

## Another group of teachers postpones strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After observing over a month-long strike at the non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas, National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE), a platform of 11 teachers and employees organisations, yesterday postponed their strike.

NFTE Chief Co-ordinator and Convenor Quazi Faruque said they decided to postpone the indefinite strike in the greater interest of the students although government did not withdraw its new condition of depositing the tuition fees to the government fund.

"We are postponing the indefinite strike till August 25 responding to the requests of the guardians and students but our other programmes like processions, rallies and human chains will continue," Faruque said while addressing a press conference at NFTE office yesterday evening.

He also said that they had to take

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## Shamsur Rahman's condition improves a bit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poet Shamsur Rahman's condition improved a little bit yesterday but he is still in a critical condition.

Duty doctor at Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) hospital Mushfiqur Rahman said the ailing poet's health condition has improved a bit.

However, Prof AKM Shafiqur Rahman, chairman of Department of Anaesthesia, Analgesia and Intensive Care Medicine of BSMMU, said his condition remained unchanged.

The 77-year-old poet has been suffering from heart, liver, kidney and lungs problems.

He was admitted to the hospital on August 6 due to acute liver and ventricular failure along with

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## BRIDGE OVER SECOND BURIGANGA CHANNEL

# Construction on ignoring environmental factors

MORSHED ALI KHAN

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has started construction of a bridge over the second Buriganga channel at Kamrangirchar without any environmental impact assessment, threatening the very existence of the waterway.

Nasir Uddin Ahmed Pintu, the MP from Dhaka-8 constituency, initiated the project, envisaging a 160-meter-long seven-meter-wide bridge, over the second Buriganga channel connecting Kamalbagh on the north with Muslimbagh on the south in Kamrangirchar.

The Tk 4 crore for the construction of the bridge came from the prime minister's priority project fund. According to LGED officials, several months ago tender bids were invited for the project but none dared to submit any bid for the work other than Asha

Enterprise. Pintu himself is the proprietor and managing director of Asha Enterprise. The contract was eventually awarded to his company with two other participants to make it look like a genuine awarding, sources in the LGED said.

The construction of the bridge started about two weeks ago without any environmental impact assessment or environmental clearance whatsoever. Pintu said the fourth bridge was being built to facilitate movement of people of the area.

According to official sources in the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), the new bridge is set to seal the fate of the second Buriganga channel, which authorities are trying to recover under the Save Buriganga Movement. The channel runs from Kamalbagh up to Rayer Bazar before joining the Buriganga again.

The channel is already under the grip of encroachers, who are filling it at different places and selling plots.

"The three existing bridges connecting Kamrangirchar with the embankment are so low that navigation in the channel has automatically suspended on most part of the five kilometre channel," said an expert of the BIWTA.

"The under-construction bridge at the mouth of the channel will make the entire channel totally inaccessible by water," said the source.

As Asha Enterprise started removing slabs from the Dhaka Protection Embankment, the Water Development Board (WDB) officials, totally in dark about the project, intervened. The WDB officials feared any sudden rise in the river water level might breach the embankment at the dug-up site

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PHOTO: STAR

Construction of a bridge over the second Buriganga channel at Kamrangirchar goes ahead without any assessment of environmental impact.

## PROF TAHER AHMED MURDER

# Key suspect Salehi to enter RU campus today, address rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Fresh tension has gripped Rajshahi University as the university unit of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) announced that its president Mahubul Alam Salehi will come to the campus today.

Salehi, a key suspect in S Taher Ahmed murder case, is scheduled to preside over a discussion meeting organised by Shibir on the campus this morning. He will address a grand rally, and attend a prize giving ceremony and a cultural programme celebrating Islami Education Day, where many central ICS and Jamaat leaders will also be present. The programme will be held in front of the

university administrative building.

Sources said, thousands of ICS activists will gather at the programme and to make the rally successful hundreds of Shibir activists from outside the campus are already staying in different dormitories.

Shibir has been announcing Salehi's reappearance on the campus and in the city for the last several days using megaphones and it also put advertisements in local newspapers yesterday.

Salehi has been avoiding public appearance since he availed an anticipatory bail from the High Court on July 3 after he had been declared wanted by local police.

Earlier, RU Shibir had scheduled

a rally on the campus on July 5 where Salehi was supposed to show up, but on security grounds it was later cancelled.

Three persons arrested in connection with the killing of Taher gave statements before magistrates implicating Prof Mia Muhammad Mohiuddin and Salehi in the murder, local police briefed their high ups about it in May.

The investigation officer (IO) seeking an order from the court on March 8 for confiscating Salehi's property told the court in writing that police have evidence proving Salehi's direct involvement in the murder.

"He (Salehi) went into hiding to

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## FM concerned at 'unprovoked' border firing

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday expressed deep concern over the situation along the Indo-Bangladesh border, saying that unprovoked firing and killing of innocent civilians are detrimental to improving bilateral relations.

"I am deeply concerned at the repetition of such incidents of firing along our border...such unprovoked firing and killing of innocent civilians should stop immediately," Morshed told the news agency.

The foreign minister called for maintaining utmost restraint to ensure peaceful border, which he said is a prerequisite to improving relations between the two next-door neighbours.

"He (Salehi) went into hiding to

# Israeli jets pound Beirut suburbs, 11 more killed

REUTERS, Beirut

Israeli air raids killed 11 people in north Lebanon yesterday as the United States and France strove to clinch a draft UN resolution to end the month-old war between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas.

