



Workers of Rahim Plastic Factory and Silvi Zining Factory staged a sit-in in front of the electricity office in Jhenidah yesterday demanding uninterrupted power supply as the two factories suspended production due to power crisis.

Jessore road crash hurts 50

BSS, Jessore

At least 50 people were injured when a bus fell into a roadside ditch at Baulia in Jessore yesterday morning.

The Narail-bound bus hit a roadside tree on Jessore-Narail road before plunging into the ditch at around 11:00am as its driver lost control over the steering, the police said.

Twenty-two of the injured were admitted to Jessore Sadar Hospital.

Swedish envoy visits Batiaghata upazila

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Brit F Hagstrom, who arrived in Khulna on Wednesday on a four-day visit, yesterday visited Batiaghata upazila of the district.

She enjoyed a dance drama staged under the Theatre Education Programme of Rupantar at Sholimari Registered Primary School.

Later the envoy visited 'Nari Bikash Kendra' (centre for flourishing of women) at Hoglada.

She was accompanied by her husband Karl Hagstrom and Vice-president of International Forum for Theatre Research Christina Nigrana.

12 killed in Somali fighting

AP, Mogadishu

At least 12 people were killed yesterday during fighting between Ethiopian troops backing Somalia's fragile government and insurgents in the capital, said witnesses, hours after an Ethiopian military truck exploded on the capital's outskirts.

Fighting between the two sides resumed yesterday after a day's pause.

Businessman Ahmed Warsame said that he heard mortars hitting his southwestern Mogadishu neighbourhood, after which he went out to see who may need help and saw eight bodies on the street. Warsame told The Associated Press on phone that the eight's belongings were strewn on the street, suggesting that they had been trying to flee the capital.

One dies in train accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

An unidentified youth, aged about 28, was crushed under a speeding train in Horischandra-Padwoa area on Dhaka-Chittagong railway at Laksam in the district early morning yesterday.

Sources said the accident occurred at around 6:00am when a Chittagong-bound intercity train from Dhaka hit him while he was crossing the rail tracks.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Comilla Medical College morgue for autopsy.

The UN refugee agency says that over 200,000 people have fled Mogadishu's violence since February.

University student Abdillahi Hassan Ali said that after mortars hit houses in northern Mogadishu, he went out to see whether anyone needed help and found four bodies in one house.

Safya Muse, who lives in the same neighborhood as Ali, told The Associated Press by phone that Ethiopian soldiers made a new base yesterday at a street junction near her home, in an area called Kungul. The area is known base for insurgents.

Thursday's fighting comes after two days of on-off street battles between Ethiopian troops and insurgents that saw both sides use tank shells, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. Some residents characterised the fighting as the most intense in many years. At least 14 people were

killed in the fighting and dozens injured. Earlier Thursday, Yusuf Osman said by phone that he heard an Ethiopian truck explode after it had passed his small pharmacy on the outskirts of the capital.

Ali Hussein Mohamed, a street vendor, told The Associated Press on the phone that he saw 10 injured Ethiopian soldiers lying on the ground.

Osman said that Ethiopian soldiers in a second truck opened fire on a nearby minibus. He saw two injured people, but he did not know if anyone was killed.

Police from a nearby station then cordoned off the area, said Osman.

It was not clear what caused the explosion. Neither government nor police officials were immediately available for comment.

Abducted girl rescued in Munshiganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

The police rescued an abducted schoolgirl from a house at Purbo Burdia village in Louhajang, Munshiganj, and arrested the kidnapper.

The police arrested Rassel on charges of kidnapping Amena, a student of class six at Kasem Adira School at Kamrangir Char in Keraniganj.

Rassel, 20, who works at a garage at Kamrangir Char, lured the girl to his house at Louhajang on Wednesday, her mother Khadiza Begum said in a general diary she filed with Keraniganj police.

In the meantime, Amena called her mother on her mobile phone using the mobile phone of a resident living next to Rassel's house and informed her everything.

Amena's mother went to Rassel's house yesterday to bring her daughter back but Rassel's family refused to hand over Amena to her.

Khadiza then went to Louhajang Police Station and informed the police who rescued Amena from Aman Bepari's house.

A case has been filed in this connection with Louhajang police.

