city.

Seema said she filed a murder case with Bogra sadar police station accusing eight persons, including her husband's family members, on September 14, but police has not been able to capture anyone yet.

She alleged that her husband was killed for dispute over property with his family members and the perpetrators are giving her death threat to withdraw the murder case.

She also said she is now passing a miserable life with her two daughters and one son.

Create posts for graduate physiotherapists in govt hospitals

BPSU urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Physiotherapy Students' Union (BPSU) yesterday demanded of the government to create post for graduate physiotherapists and diploma physiotherapists in all government hospitals including thana health complexes.

It also demanded establishment of College of Physiotherapy like medical colleges in the country.

Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club in the city, BPSU leaders also demanded introduction of postgraduate course for them.

They said Bangladesh Cricket Board spends a lot of money for foreign physiotherapists. This money could be saved if post graduate physiotherapists are produced here.

BPSU Convenor Md Kamruzzaman read out a written statement at the press conference.

Eminent journalist ABM Musa, Ex-coordinator of NITOR Prof MN Alam, Course Coordinator of Bangladesh Health Professional Institute, Savar Abdur Rahman of Peoples' University, Dr Shamsul Arefin of State University and Sohrab Hossain of CRP also spoke at the press conference.

CPB demands permanent solution to monga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) demanded assistance for monga (a famine like situation) affected people and creation of alternative employment opportunities to permanently address the problem at a meeting in the city yesterday.

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim urged the followers to make their street sit-in programme a success to be staged on October 16 across the country with a slogan 'prevent monga, reduce price, save life'.

He also demanded punishment to those who are involved in corruption with relief and VGF.

Central leaders of CPB addressed the meeting held at the Party's Central Office in the city.

Case against Sphulinga editor, publisher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Kotwali police station yesterday lodged a case against Mia Abdus Sattar, publisher and chief editor of Daily Sphulinga. Apu, editor of the Daily and Abdull Kuddus, owner of Mollah Press, for publishing the newspaper even after the cancellation of its declaration.

Police said Magistrate Mina Shamsuzzaman raided Mollah Press at Sheikhhathi and seized 6 plates of the Daily.

The declaration of Daily Sphulinga, a regional daily, was cancelled on September 22.

The case was filed under sections 32 and 33 of the Printing and Publication Act 1973.

3 sanctuaries to conserve pure carp species

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to establish sanctuaries at Halda river in Chittagong, Chalan Beel in Pabna and Sundarbans to conserve carp species of pure genetic quality.

This was stated by Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman while speaking at a press conference yesterday on the occasion of signing a contract between World Fish Centre (WFC) and Bangladesh Shrimp and Fish Foundation (BSFF) to conduct a study on the fish resources of Halda.

As part of the plan, BSFF will conduct the study aimed at identifying the factors affecting genetic purity of fish stocks and causes of declining brood fish and spawn in Halda river.

WFC will give financial and technical assistance for the study. The study, which is set to begin by

October 15 and complete by December 17, will recommend a short-term remedial measures to prevent further decline of brood stocks and develop a project proposal for long-term sustainable recovery of fisheries to a maximum level of genetic purity.

The collection of carp spawn came down to only 100 kilograms in 2005 from 4,000 kilograms in 1946.

Dumping of chemical materials from Kaptai Paper Mills, plying of motorised boats, silt deposition and over fishing resulted in the decline of brood stock, said Abdullah Al Noman.

"If this trend continues, the country will suffer immensely from the lack of carp fish that meets 43 percent of fish demand in the country," said BSFF Executive Director Dr Mahmudul Karim.

He said the profitability of carp

culture has been steadily decreasing as most of the hatcheries have been using genetically degraded low quality brood stocks that produce low quality fry.

The Halda river is a major shelter for the local carps of genetic quality as well as fresh water shrimp (Galda), he added.

"If the tradition of Halda river is recovered and conserved, it could be declared as the part of World Heritage," said BSFF Chairman Mahmudul Haque.

If Halda is declared a sanctuary and projects undertaken in this regard, the fishermen nearby the river will be rehabilitated through alternative livelihoods, the minister assured.

Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Abdul Karim, WFC Regional Director Alan Brooks, Prof Mohammad Ali Azadi and Prof Sekendar Khan of Chittagong University also spoke.

'Amend laws to eliminate hazardous child labour'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable called on the government to take immediate steps to eliminate all forms of hazardous child labour in the country.

The government should amend all relevant laws, which permit children to engage in hazardous labour, said Prof Mizanur Rahman of Dhaka University.

The roundtable titled 'Reaching out to working children: Need for an

effective national child labour policy' was held at the LGED Bhaban at Agargaon in the city recently on the occasion of Child Rights Week-2005.

Speaking as the chief guest, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said the prevailing socio-economic condition is forcing children to work under low wages and in a hazardous condition.

Reducing poverty at the grass-roots level through accelerating economic growth is a must to address

the child labour issue, he added.

Safiqul Islam, secretary of the labour ministry, said the government has prepared a draft of child labour law in 2002, but it is not yet finalised.

"We are trying our best to give it a complete shape," he added.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, presided over the roundtable.

Olaf Ridgeburg, country manager of the Save the Children, Sweden-Denmark, was also present.



PHOTO: STAR

The Green Voice forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday with a call to protect the country from the grip of multinational companies.

Cancel coal extraction deal with Asian Energy

Speakers ask govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday asked the government to cancel the contract signed with Asian Energy Corporation to extract coal under an open pit mining system from Phulbaria upazila in Dinajpur.

They also demanded trial of the minister, parliament members and bureaucrats involved in the treaty that

goes against the interest of the country.

The rally was organised by Green Voice, an organisation of young environmentalist, at Shahbagh in the city.

Green Voice has been working with the youths of different educational institutions in Dhaka to protect the environment.

It also placed its five-point

demand at the rally.

The speakers said as per the contract Asian Energy would receive 94 percent of total extracted coal valued Tk 1,44,000 crore. On the other hand Bangladesh would get only 6 percent worth about Tk 9,000 crore.

Besides, around six lakh people including 50 thousands indigenous people of nearby areas would be evicted from their homesteads because of this open pit mining system, they added.

The speakers said a vast area would remain barren and the ecology of the region would be destroyed for long 130 years.

They said the decision on how to extract coal should be taken by a national organisation, and not by any multi-national companies.

The speakers demanded utilisation of natural resource for the welfare of the people and no conspiracy would be tolerated.

All terms and conditions of the contracts should be made public, they added.

Ruhin Hossain Prince of Bangladesh Communist Party, Mihir Biswas of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Convenor of Oil, Gas Protection Movement Committee Mohammad Shahidullah, Architect Abdullah Khalid and freedom fighter Shahjahan Mridha were present at the rally.

WEATHER TODAY. Light to moderate rain likely. UNB, Dhaka. Table with temperature and humidity data for various cities.