

Schoolgirl burnt

FROM PAGE 1
But as The Daily Star drew his attention to her last statement, the OC said he then needed to talk to the parents to know how she died.

Tobarak, who lives in the same village -- Kona Bhawal -- swooped on Pinky at around 7:30am when none of her parents or siblings was home. Pinky, a class-ten student, was studying for examinations when she saw him on the doorstep with a one-litre plastic bottle full of kerosene.

Before she could move, he had emptied the kerosene bottle on her and threw a lit matchstick setting her ablaze, Latifa said quoting from the statement her daughter gave before death.

Flames swallowed up Pinky in no time.

At the time, her mother was on a walk in the neighbourhood. As she heard a shrill scream, she sprinted to her house to find a burning Pinky throwing herself into their pond.

Latifa and another daughter of her son got Pinky out of water. With help from others, they took her to DMCH burn unit at around 2:00pm. After fighting for life for several hours, the girl died at 10:30pm.

Locals said Tobarak, son of Jaru Mia, used to tease Pinky on her way to school and throw bricks on their house at night.

Alfatur Bhuiyan, Pinky's rickshaw-puller father, said Tobarak on numerous occasions had told Pinky that he would throw acid on her if she did not marry him.

As harassment got intolerable, they sought an end to it through village arbitration, but to no avail.

Locals said most of the villagers are afraid of Tobarak as his brother work as a prison guard in Narsinghdi.

Neighbours said Pinky was a gifted dancer. Only a few days ago, she won Tk 10,000

in a dance contest in her school.

On March 17, Afroz Moni, a student of Kishoreganj Azimuddin High School, committed suicide failing to withstand relentless teasing.

Nashfia Akand Pinky, a class-nine student at the capital's West Agargaon, and Umme Kulsum Elora, 14, killed themselves in January and April under similar circumstances.

Ecneec okays

FROM PAGE 16
The project titled 'Capital Dredging of River Systems in Bangladesh' would cost Tk 1,028 crore.

Under the project, capital dredging will be done from the upstream of Sirajganj Hardpoint to Dhaleswari uptake and from Bhupur Tarakandi Embankment to Nolin Bazar to maintain navigability of the rivers.

The Ecneec also approved Tk 944 crore project for Buriganga, New Dhaleshwari, Pungli, Bangshai and Turag rivers.

The aim of this project is to increase water flow in the Buriganga and the Turag and maintain their navigability.

It also aims to free the rivers from illegal occupation and develop irrigation and fisheries. The project work will start on July and end by June 2014.

The Ecneec also approved South-Western Coordinated Water Resources Planning and Management (revised) project at a cost of Tk 283 crore, project for setting up Barisal Engineering College at a cost of Tk 74 crore, Development of National ICT Infra-Network for Bangladesh Government (BanglaGovNet) project at a cost of Tk 281 crore and Strengthening the Research and Exploration Capabilities of the Geological Survey of Bangladesh project at a cost of Tk 38 crore.



Moniruzzaman Monir

Man stabs

FROM PAGE 16
rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He died there yesterday at 2:00am.

Monir and the girl once were money collectors of a private firm at Dholaipar.

The girl and some of Monir's colleagues said Monir had taken several suicide attempts by taking sedatives as the girl had been denying his proposal. He also wrote the girl's name in his hand with a knife, they added.

These incidents pushed the girl to leave the job and join a life insurance company. However, Monir used to visit the girl's house quite regularly.

Talking to The Daily Star the girl said, "I liked Monir as a friend, not as a boyfriend and did not want to marry him for various reasons."

Monir had been proposing her for the last two years, she added.

Monir's elder brother Saheb Ali who was also present during the incident said, "Monir took me to the girl's house saying that he had to pick up some medicines from a house in Maniknagar. I had no earlier knowledge of Monir loving the girl."

When the girl said that she did not love him, Monir suddenly pressed a hidden knife into his abdomen, Saheb Ali added.

Sub-inspector Mizanur Rahman of Sabujbagh Police Station said an unnatural death case was filed in this connection.

Aila victims

FROM PAGE 16
the shoddiness of work.

"WDB officials made a hasty estimate during winter when the breaches were smaller, and the water level was low, but now the depth and width of the breaches have gotten larger as they took quite a long time to issue work orders," said Jamshed Ali, a sub-contractor who was repairing an embankment at Jaliakhali in Dakope.

WDB officials however said a lack of availability of quality mud, existence of strong current at the breaches, uncertainty over funding, contractors' tendency for not participating in bids for repairing larger breaches, and appointment of inexperienced sub-contractors by main contractors are the reasons for the delay and shoddy work.

Dakope Upazila Nirbahi Officer Quazi Atiur Rahman said the situation is bad, as the water level is increasing.

It will not be possible to finish the job before the rainy season, he feared adding that a tug of war between WDB and the contractors over allocation of money is basically lingering the work.

Mossadek Hossain, WDB executive engineer of Division-2 in Khulna, said they managed to repair around 80 percent of totally destroyed dykes in the belt, but are yet to start repairing the partially damaged ones.

"We've invited tender for repairing 96 kilometres out of the 190 kilometres of partially damaged dykes, and will soon start the work with a target to finish within 45 days," he said adding that the rest will be repaired later in phases.

Aila struck the country's southwest coast on May 25 last year, leaving 190 people dead and thousands destitute.

Jr school certificate exams in Nov first week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first Junior School Certificate (JSC) and equivalent examinations will be held in the first week of November.

Nearly 20 lakh Class VIII students of schools and madrasas across the country will take the exams under eight general education boards and the madrasa education board. However, the examinations will be held under uniformed question papers.

The pattern of subject-wise question and marks for the exam was published on the website of the education ministry, Dhaka Education Board and Inter-education Board, says an official handout. The websites are www.mo.edu.gov.bd, www.dhakaeducationboard.gov.bd and www.educationboard.gov.bd.

The exams will be held on nine subjects, each for 100 marks. The pass mark has been fixed at 33 for each subject.

The subjects are: Bangla paper I, Bangla paper II, English paper I, English paper II, General Mathematics, General Science, Samajik Bigyan (Social Science), Religion, Krishi Shikha (Agriculture Studies)/Home Economics.

There will be no practical exams.

Results will be published on Grade Point Average (GPA) system and academic transcripts would be issued instead of certificates after the results.

Grade A+ (5.00) will be given for 80-100 marks while A (4.00) for 70-79, A- (3.50) for 60-69, B (3.00) for 50-59, C (2.00) for 40-49, D (1.00) for 33-39 and F (0.00) for 00-32 marks.

The authorities have fixed the age-limit for the class VIII students, according to which a student not below the age of 11 years and not more than 17 years can study in class VIII.

The education boards concerned will send schools and madrasas the published copy of the pattern of subject-wise question and marks.

TRIPURA POWER PLANT

Indians in city to assess facilities for machinery transport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-member Indian technical team is now visiting Bangladesh to expedite the process of improving roads and waterways to transport heavy machinery for setting up a power plant in Tripura state.

Meanwhile, a joint team of experts from both the countries has prepared a report assessing the cost of renovation of Ashuganj port and improving 59 kilometres road from the port to Akhaura linking Tripura's Palatana where the power plant will be set up, shipping ministry officials said.

The technical team led by SP Gaur, chairman of Inland Waterways Authorities of India, arrived here on Sunday.

The delegation met shipping ministry officials on Monday and the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) yesterday.

"During the discussion, we told them that we need to develop both the Ashuganj port and the roads to facilitate transportation of the Over Dimensional Consignments (ODCs) for the Palatana power project," BIWTA Chairman Abdul Malek Mia told The Daily Star.

He said that some rivers would require dredging since the consignments will come to Ashuganj port through waterways.

"The consignments will first come to Narayanganj from Kolkata and then will go to the Ashuganj port," he added.

The BIWTA chairman also said, "We need to improve navigability of rivers as Bangladesh and India use water routes for 98 percent of the total 10 lakh tonnes of their consignments."

During prime minister's visit to Delhi in February this year, both India and Bangladesh agreed to designate Ashuganj and Palatana as ports of call.

They also decided that a joint team would assess the improvement of infrastructure and the cost for one-time or longer-term transportation of ODCs from Ashuganj.

As per the joint communiqué, India will make necessary investment in this regard.

Women judges stir up old debate in Egypt

AP, Cairo

When women tried to join the bench on Egypt's top administrative court, the uproar from its judges was fierce. Women are too emotional, they insisted and who will take care of the family if the mother is busy with the arduous tasks of the courtroom?

In internet chat rooms, the response from Egyptian men and women was even stronger. Women are too fragile, they're not up for making life-changing rulings, and menstruation and pregnancy make them unfit to be judges.

It took a street protest, government intervention and a Constitutional Court ruling over the past weeks to get women appointed to Egypt's State Council court for the first time. The final result was a victory, but many women's rights advocates are dismayed that after decades of struggle it took such a fight, and that such views still run so deep, even among the country's elite.

Especially given that women have already been judges for years on most Egyptian courts.

"I was surprised and confused why we are going back to square one to discuss something that is our constitutional right," said Tahany el-Gebali, who in 2003 became Egypt's first female judge when she was appointed to the Constitutional Court, the country's highest judiciary body.

Egypt has a century-old women's movement, and women have long served as government ministers and business executives, doctors and other professionals not to mention the large numbers working in factories, small businesses and household industries.

But the dispute illustrated how so far, progress for women

Night load

FROM PAGE 16
load shedding will be continued, the source added.

The authorities took the decision as power generation increased 200 megawatt following a stoppage of power supply to the fertiliser factories, reports BSS.

UNB reports: Two units, No 5 and 6, of the Ghorashal Power Plant, each with 120-megawatt capacity, were shut down following subsequent fire in their substations at 1:30pm and 4:00pm on Monday.

The fire originated from sparks, the officials said.

Unit 5 returned to operation after the fire was extinguished by the fire brigade around 3:00pm Monday.

Unit 6 resumed its operation at 3:00pm yesterday after experts from Dhaka came and repaired it, the officials added.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday formed two committees to investigate the fire incident and submit reports within seven working days.

Solaiman, 40, the security guard, who received severe burn injuries in his drive to douse the fire at unit 6, succumbed to his burn injuries at the Ghorashal Power Plant Hospital at 7:00am yesterday.

Clashes

FROM PAGE 1
him to a room in the university's second academic building for about three hours. They also beat him up.

Shahnewaz had gone to the campus to cover a discussion organised by the Prothom Alo Bandhu Sava around 5:00pm Monday.

On information, the VC and other teachers went to the spot around 8:00pm and tried to rescue him. Failing to do so in the face of resistance, they called in law enforcers.

Two platoons of riot police around midnight went to the campus and tried to rescue Shahnewaz. The police attempt triggered the clash. Police charged truncheons and fired around 15 teargas canisters to disperse the students and alleged outsiders.

Police, however, managed to rescue Shahnewaz.

During the clash, students along with alleged outsiders vandalised doors, windowpanes and furniture of a number of rooms in the two academic buildings, the library room and rooms in Khanjahan Ali Hall.

VC Saifuddin Shah told The Daily Star that the incident was "unprecedented" and alleged that some vested quarters were trying to vitiate the existing peaceful academic atmosphere in the university.

Additional police forces were deployed in and around the campus to avert further untoward incidents.

Khulna Press Club, Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ), Metropolitan Union of Journalists (MUJ) and Khulna unit of Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association (BPJA) will stage a human chain programme today in front of the press club building in protest against kidnap and attack on Shahnewaz.

Meanwhile, police said a number of students attacked four students of the university at Gallamari and Nirala leaving them seriously injured around 7:30am yesterday. The attack was made as the four were leaving the dormitories.

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Politics, business

FROM PAGE 16

The ACC chairman said the duty of lawmakers in the parliament is to formulate laws, but they also get involved in activities which will help them get votes in the next election.

"This practice should be changed," he said suggesting proportional representation system for the parliamentary election.

Ghulam Rahman stressed the need for strengthening the local government bodies, saying that strong local governments can stamp out corruption in the society.

"The politicians only express the political will to strengthen the local government bodies but they don't intend to make those effective," he said.

He suggested making the ACC more effective, formulating effective and appropriate laws, reducing the lengthy judicial system, reforming the administrative system and procedures to prevent corruption in the country.

He said, to root out corruption, a social movement against corruption is to be taken.

The ACC chairman also said students of all levels are to be mobilised in the anti-corruption movement.

Shujan President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said reforming of political process, decentralisation of power, and the empowerment of the local government bodies are paramount to build a country free from corruption.

He demanded that the prime minister, leader of the opposition, chief justice, lawmakers, and those who hold the constitutional posts publish their wealth accounts in newspapers.

Transparency International Bangladesh Chairman M Hafizuddin Khan alleged the ACC is not getting any cooperation from the government, instead a few measures have been taken to make it ineffective.

"We want that the commission play an effective role, and, to make it more effective, the chairman and members of the commission should be given constitutional posts," he said.

Shujan Secretary Badul Alam Majumder said, apart from political will, a proper legal structure, active institutions and social awareness are necessary to curb corruption.

Columnist Syed Abul Maksud moderated the roundtable. ASM Shahjahan and Inam Ahmed Chowdhury were present.

Indian Maoists

FROM PAGE 16
remaining CRPF personnel and the Maoists.

The attack comes two days after Maoists set off a land mine blast in Koraput district of eastern state of Orissa, killing 11 security personnel of elite anti-Maoist Special Operations Group.

On February 15, 24 personnel of Eastern Frontier Rifles were killed in a Maoist attack on their camp in West Bengal's West Midnapore district.

Concerned over the incident, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh talked to Home Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram over telephone to make an assessment of the situation. Both of them expressed shock over the attack and grief over the loss of lives.

While the prime minister called it a "horrific" incident, Chidambaram said it showed the "brutality and savagery" of the Maoists.

Chidambaram said something must have gone "drastically wrong" in the joint operations as the CRPF personnel seemed to have walked into a trap laid by the Maoists.

Helicopters were placed to evacuate the injured and bring back the bodies, Chhattisgarh Director General of Police Viswa Ranjan said.

Water crisis

FROM PAGE 16
The city dwellers have been facing acute water crisis over the last few weeks.

The army men would maintain security and manage smooth supply of water at every zone across the capital.

Wasa sources said it currently produces some 190 crore litres of water a day, whereas the demand goes up to 220 crore litres during summer.

Meanwhile, locals of Gulshan road No. 24-32 held a meeting to find ways to overcome water crisis in the area.

Asif Ibrahim, a resident of the area, said people are not getting water from the main pipeline over the last three to four weeks. They bring water from nearby areas by tanklorry.

Some of the residents will meet this evening to discuss how to mobilise support for a campaign seeking an immediate resolution of the crisis.

Diarrhoea

FROM PAGE 16
vehicles it is providing safe water to the areas where there are acute water crisis.

If there is leakage in the water line, the dirty water may enter into the pipe and contaminate it, they said.

Very soon Wasa will be able to provide safe water to the slum areas with the help of the NGOs, sources said.

Furthermore, Wasa has taken a long-term project under the ADP to replace all the pipelines in the city, sources added.

Campaign

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Ansar and VDP, National Security Intelligence, Rapid Action Battalion, and the director general of Prime Minister's Office.

Home ministry officials say the ministries put little importance on the campaign although the government showed seriousness in combating militancy.

"The home ministry itself is not as serious as it was before," a senior official told The Daily Star seeking anonymity.

In the last meeting, each of the ministries and authorities was given specific tasks but they failed to deliver. Only the religious affairs ministry arranged some religious gatherings last winter highlighting the impacts of militancy.

The education ministry has been asked to organise teacher-student conventions at district, upazila and union levels on militancy. It was also supposed to take measures to incorporate essays and short stories in textbooks from the session 2010.

"But no representative from the education ministry attended the last meeting to talk about its activities," said a deputy secretary of the home

Buriganga grabbing

FROM PAGE 1
directives, including one upon the government, to complete the demolition of illegal structures and remove the debris by November 30 this year.

On January 24 this year, the HC again directed the government to start the demolition as stipulated by its earlier previous order.

As directed by two district administration surveyors, who carried lists and proper maps of the area, the bulldozer moved first to demolish well-protected premises of Insaf Foods. A large signboard in front of the gate warned that the HC in 2002 had issued a permanent stay order against any move to demolish the premises.

Its owner Haji Mohammad Enayet Ullah told The Daily Star over phone that the demolition team had no right to break any part of his industrial structure.

"We have a valid High Court order which forbids anyone from demolishing our premises. This demolition is illegal," Enayet Ullah claimed.

The President of the Sultanganj unit of the Awami League Haji Solaiman also protested the move for demolition and rang up the local lawmaker and also State

Pakistan envoy

FROM PAGE 1
media," he said.

"Pakistan believes in sovereignty of Bangladesh and there is no question to interfere by Pakistan in the internal affair of this country," Qureshi told reporters after meeting with Law Minister Shafique Ahmed at his secretariat office yesterday afternoon.

The Pakistan envoy, however, said his county has not yet made any formal statement about trial of war criminals in Bangladesh.

Replying to a question, he said the issue of trial of alleged Pakistani war criminals was settled through the Simla Agreement in 1972.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said the Pakistan high commissioner made it clear that Islamabad will not launch any campaign against Bangladesh government's initiative to hold trial of those who committed crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

"Pakistan has changed its position about holding trial of war criminals in Bangladesh," he said, adding that only the war criminals in Bangladesh will be tried.