

Country experiences 1100mw power shortage

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The country experienced about 1100mw of electricity shortage in peak hours yesterday although it was the weekly holiday when electricity consumption usually goes down.

According to Power Development Board (PDB) sources, electricity demand across the country was 4,000mw but all power plants generated around 2900mw.

Although the Haripur 360 MV power station came to production on Thursday after experiencing suspension three times over last 15 days, the 450 MW Meghnaghat generated half of its total capacity due to the suspension of its gas turbine-2 from Friday night.

The PDB yesterday supplied around 940mw electricity against the demand of 1500mw in the capital city.

When contacted, a high official of PDB informed that at least 12 units of some power plants remained suspended till Friday forcing them to resort to load-shedding across the country.

PDB sources said, the unit-5 (150mw) of Ashuganj plant, unit-1 (55mw) and unit-4 (210mw) of Ghorasal plant, unit-1 (125mw) of Barapukuria plant, 60mw Khulna plant, 80mw Tongi plant, 100mw Baghabari plant, three units (100mw capacity) of PDB-operated Haripur plant, two units (70mw-capacity) of Sahjibazar plant and three units (140mw-capacity) of Kaptai hydraulic power plant were out of production due to technical glitches or for undergoing overhauling.

Meanwhile, as the grid-line of Ulan-Dhanmondi remained closed the whole area under the grid is experiencing 4-5 hours power outage over last one week.

One killed as villagers clash over Jatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

One person was killed and 20 others injured in a clash between the inhabitants of several villages of Sylhet Sadar upazila.

The deceased was identified as Khalilur Rahman Muson, 52, a freedom fighter hailing from village Umairgaon Pashchimpara.

Among the injured, one with critical wounds was admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

It is learned that Khalil, along with other leading people including UP member Abdul Jabbar, organised a Jatragan at Umairgaon on Wednesday night. The organisers had an exchange of hot words among themselves over sharing the proceeds of the event on Thursday.

Afterwards, when Jabbar was going through Pashchimpara yesterday morning, supporters of Khalil attacked him.

As the news spread that Jabbar was beaten up, several hundred villagers from Jangali Foud, Purbopara and Majhpara swooped on the villagers of Pashchimpara with lethal weapons. The two-hour clash left Khalil dead and 20 others injured.

Police force was deployed in the villages to avoid further clash.

Sec 144 imposed in Kalapara to avoid clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Kalapara upazila administration under Pataukhali district imposed section 144 in a meeting place and its surrounding areas after both the ruling and opposition parties had called meetings there at the same date and time on Friday afternoon.

Mahbubur Rahaman Talukdar, local lawmaker of Awami League and central vice president of Awami Swechcha Sebok League condemning the imposition of section 144 and programme of Jubo Dal, said Kalapara municipal Sewchchha Sebok League called a pre-scheduled programme at Badurtha sluice gate area to be held on Friday afternoon.

But on Thursday local Jubo Dal suddenly announced a programme at the same place and time, he added.

On the other hand, Akkas Ali and Harunur Rashid, president and secretary of Kalapara upazila Jubo Dal, alleged that despite knowing about a pre-scheduled programme of Jobo Dal, the opposition party on Thursday announced their programme at the same place and time.

Abdul Bari, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalapara, said section 144 was imposed from 2:00pm Friday noon to Saturday early hours to keep law and order situation under control.



PHOTO: STAR

Sammitila Nari Samaj takes out a procession at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding resignation of Eden College Principal and an end to 'seat trade' at the dormitories of the college.

'Fanaticism poses threat to women's security'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women in the country have been facing hindrances in all walks of life and their security has been threatened with the rise of fundamentalism, said the speakers at a conference yesterday.

They stressed the need for incorporating education with the lives of women to face global challenges efficiently.

The two-day conference titled 'Women in Contemporary Bangladesh: New Challenges' has been organised by women studies department of Dhaka University at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University SMA Faiz attended the inaugural session of the conference

as chief guest.

He hoped that the conference would play a significant role in identifying the present position of women in the country and their future challenges.

Chairman of University Grants Commission Dr M Asaduzzaman was present at the session as guest of honour while Dean of Social Science Faculty Prof Dr Harun-Or-Rashid and Director of International Information Centre and Archive for Women's Movement Dr Saskia E Wieringa as special guests.

Prof Nazma Chowdhury delivered the welcome speech at the inaugural session presided over by department Chairperson Dr Nazmunnessa Mahtab.

Litterateur Selina Hossain presented a keynote paper on

'Women's life and Women Studies: Reflection and Incorporation' at the first session.

Ayesha Khanam of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad presented a keynote paper titled 'Causes of Women's Repression: Bangladesh Perspective and Recommendations for their removal' at the second session.

Prof Dr Sadeka Halim of Sociology department presented a paper titled 'Women's Struggle for Rights: Justice Denied' at the same session highlighting the discriminations faced by women garment workers.

More papers are expected to be presented on the concluding day of the conference today.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor SMA Faiz speaks at seminar on 'Women in Contemporary Bangladesh: New Challenges' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday.

Rab recovers one kg heroin, two kg cocaine, five held

STAR REPORT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered one kilogram of heroine worth Tk one core in Barisal and two kilograms of cocaine worth about Tk 30 lakh in Chittagong on Thursday and arrested five people in this connection.

Our Correspondent in Barisal reports: the Rab recovered one kilogram of heroine from a flat in the city and arrested two persons.

The arrestees were identified as Khalid Khan Moon, 28, son of Majid Khan, and Sheikh Sabir Hossain, son of Sheikh Kabiruddin.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab led by Captain Shahriar Morshed and Deputy Assistant Director Mizan Ali raided an apartment 'Ulania Lodge' at Mallikbari Road on Thursday noon and recovered the

heroin packed in a black and brown leather box, said a Rab official yesterday.

'Made in Afghanistan: Congekal Drug' and 'A Product Of Old Bond Street # Golden Tragol' were written on the packet.

The Rab official suspects that this heroin might have been smuggled from Afghanistan and international drug smugglers are involved in the smuggling.

The contraband item and the arrestees were handed over to Barisal Kotwali Police Station and a case has been lodged in this connection.

BDNEWS adds: A team of Rab seized two kilograms of cocaine worth about Tk 30 lakh and arrested three alleged drug peddlers from Jowara under Chandanaish upazila in Chittagong on Thursday night.

Acting on a tip-off, the Rab members raided a house at south Jowara Barua para and picked up three persons.

The Rab team found that two of the arrestees were carrying one kg of cocaine made in Thailand and another kg of the drug made in Pakistan strapped to their bodies.

During preliminary interrogation, the arrestees Farid Ahmed, Enamul Haq and Amal Barua confessed that they have bought the cocaine from a drug syndicate in Dhaka.

A well-organised syndicate buys cocaine from Dhaka and sell those in Chittagong and Chittagong hill tracts, a source in the Rab said.

The arrested have been handed over to Chandanaish police station.

Touchstone statue found while digging pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Labourers, who were digging a pond at Kachua Primary School in Sholok union under Uzirpur upazila, recovered a statue of Dasharath made of touchstone.

Local sources claimed price of the statue would be crores of taka. Abdur Rob, officer-in-charge of Uzirpur Police Station acknowledging the fact, yesterday said the labourers recovered the statue with one broken leg and cracked body on Thursday and handed it over to the headmaster of the school.

Nazrul Islam, a village defence member, informed the matter to Uzirpur Police Station and Assistant Sub-Inspector Golam Sarwar took it to the Police Station.

Police sources said the statue is now kept at the Police Station and the department of archaeology and antiques has been informed about it.

SPGRC threatens self-immolation

UNB, Dhaka

Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) has threatened self-immolation on March 23 if the government fails to take initiative to hold tripartite meeting by March 22 to solve their long-standing problems.

The stranded Pakistanis who have been staying in various camps since 1971 are demanding that the government either repatriate them to Pakistan or allow them to settle in Bangladesh permanently.

Mahmud Alam Khan, joint secretary of SPGRC, told UNB yesterday that their problems must be resolved through tripartite meeting between the governments of Bangladesh, Pakistan and the representatives of the SPGRC.

He demanded that the Bangladesh government take an initiative to hold the meeting by March 22.

To press home their demands, the SPGRC has been observing token hunger strike at its different branch offices in the city.

They staged token hunger strike from 8:30am to 12.15pm at the SPGRC branch office at Mirpur yesterday. The token hunger strike will continue for next few days.

The SPGRC will also hold a grand rally at Geneva camp in Mohammadpur on March 21.

Adivasi Festival begins in city tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day 'Adivasi Festival' will begin at the National Museum in the city tomorrow.

Kumudini Hajang, a veteran woman leader in the historic Tanka Movement, will inaugurate the festival, organised by the Environment and Human Development (SEHD).

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selina Hossain will attend the function as chief guest while Chingku Roaza, a leading intellectual of hill tracts, Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, and Prof Mahmudul Haq, director general of the National Museum, will be present as special guests.

With the participation of Adivasi artistes, traditional cultural programmes will be held from 5:00pm to 7:30pm everyday.

As part of the festival, a seven-day photo exhibition begins at Drik Gallery today. The exhibition will focus on the 'Arannya O Arannya Sangskriti' (forest and forest culture). It will remain open from 10:00am to 8:00pm daily.

Some politicians unhappy with arrest of militant kingpins

Says Moudud

BSS, Dhaka

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday said leaders of a political party were unhappy with the arrest of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai.

He said but the people of the country were happy after the arrest of the top leaders of the banned militant groups.

He said the leaders of a certain political party did not want arrest of them, rather they wants to go to power by utilising the evil forces.

The law minister was speaking as chief guest at a view exchange meeting titled "The Role of the Government in Checking Militancy: Propaganda by the Opposition and Obligation of the Nationalist Force" organised by Shadhinata Forum at the Jatiya Press Club here today.

Joint Secretary General of BNP Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, leaders of Islami Oikya Jote Prof Ahmed Abdul Quader, general secretary of Jubo Dal central committee Moazzem Hossain Alal, MP, and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Prof Mojibur Rahman addressed the meeting as special guests.

General secretary of the city BNP Abdus Salam, vice-chancellor of Moulana Bhasani Science and Technology University Prof Khalilur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. President of Shadhinata Forum Abu Naser Mohammad Rahmat Ullah presided over the meeting.

Moudud said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has taken tough stand against militancy as she is pledged to root out terrorism in the country and the people of the country welcomed the prime minister's stand.

He said the main opposition Awami League does not want fulfillment of their demands of reform of the caretaker government system.

He underscored the need for discussions between the government and the opposition without any preconditions. He said the AL does not want reform of caretaker government, they just want to utilise the issue as a means for going to power.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Committee to Prevent Polythene and Plastic Products hold a rally at Shahbagh in the city yesterday demanding strict enforcement of the law banning polythene shopping bags.

Enforce anti-polythene law strictly

Bapa urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists at a rally yesterday called for strict implementation of the law prohibiting the production, use and marketing of polythene shopping bags and other plastic products.

They urged the government to refrain from giving permission to any company producing polythene shopping bags under any circumstances and to destroy the polythene bags now prevailing in the

market.

The rally was organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) at Shahbagh intersection in the city.

The speakers said in the name of export, the government has reportedly decided to give permission to a company to produce Polypropylene and woven bags which is clearly against the law of banning polythene shopping bags.

They urged the government to formulate a policy on one-time

useable products and packaging materials and to increase import duty on the raw materials of plastic as well as to form a cell to monitor the overall situation.

The speakers also stressed the need for launching vigorous campaign in favour of bags made of jute, cloth and paper as an alternative to polythene bags.

At the rally, a seven-point demand was placed to control the use and production of polythene and plastic goods in the country.

Presided over by Bapa leader Prof Dr Bazul Haque, the rally was addressed by Prof Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University, Member-secretary of the Committee to Resist Polythene and Plastic Products Amit Ranjan Dey, Executive Member Engineer Kazi Mohammad Shish, Bapa Joint Secretary Mihir Biswash, Dr Abdul Hai Majumder of Peace, and Dr Nuruddin of Sheba.

Representatives of different organisations including Work for Better Bangladesh Trust, Nagorik Sanghati, Green Voice, Nagorik Uddog, Asia Pacific University, and Citizen Movement Rights were present at the rally to express their solidarity with the demands.

Passing-out parade of Nat'l Maritime Institute held

Bss, Chittagong

The passing-out parade of the 6th batch of trainee crew of the National Maritime Institute (NMI) was held on the institute premises on Thursday.

NMI sources said 43 sailors of the 6th batch completed the maritime course receiving training.

Chairman of the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) AMM Shahadat Hossain attended the parade ceremony as the chief guest while Principal of the institute Captain Kazi Ali Imam made the address of welcome, a press release said.

Speaking at the function, the CPA chairman called upon the seafarers to work together with sincerity and honesty to keep high the image of the country so that foreign ship companies would accommodate more Bangladeshi mariners at their vessels.

He said the trend of deserting ships at foreign ports illegally by the Bangladeshi seafarers was one of the main causes behind reducing their job opportunities at international markets although Bangladeshis are more efficient and hard-working.

Principal Kazi Ali Imam asked the mariners to be attentive to their responsibilities while on-duty and attain professional excellence through continuous learning and gathering experiences.

Local stakeholders visit protected forest areas of WB

The forest department under its protected area management programme known as Nishorgo arranged an exposure visit for local stakeholders to observe participatory management approach in protected forest areas of West Bengal (WB) from February 22 to March 1, says a press release.

A group of 29 rural stakeholders including women and nine foresters from Lawachhara National Park, RemaKalenga Wildlife Sanctuary, Satchhari National Park, Chumati Wildlife Sanctuary and Teknaf Game Reserve visited various protected forest areas encompassing Shiliguri and Darjeeling.

Nishorgo Support Project in collaboration with USAID arranged the visit so that local people can gain experience in conserving bio-diversity.



PHOTO: STAR

Justice Naimuddin Ahmed speaks at a discussion on 'Role of the Election Commission and the Caretaker Government in holding a free and fair election in Bangladesh' at Bilia auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left is Waliur Rahman and on his right is Forest E Cookson.

DHAKA TODAY

View exchange

Campaign for Good Governance organises a view exchange meeting on 'Foreign investment and public interest'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:00am.

Workshop

Shujan, an NGO working for good governance, organises a workshop on 'Political reform of Bangladesh and our duty on the occasion of the Ninth National Parliamentary Election'. Venue: Swanirvar Bangladesh, Lalmaia. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion on Bangabandhu

Sheikh Russel Shishu Kishore Parishad will hold a discussion on 'Liberation War and Bangabandhu' to mark the birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Venue: Awami League central office, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion on

Independence Day

Save The Youth Forum will hold a discussion to mark the Independence Day. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion on river water

A discussion will be held on 'river water problem of Bangladesh'. Venue: Muktangan. Time: 4:00pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

Rotary Dhaka North West

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5:30pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley launches a book titled 'Ekjan Kibria' by Abul Kalam Azad Chhoton at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.