Meteorological radar to be inaugurated at Cox's Bazar

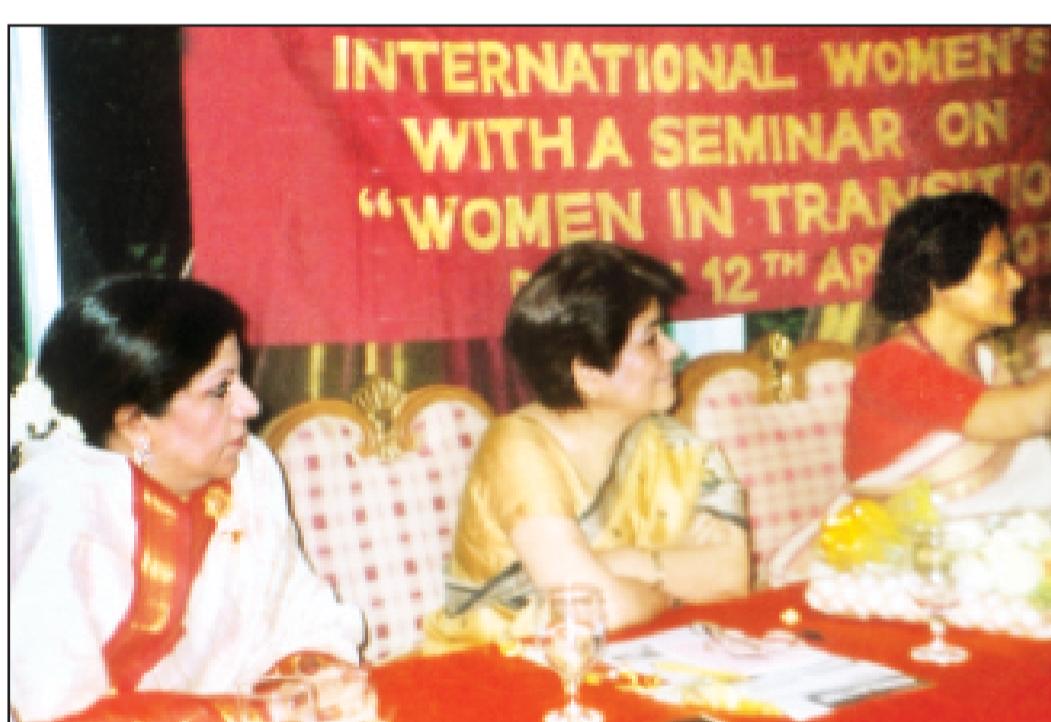
A new meteorological radar will be inaugurated at Cox's Bazar on April 22, says a press release.

Japanese Ambassador Masayuki Inoue and Secretary to the Ministry of Defence Kamrul Hasan will attend the inaugural ceremony.

Under the first phase of a Japanese grant assistance of Tk 49 crore, the government has constructed new Radar Tower Buildings and installed new Radar Systems on the premises of Cox's Bazar Meteorological Radar Stations so as to construct new Storm Warning Centre at the Bangladesh Meteorological Department Head Office in Dhaka.

The government of Japan, upon request of the government of Bangladesh, earlier undertook the Basic Design Study of this project. Japan has been extending grant assistance to Bangladesh for improvement of its meteorological services since 1988.

The project is expected to greatly contribute to Bangladesh's effort in monitoring tropical cyclones through providing more accurate forecasting and warning regarding time and place of tropical cyclones over the Bangladesh coast.



Zonta Club IV Dhaka arranged a seminar on 'Women in transition' at a local restaurant recently to celebrate Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla New Year, and the International Women's Day. Rokia A Rahman, former adviser to a caretaker government, was present as the chief guest while Rashida Sultana of Rapid Action Battalion as the special guest. Salma Masud, president of Zonta Club IV, presided over the seminar.

6 killed, 71 injured during Myanmar water festival

AP, Yangon

Six people were killed and 71 injured during Myanmar's four-day water festival that ushered in the Buddhist New Year holiday, state media reported yesterday.

Among the fatalities, three were victims of drowning, one died in a road accident, and two were killed in fights, said the Myanma Ahlin newspaper.

The New Year period is often a time of drunken revelry, leading to traffic accidents and brawls. More than half of the reported injuries this year were blamed on quarreling.

Myanmar celebrated its annual water festival, known as "Thingyan," from April 13 - marking the start of the New Year according to the traditional Buddhist calendar. Revelers mark the event by

throwing water at passers-by. The New Year's holiday itself runs for 10 days until April 22.

Myanmar's military government issued a series of regulations and rules before the holiday banning revelers from using high-pressure water guns that could injure people and from hurling ice-filled water balloons, and anyone caught violating either rule could face a maximum three years in prison.

There were no arrests reported by local media.

Authorities also warned revelers not to say anything that could damage national unity and to refrain from wearing provocative or "unbecoming" clothing" contrary to Myanmar's traditions, such as girls wearing skimpy clothes.