

Two more Tejgaon factory fire victims die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two more workers, who suffered burn injuries in a devastating fire at a factory in Tejgaon on January 20, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) raising the death toll to four.

Khandaker Milon Hossain, 30, died at 1:30pm yesterday and M Sayeed Hossain, 32 died on Sunday at DMCH.

The other two Noor Alam, and Babul, both 30, machine operators of label-making factory SRA Label Industry in Tejgaon, died on January 24 and 25 respectively.

'28 killed by law enforcers in Jan'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The law enforcement agencies killed 28 people in the country during January last while 17 of them were killed in crossfire, said a human rights organisation yesterday.

Odhikar, in its report based on the news published in 12 national dailies, said a total of seven people were killed by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) while 21 by the police.

Two died in police custody and five in jail during this period, the report added.

Some 20 people were killed, 878 injured and 64 others arrested in political clashes.

In Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), one was abducted and four others were arrested in human rights violation issues.

During the period, eight journalists were wounded and 14 others received death threat. Besides, one was arrested, one assaulted and three were attacked. Cases were filed against three journalists.

Odhikar also reported that a total of 61 women including 22 children fell victim of rape and of them 15 were killed after being raped.

At the same time, 14 people including four children received acid burns and 25 fell victims of dowry.

A total of 74 children were tortured in different ways during the period, the report concluded.

Hasina's security vehicles are too old

Govt urged to provide 2 fast moving vehicles UNB, Dhaka

The police security vehicles provided for the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina are too old and unable to closely follow her motorcade while travelling on the highways outside the capital.

In a letter to the State Minister for Home Affairs, Opposition Leader's Assistance Private Secretary (APS) Alauddin Ahmed Chowdhury requested for two fast moving vehicles on urgent basis replacing the two existing slow moving ones.

The two existing police security vehicles are too old, the letter said, adding that the escort vehicles get isolated for failure to keep pace with the motorcade of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

As a result, there is always a fear of hampering security for the Leader of the Opposition, which is not at all desirable, added the letter, a copy of which was made available to the agency yesterday.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain and other opposition leaders at the 14-party Divisional Grand Rally in Sylhet yesterday.

Bhuiyan protests media reports on BNP nomination

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday protested against the media reports regarding nomination of party candidates and urged people not to be confused by such 'misleading propaganda'.

In a statement, Bhuiyan said a section of the press has been providing misleading and speculative information about the nomination of BNP candidates in the next general elections.

"Even some of the newspapers have been publishing the names of the candidates in such a way that it seems the nomination is under the control of those media," Bhuiyan, also the LGRD and Cooperatives minister said, adding "It's completely unbecoming."

In reality, Bhuiyan said, these reports are baseless. He said none but the Parliamentary Board comprising BNP standing committee members have the supreme authority to nominate candidates after interviewing a number of qualified candidates from each constituency.

So it is impossible to guess the final nomination of any candidate before selection by the parliamentary board, Bhuiyan said, adding those who have been publishing speculative news are destined to mislead the general people.

He also urged the media to refrain from publishing such speculative news.

Hajj formalities to be completed 3 months before annual Hajj

BSS, Dhaka

An inter-ministerial meeting yesterday decided to complete all Hajj formalities three months before the annual Hajj to avoid harassment to the pilgrims and transportation hassles.

It was also decided at the meeting that the Bangladesh Biman authorities would fix the same fare for both balottee and non-balottee pilgrims, an official handout said.

The decision was taken after reviewing the faults found in carrying out the formalities of the recent Hajj. State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharef Hossain Shajahan chaired the meeting, held at the ministry's conference room.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, Chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Religious Affairs Moulana Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, Religious affairs secretary Ataur Rahman, Secretary of the Civil Aviation Tourism Ministry Zafarullah Khan, former Religious Affairs Secretary Rafiqul Islam and Director General of Islamic Foundation Fazlur Rahman, among others, attended the meeting.

The participants in the meeting recommended that the Ministry of Religious Affairs would fix the number of Hajees every year and also stern measures against harassment of pilgrims by the concerned Hajj agencies.

They also stressed the need for undertaking strong measures against those, who have been issuing fake health certificates for the physically and mentally unfit persons to perform Hajj.

According to their suggestions, such fake health certificate issuing authorities and the concerned Hajj agencies must be dealt with an iron hand, the handout said.

The meeting also underscored the need for formulating a long-term Hajj Policy by March next, it added.

American Centre cancels concert

UNB, Dhaka

The American Centre regretted to announce that the "Rhythmic Prophecies" Jazz Ambassadors concert scheduled for February 5 at Shilpakala Academy has been cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances.

VIOLATION OF WILDLIFE PRESERVATION ACT Cricketer Durjoy, Bashundhara Vice-chairman Shafayet fined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Cricket star Naimur Rahman Durjoy and Vice-chairman of Bashundhara Group of Industries Shafayet Sobhan were fined Tk 30,000 on Tuesday for entering the Sundarbans with firearms in violation of the Wildlife Preservation Act.

The MV Royal Gandela, a launch of a tour operator which carried them to the forest on January 29, was also fined Tk 12,000.

Acting on a tip-off, Assistant Conservator of Forests Md Sajjad Hossain, who is in charge of Swarnkhola Range, rushed to Dublar Char on January 30 and recovered a 22 bore rifle, a pistol, a nine shooter and 80 rounds of ammunition from the launch.

Owner of MV Royal Gandela Md Faruque Hossain was also with Durjoy and Shafayet at that time. They were brought to Bagerhat Divisional Forest Office on Tuesday evening and a case was filed against them under the Wildlife Protection Act.

Divisional Forest Officer Md Mizanur Rahman said they have entered the forest with firearms without any permission. But they were carrying licensed firearms, he added.

They were allowed to leave the forest office at 8:30pm after payment of the fines.

HC showcause on construction of CNG station at Batali Hill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A High Court (HC) bench yesterday served a show cause notice against the construction of a CNG station at the port city's picturesque Batali Hill Railway Estate in violation of Chittagong Metropolitan Master Plan and Open Space Conservation Act, 2000.

The notice asked the authorities concerned to show cause within next three weeks as to why the permission for the construction would not be declared as "unlawful" and why the structure under construction won't be removed.

The bench comprising Justice Md Abdul Matin and Justice ATM Fazle Kabir served the notice on director generals of Bangladesh Railway and Department of Environment, Chairman of Chittagong Development Authority, secretaries to the ministries of communication, environment and forest, and housing and public works, and Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation.

The bench issued the notice in connection with a case filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) against the construction of Messers Rainbow CNG Station destroying the conserved natural site of Batali Hill.

The court fixed March 7 as the final date of hearing.

World Wetlands Day today

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh, endowed with rich wetland resources, will observe World Wetlands Day today.

Different organisations will hold discussions, organise rallies and art competitions marking the day.

World Water Forum of Journalists (WWFJ) in collaboration with Forum of Environmental Journalists Bangladesh (FEJB) will hold a seminar titled "Wetlands for Poverty Alleviation: Role of the Media" at FEJB conference room in the city at 12:00 noon today.

Water experts and journalists will participate in the seminar. The Nature and Conservation Society will also hold a rally at 9:30 am in front of the Ramna Park marking the day.



Activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the opposition Awami League, covering their faces with black ribbon, stage a demonstration on the Dhaka University Campus yesterday protesting the visit of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to the campus for the inauguration of the Ekushey Book Fair.

AMAR EKUSHEY BOOK FAIR Pro-opposition students protest PM's visit, JCD welcomes

DU CORRESPONDENT

Different pro-opposition student organisations yesterday staged demonstrations on the Dhaka University (DU) campus protesting the prime minister's visit to inaugurate the month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair, while the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the BNP, welcomed her on the Bangla Academy premises.

Several thousands of JCD leaders and activists stood by both sides of the Bangla Academy road to welcome the prime minister, also the BNP chairperson. They also chanted slogans for the prime minister.

JCD President Azizul Bari Helal, General Secretary Shafiq Bari Babu, Sultan Salauddin Tuku, Abdul Kader Bhuiyan Jewel, Amirul Islam Khan Alim, Asaduzzaman Asad, DU unit President Hasan Mamun, General Secretary Saiful Islam Firoz, Mamunur Rashid, Obaidul Haque Nasir and Akramul Hasan along with different college unit and Dhaka City unit leaders receive the prime minister.

Earlier in the morning JCD activists gathered at the Madhu's Canteen on the campus and brought out a procession that paraded the campus.

On the other hand, main opposition Awami League's (AL) student body Bangladesh Chhatra

League (BCL) and its six left leaning ally student organisations including Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed BCL, Jatiya Chhatra Dhara and Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri staged demonstrations at the Dhaka University Library Gate covering their faces with black scarves and showing black flags.

Later, police intercepted a BCL procession at the main gate of the DU Central Library while they tried to march towards the Bangla Academy. The BCL held a brief rally there.

Addressing the rally, BCL General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu said the spirit of the historic language movement would be dishonoured with the inauguration of the Ekushey Book Fair by Khaleda Zia whose cabinet includes those who opposed the country's independence in 1971.

BCL President Liaqat Sikder said the prime minister has no right to inaugurate the great book fair, as her cabinet consists of communal forces.

Senior leaders of the students' combine including Marufa Akther Popy, Rafiqul Islam Kotawal, Baloram Podder, Saifuzzaman Shekhar, Zakir Hossain Maruf, Khan Moinul Islam Mostak, Delwar Hossain, Hemayet Uddin Khan Himu, Gaffer Dewan Razib and Imran Hossain attended the demonstration among others, where Shariful Kabir Swapan, Ali

Hasan Tarun, Mustak Ahmed, Jewel Ahmed Khan also spoke.

Progotishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ), a combine of six other left leaning student organisations including Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Biplobi Chhatra Moitri also staged demonstration on the campus protesting the prime minister's book fair inauguration.

The PCJ brought out a procession and held a rally in front of Dhaka University Central Student's Union (Ducsu) Office. PCJ leaders Khalequzzaman Lipon, Baki Billah, Mosharrif Hossain and Abu Naser Anik addressed the rally.

Additional police and members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were deployed around the campus to avert any untoward incidents.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Photo Journalists' Association in a statement said many of the senior photojournalists were not allowed inside the Bangla Academy to cover the book fair inauguration on the excuse of security concern.

Condemning the incident, the statement also demanded immediate investigation into the incident, punishment to the people responsible and government announcement of giving back the right to carry out professional duties.



Bangladeshi student dies in Sydney road accident

Zahid Reza Khan (Ranon), a Bangladeshi student, died in a road accident in Sydney, Australia, on Tuesday, says a press release.

Zahid son of Brig. Gen. (Retd.) Abdir Reza Khan, was studying at the New South Wales University in Sydney.

He was a former student of Mirzapur Cadet College with exceptional academic achievement.

He left behind his parents, one sister and a host of friends and relatives.

His body is expected to be flown to Dhaka on Friday.

Keraniganj Jubo League leader stabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A union parishad (UP) member, who is also a Jubo League leader, was stabbed allegedly by the men of the UP chairman, also a leader of the ruling BNP, at Keraniganj on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

Anwar Hossain, 50, ward member of Rohitpur UP, and Jubo League president of the UP unit, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition.

The injured, son of Shah Ali of Sonakanda village, alleged that some 15 to 20 terrorists led by Chairman Kamaluddin and his nephews Zia and Al Amin stabbed him indiscriminately near the local bus stand at about 8:00am.

Anwar said the attack was carried out to foil the Ruhitpur Union AL conference scheduled for tomorrow.

Mangal Mia, brother of the victim, alleged that he went to Keraniganj Police Station to file a case but the officer-in-charge did not take the case, instead he sent police to arrest Anwar and his family members.

Refuting the allegation, Kamal, however, charged that Anwar and his associates attacked his nephew Al Amin who was under treatment at the local upazila health complex.

Police said one Marfat Ali has filed a case against Anwar, Ataur and unidentified eight others as they stabbed Al Amin failing to extract Tk 20,000 in toll from him.



Teachers of community primary schools continue their fast unto death for the second day yesterday at Mukhtangan in the city demanding nationalisation of their jobs.



Pro-govt panel sweeps BOUTA election

Ruling BNP-backed BOU Nationalist Teacher's Forum won the Bangladesh Open University Teacher's Association (BOUTA) election on January 30, says a press release.

Dr Md Mayenul Islam and Md Chenggish Khan were elected president and general secretary.

Other office-bearers are: Vice-President: Dr Md Arshed Ali Matubber, Treasurer: Salma Karim, Joint Secretary: Mohammad Zahir Raihan and Cultural Secretary: Md Mamunur Rashid.

Executive committee members are: Prof Dr M Ekramul Hoque, Prof Khaja Zakaria Ahmed Chisty, Dr Md Amir Hossain Sarker, Shahid Ahmed Chowdhury, Muhammad Abdur Rahim, Dr Md Shah Alam Sarker, Dr Khondaker Bulbul Sarwar, Md Sirajul Islam and Sakiba Ferdowsi.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather is likely to prevail over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged night temperature.

Highest temperature 31.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 10.6 degrees at Srirongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:45pm today and rises at 6:39am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
DDhaka	29.3	15.4	68	60
Chittagong	30.6	16.0	68	55
Rajshahi	29.0	13.4	89	69
Khulna	29.3	14.7	82	63
Barisal	28.6	14.0	92	85
Sylhet	31.5	16.3	61	44
Cox's Bazar	30.4	15.3	65	--



BRTC takes out a procession in the city yesterday marking its 45th founding anniversary.

PHOTO: STAR