The air strikes on a bridge near the northern border with Syria also wounded 18 people, hospital staff said. Beirut awoke to a dozen raids on Shia Muslim suburbs before dawn. There was no immediate word on casualties in those blasts.

Many residents had fled the once-crowded suburbs after Israel dropped leaflets on Thursday warning them to leave.

An Israeli strike on a car near the eastern city of Baalbek killed

one civilian and wounded two, medical sources said.

Hezbollah fired several rockets into Israel, but they caused no casualties, according to Israeli police.

In south Lebanon, the Shia guerrillas said they had repelled an Israeli force advancing toward the village of Beit Yahun, 8km from the border with Israel.

The war has created shortages of fuel and power across Lebanon and badly disrupted relief efforts in the south, where aid officials say hospitals are running short of vital supplies.

The United States and France were close to agreement on a draft UN resolution, but objections from Lebanon or Israel could again

delay a Security Council vote. The US and French envoys to the United Nations worked on the text late into the evening after Beirut rejected deployment of extra UN troops under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which authorizes the use of force, not just self-defence.

Russia proposed a resolution calling for a 72-hour truce to alleviate a "catastrophic" humanitarian crisis as a stop-gap should the US-French draft resolution be delayed further.

Israel rejected the Russian proposal, saying it would help Hezbollah "regroup and recover."

Washington's UN ambassador John Bolton also said the Russian measure was not helpful. He said

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PHOTO: STAR

Logs of illegally auctioned off trees felled at Mokamtala under Shibganj upazila in Bogra being loaded on a truck.

## DFO sued for selling trees 'illegally'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The Roads and Highways Department (R&HD) has filed a case with Shibganj thana against the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) here on Thursday for 'illegal sale' of a large number of roadside timber of the R&HD.

Earlier, the R&HD had lodged several general diaries (GDs) with Shibganj police against the DFO for 'illegal auction sale' of trees on Bogra-Joypurhat highway.

The DFO had allegedly sold on auction roadside trees at different places in the district, including Katham area of Nandigram upazila, without informing the R&HD.

Besides, complaints were made against the DFO for his 'involvement' in sale of trees at Dharaborosa Char in Shariakandi upazila of the district recently.

DFO Shamsul Alam denied the allegations and said forest department has now stopped felling of trees on Bogra-Joypurhat road because of various allegations. But he claimed that the trees belonged to forest department, and there was no need to inform the R&HD about this.

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# Top criminals may return home as polls near

## Warns DMP chief, beefs up security in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Security has been beefed up in the capital in anticipation of the most wanted criminals' return to the country from their hideout abroad ahead of the upcoming national election.

All intelligence and detective agencies have been directed to increase vigilance in the city to

capture the top criminals as soon as they enter the country, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner SM Mizanur Rahman said at a meeting with the crime reporters at his office yesterday. "The intelligence agencies and detective branches have been ordered to be on the lookout for them as well as for other hired guns at airports and city hotels."

"There is an apprehension that the most wanted criminals may return before the election," the DMP chief added.

"Stop and search has been increased and intelligence vigilance strengthened to avert any untoward incident," asserted the DMP chief.

Out of the 23 DMP top-wanted

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# Typhoon Saomai kills over 100 in China

REUTERS, Cangnan

The strongest typhoon to hit China in half a century killed more than 100 people, dozens of whom had taken shelter in a house that collapsed, Xinhua news agency said on Friday, and the toll appeared likely to rise.

Typhoon Saomai tore into Cangnan county in the eastern province of Zhejiang on Thursday after authorities moved more than 1 million people in the densely popu-

lated commercial province to safety.

By Friday noon, 104 people were confirmed dead and 190 were missing in Zhejiang and neighbouring Fujian province, Xinhua said. Some 54,000 houses were destroyed.

At least 41 villagers, including eight children, were killed when a house collapsed in the town of Jinxiang, only an hour's drive from where the typhoon made landfall, Xinhua and a local official said.

Most of the victims were neighbours who thought the two-storey, concrete structure would be safer than their own wood-and-brick shelters. Xinhua said, adding another two died in a separate house collapse in the town.

"Many people here are taking shelter in schools and factories as their houses have been destroyed," the official in Jinxiang said.

Damage to crops, power lines and infrastructure was evident in

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## Another 250 to return from Lebanon today

UNB, Dhaka

Some 250 Bangladeshis return home from the war-ravaged Lebanon today by a chartered aircraft of Middle East Airlines (MEA).

Foreign ministry and IOM (International Organisation for Migration) officials told the news agency yesterday that 443 Bangladeshis arrived in Syrian capital Damascus on Thursday under the supervision of the IOM on their way back home.

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PHOTO: STAR

Children of the social organisation Kalarab line-up at Purana Paltan in the capital yesterday protesting Israeli invasion of Lebanon and demanding an immediate ceasefire.

## Extortion in the name of outlaws in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Callers using the name of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho) demanded tolls from over a hundred people of different professions in the last one week and warned of dire consequences in case of failure.

Khulna University Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Mahbubur Rahman, professors Ashit Baran Ghose, Sajib Ghose, and Shushato Biswas and journalist Gouranga Nandy of Dainik Janakantho are among those who received the threats in last one week.

Meanwhile, Abir Hasan, who identified himself as an operation commander of Janajuddho, faxed to three local newspaper offices on Thursday night denying his party's

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Prayer Timing		
August 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-41	6-44
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation