

# BAGHAIHAT INCIDENT Attack condemned

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Rights activists and eminent personalities yesterday strongly condemned the killing of indigenous people and arson attacks on their houses at Baghahat in Rangamati on Saturday.  
In separate statements, they demanded formation of a judiciary commission to probe the incident and punishment to the attackers.  
They called on the government to provide food and treatment facilities for the affected families and ensure their rehabilitation.  
They also called for deployment of police force formed with indigenous people and Bangalees.  
They urged the government to activate the Chittagong Hill Tracts land commission to resolve land disputes.  
The organisations included Bangladeshi Adivasi Odhakar Andolon, Gono Forum, Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Legal and Services Trust (BLAST), Association for Land and

Development (ALRD), Nijera Kori, Brac's Human Rights and Legal Aid Programme, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Association of Bangladesh (ADAB), Chittagong Hill Tracts Hill Students Council, Revolutionary Workers Party of Bangladesh, Gonoratrik Bam Morcha, Samajantrik Chhatra Front, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Gono Sangskriti Front, Jatiya Gono Front and Sammilito Samajik Andolon.  
In a joint statement, 29 eminent personalities demanded a discussion on the issue in parliament.  
They also called for formation of a parliamentary group who will talk to the affected people and the administration to calm the situation.  
The signatories included Prof Mosharraf Hossain, Prof Anisuzzaman, Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, Prof Rangalal Sen, Ajay Roy, Maj Gen (retd) Shafiullah, Prof Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, Barrister Sara Hossain and Prof Abul Barakat.



Police intercept a procession of Pahari Chhatra Parishad in front of the High Court in the city yesterday as the agitators were heading towards the Secretariat to hand over a memorandum to the home minister.

# Youth held in Ctg for giving death threat to Taposh

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**  
Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a youth from the port city's Khulshi area early yesterday on charges of giving death threat to Awami League lawmaker Fazle Noor Taposh through short message service (SMS) and sending vulgar messages.  
The arrestee was identified as Soheli Rana, 27, son of Amir Hossain, of village Rasulpur under Zokiganj upazila in Sylhet.  
On information, Rab men arrested Soheli from a flat of Prashad Boishakhi in Khulshi area at around 4:00am and seized four mobile phone sets and seven SIM cards from his possession.  
Rab-7 Commanding Officer (CO) Lt Col Sazzad Hussain said Soheli confessed that he gave death threat to Taposh through SMS and also sent vulgar SMS to the lawmaker.  
"Earlier, Soheli, Soheli also threatened some other VIPs over phone and we are interrogating him to unearth the actual cause behind sending the SMSs and his suspected link in the earlier bomb attack on the lawmaker in the capital," he said.  
Soheli also gave irrelevant information when he was produced before the reporters at Rab-7 Headquarters in Patenga yesterday afternoon.  
Soheli, who is a scrap trader, said his physically challenged younger brother Jewel wanted to talk to Taposh, but Soheli failed to reach Taposh despite several attempts over cellphone.  
"Failing to contact him over phone, my brother told me to send vulgar SMS and I sent 12 such SMSs in the last 11 days," he said.

# UNAUTHORISED GAS CONNECTIONS Companies at fault to face probe

**UNB, Dhaka**  
Companies having gas connections without sanction of rules will come under investigation as a move is underway to find out the irregularities.  
Against the backdrop of gas crunch that forced the government to go for rationing of the fuel, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy, Power and Mineral Resources Ministry yesterday asked the authorities concerned to submit a report against the companies at fault.  
The report will have to be placed at the next meeting of the committee after investigation.  
It was decided at the 12th meeting of the standing committee with its president Subid Ali Bhuiyan MP in the chair.  
In a further step, the meeting

# Pakistan should make apology to Bangladesh: Hamid Meer

**BSS, Dhaka**  
Eminent Pakistani journalist Hamid Meer yesterday said his country should be ashamed and make an apology to Bangladesh for its past misdeeds.  
He expressed this opinion while he was taking part in a discussion arranged by Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad on the occasion of the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day on February 21.  
Noted media personality Ijaz Gul, branch head of a local private school Zaira Haider and expatriate Bangladesh ANM Obaidullah, also took part in the discussion, according to a message received here yesterday.  
The day's programmes in Bangladesh High Commission began with the hoisting of the national flag at half-mast. Acting High Commissioner M Mahfuzur Rahman hoisted the flag.

# GOVT COMMITTED TO BUILDING METRO RAIL Jica asked to complete feasibility study soon

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The government is committed to build metro rail, he said, adding that the prime minister has already approved the project for invitation of tender on Public Private Partnership (PPP) or BOT basis.  
Dhaka Transport Communication Board, the communications ministry and Jica jointly organised the workshop on 'Dhaka mass transit system making use of Tokyo and Delhi experiences' at a city hotel.  
The minister hoped that Jica would come up with their recommendations as soon as possible.  
Jica has been conducting feasibility study for the Metro rail, a priority project of the government, as the Japanese agency is interested to fund the project.  
After the feasibility Study and detailed design by the Jica Study team, the Jica and the government will start construction of metro rail very soon, said the minister.  
Before the construction of metro rail, necessary organisational set-up would be put in place, he added.  
He also said the tender for the elevated expressway will open on March 4.  
Vice Chancellor of Brac University Dr Jamilur Reza Choudhury said he is happy to see that process is underway to implement some of the recommendations of the Strategic Transport Plan (STP).  
Charges d'Affaires of Embassy of Japan Harumitsu Hida and communications secretary Md Mozammel Inaugh Khan also spoke at the inaugural session.  
Dr Elattuvalapil Sreedharan, managing director, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd, India, Dr Shuichi Yahagi, president of Metro Development Corporation, Tokyo, Japan, and Kazuyuki Fujii, deputy manager of Railway Management Department, Railway Headquarters, Tokyo Metro Co. Ltd, shared their experiences in the workshop.

# Ensure fair distribution of agricultural subsidy

**PM asks ministers, MPs**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Among them, one crore Boro farmers will be given money through banks as direct subsidy on diesel used for irrigating croplands for the dry-season rice farming.  
Talking to The Daily Star after the meeting, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said showing the Agriculture Input Assistance card introduced by the government recently, the farmers will receive money from banks as cash subsidy.  
For drawing the subsidy and monetary transactions, the farmers would have to open a bank account with Tk 10 only, she said.  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has recently introduced the Agri-input Assistance Card and Cash Assistance programme for the country's farmers.  
She also asked them to make sure that there is no mismanagement in open market sales (OMS) of rice.  
The directives came at a cabinet meeting chaired by the prime minister at the Secretariat.  
Under the scheme, marginal farmers will get Tk 800 and wealthy farmers Tk 1000 as cash incentives to buy diesel.  
According to the government's decision a total of 1.82 crore farmers of the country will get the incentives under the recipe.

**DHAKA TODAY**

**Roundtable**  
Nagorik Uddyog organises a roundtable on the role of Salish to dispute resolution at local level and its challenges and opportunities. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

**Reception**  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Teachers' Association will accord a reception to the veterans of the Language Movement who are also physicians. Venue: BSMMU. Time: 11:00am.

**Seminar**  
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) organises a seminar on earthquake, tsunami and storm surge. Venue: Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. Time: 5:00pm.

**Discussion**  
Karmojibi Nari (KN) will hold a discussion on eliminating violence against women. Venue: KN office, 3/6 Segunbagicha. Time: 11:00am.

# Country's largest solar power system at PMO

**PM to inaugurate soon**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The prime minister will very soon inaugurate the country's largest solar power system installed at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a move to encourage green energy expansion, a parliamentary body said yesterday.  
The parliamentary standing committee on power and energy ministry said installation of the solar plant, which has a capacity of generating 20 to 21.6KW power, has been completed at the PMO office.  
"It is not possible to meet country's growing demand of power using coal and gas, we must go for alternative energy source like solar system," Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, chief of the parliamentary body, told reporters after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.  
Bhuiyan, also a ruling Awami League lawmaker, said members of his committee will visit some developed countries to see how those countries are fulfilling their demand for power and energy.  
"Success of a government largely depends on energy. The government therefore has taken multiple programmes to get rid of the power crisis," Bhuiyan added.  
He told the reporters that about 120MW power will be added to the national grid by March.  
Besides, he said, the government has signed memorandum of understanding with four private companies to produce 300MW of power.  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on February 14 said her office will soon go under the supply of electricity produced from solar energy with a view to slashing down carbon emission that cause global warming and exhaustible energy resources.  
A local private firm Rahimafrooz Renewable Energy Ltd has installed the solar plant at the PMO for a contract worth Tk 99 lakh.  
At present, the contribution of renewable energy to overall power generation is less than one percent, with solar power home systems installed mainly in off-grid areas, which is the current leading green energy generator in the country.

# Hijbut Tahrir man arrested in Ctg

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**  
Police arrested an activist of outlawed Islamist outfit Hijbut Tahrir at the port city early yesterday.  
The arrestee was identified as Nazmul Huda, 23, son of Saiful Islam of Belkuchi upazila in Sirajganj district.  
Nazmul, a student of Chartered Accountant of AIC at GEC Intersection, was arrested while he was pasting anti-government and party posters with a group at GEC Intersection around 5:00am, said Officer in-Charge (OC) Mohiuddin Mahmud of Kotwali Police Station.  
Other members of the group managed to flee the scene, said Mohiuddin, adding that Nazmul confessed to his involvement with Hizbut Tahrir.  
"We have got some important information from Nazmul and verifying them for arresting other members of the organisation. He is being quizzed for further information," The OC added.  
A case has been filed in this connection.

# Death anniversary

**METRO DESK**  
Today is the 33rd death anniversary of Lt AM A t a u l H a q u e , a freedom fighter and former acting chief of Bangladesh Navy, says a press release.  
Ataul Haque, hailed from Mymensingh, joined the Royal Indian Navy in 1945 and then served for Pakistan Navy after the separation of India in 1947. He joined the War of Liberation in 1971 and served as the acting chief of Bangladesh Navy until April 1972.  
He passed away due to a cardiac arrest on February 23 in 1977 at the Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka.  
Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for eternal peace of this departed soul.

# VDP demands ration, pay hike

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Village Defence Police (VDP) yesterday demanded food rationing system and salary as per the pay scale for fourth-class government employees.  
Bangladesh Gram Police Karmachari Union leaders placed the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.  
They said the LGRD minister on July 28 last year declared that the salary of Village Defence Police would be doubled, but they are yet to receive any pay hike.  
They said a Dafadar receives only Tk 1000 and Mahalladar (village defence police) receives Tk 750 as monthly salary from Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and the payment is not regular.  
The remaining part of their salary which Union Parishads provide is not paid most of the time, they said.  
A total of 44,560 members of Village Defence Police are working with sincerity across the country, but they are facing financial hardships.  
They demanded their salary be doubled and pension amount be raised to Tk 60,000 for a Dafadar and Tk 50,000 for a Mahalladar. Otherwise, they will wage a tougher agitation programme, they threatened.  
They will hold a sit-in programme in the capital on February 27.  
Bangladesh Gram Police Karmachari Union general secretary MA Alim and publicity secretary Biswanath Das spoke at the press conference.

# Obituary

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet**  
Hajera Khanan, mother of Lokman Ahmed, general secretary of Sylhet district Jatiya Samajantrik Dal (JSD) and councillor of Sylhet City Corporation Rezwan Ahmed, passed away at a private hospital in the capital on Sunday due to old-age complications at the age of 70.  
She left behind her six sons and five daughters.

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