

NEWS IN *brief*

AL leader assaults UNO

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Natore*

A local Awami League leader assaulted an Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) as a mobile court fined a brickfield for burning wood and polluting environment at Lalpur here yesterday.

A mobile court led by UNO Zahirul Islam raised 'Seven Star Brick Kiln' of the local AL leader Tofael Hossain Tipu at Ramkrishnapur village at about 3:00 pm.

Zahirul said they asked Nantu Miah, brother of Tipu, to show the court licence of the brickfield as the owner was not present there.

The UNO said Nantu assaulted him as the court decided to fine the brickfield for polluting the environment and running it without licence.

Stolen cables, drugs recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Police arrested nine people and recovered stolen electric cables, Yaba tablets, and Phensedyl during three separate drives here in the wee hours of yesterday.

Six persons were held and around 700-kg of electric cables seized at Coronal Jones road around 2:00am in a drive by Pahartali police.

In another drive, Double Mooring police recovered 28 pieces of Yaba tablet at Badamtali intersection around 2:00am, detaining two persons -- Abu Taher, 42, and Lokman, 38.

18 business houses fined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court initiated by BSTI Monday fined Tk 7.15 lakh to 18 business houses and two persons in and around the city for illegal production and marketing of water.

The business houses are Safe International at Senpara, Bondhan Drinking Water, Mohna Drinking Water, Male Food and Health Ltd at Savar, Wifaz and Brothers, Yias Pure Drinking Water, Smart Food and Beverage and Musa Consumers Products at Mohammadpur, AK Food Productions at South Monipur, Elegance Food Products at Sukrabad, Duncan Products Ltd at Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Thirsty Water System at Turag, Sharif and Co at West Shewrapara, Sip Pure Drinking Water at Kazipara, Human Health Food Products at Sayadabad, Swan Corporation Adabar, Osmo Drinking Water while one Russell and Mahmudul Huq at Karwanbazar.

These trading houses and individuals were fined for selling water of Canny, Bondhon, Swan, Kings, Shoshi, Yias, Saudia, Revival, First Drop, Duncan, Mohna, Thirsty Water, Lotus, Moon Drop, Kistal, Sip, Nyagra and Osmo brands.

Vivekananda's birthday today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 149th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, Ramakrishna Math and Mission will arrange offering special puja (prayers), readings scriptures, and performing hymns.

Other programmes include a discussion titled "The Life and Ideal of Swami Vivekananda" at 6:30pm.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Pramod Mankin will be present as the chief guest at the programme with Prof Dr Paresh Mandal in the chair.

Swarna's killing: Probe demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday demanded fair investigation into the killing of Swarna Khatun, a SSC examinee from Ishwardi in Pabna.

It also demanded immediate arrest of the killer and ensure security to her family. The parishad sent a statement signed by its President Ayesha Khanam.

Swarna, a candidate for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exam, was killed allegedly by her boyfriend Anwar Hossain Anu on Sunday. Her body was found the next morning.

10 hurt as DU students clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 students of Dhaka University were injured in a clash between two groups at a restaurant in the city's New Market area yesterday. The injured were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital from where they were released after first aid.

Campus sources said the clash began when a student of Shahnewaz Hostel of the university hit a student of the Institute of Social Welfare and Research at Niribili Restaurant following an altercation over taking a seat for breakfast.

DU Proctor Dr KM Saiful Islam Khan said an inquiry committee will be formed to find out the students responsible for the incident.



Common Interest Group Against Cigarette forms a human chain at Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday demanding that prices of cigarette be increased to prevent the harms of the tobacco product.

PHOTO: STAR

Stay order on Jhalakathi polls upheld

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld a High Court (HC) verdict that declared illegal the schedule of the Jhalakathi municipality election slated for January 27.

Justice SK Sinha, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, did not pass any order on a petition filed against the HC judgment.

Abdul Halim Gazi, a voter in the municipality, filed the writ petition with the HC on January 23 challenging the voter list of Ward-7.

The HC verdict now remains valid, as the SC did not pass any order against it, lawyer Toufiq Inam Tipu, a counsel for the writ petitioner, told The Daily Star.

Move on to buy hydropower from Myanmar

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has initiated a dialogue with a Myanmarese company to buy hydropower from Rakhaine State of the neighbouring country.

"Discussion is going on and I myself had talks with the company officials about importing electricity," Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.

The private firm has been awarded contracts to set up two hydropower projects, mentioned the minister adding, of the two, one 80 megawatt plant will start production in 2015 and another 800 megawatt project will be operative in 2018.

"I met with them on January 23 in Yangon during my visit there to attend the 13th ministerial meeting of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the company agreed to sell hydropower on completion of the projects."

She mentioned that import of electricity from Myanmar would require

two grid lines in either side of the border. However, pricing of electricity is yet to be finalised.

Referring to her meeting with the Myanmar foreign minister, Dipu Moni said various bilateral issues including repatriation of both registered and undocumented Myanmar citizens and easing visa regime were discussed.

Replying to a query she said the Myanmar authorities agreed to repatriate its refugees as early as possible. She said 28,000 Myanmar refugees are in Bangladesh camps while the figure of unregistered citizens might be 3 to 5 lakh.

Regarding decision to set up permanent secretariat of BIMSTEC in Dhaka, she said it's a big achievement for Bangladesh and hoped the secretariat will be operational within this year. However, the construction of the permanent building will take a few more years, she added.

The minister termed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to UAE successful.

The premier had talks with her UAE counterpart Sheikh Mohammad Bin

Rashid al Maktoum and the foreign minister. The UAE has agreed to assist developing infrastructure and setting up oil refinery in Bangladesh, noted the minister.

About issuing Machine Readable Passports (MRP) to the Bangladeshi expatriates in UAE, she said Bangladesh missions in UAE will issue the modern passport to meet the December 31 deadline set by UAE.

If we miss the deadline, the UAE authorities have agreed to consider extending the time limit, she added.

Presently there are about more than seven lakh Bangladeshi workers in UAE.

Asked about the fate of Bangladeshi mariners on board the hijacked ship MV Jahan Moni, the minister said all of them are in good health and efforts are underway to free them.

Efforts are underway also to rescue five Bangladeshi workers abducted by Afghan criminals, stated the minister adding, the government is in regular contact with the Afghanistan authorities.

Correction

In a report published Tuesday (January 25, 2011) in The Daily Star under the headline "US to hand over killers of Bangabandhu", US Ambassador James F Moriarty was quoted as saying that killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman hiding in the United States would be handed over to Bangladesh after law is enacted.

The ambassador was responding to the question "How is America going to help bring them [the alleged killers] back to Bangladesh?" And he in fact said: "We have a legal process back in the States that has to be followed before anything like that can happen. Since that legal process is underway, I cannot really comment on it. It's not appropriate for a US executive official to comment on the US judicial process." We sincerely regret the error.

'Remove CHT land commission chief'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) yesterday demanded immediate removal of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Commission Chairman Khademul Islam Chowdhury accusing him of acting against the peace accord.

Leaders of the organisation raised the demand at a protest rally held at the capital's Muktangon.

The rally also pushed for amending the CHT Land Commission Act in the winter session of the parliament.

They urged the government to announce a roadmap to implement the CHT peace treaty within a specific time frame.

10 projects of Tk 6,653cr okayed

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) yesterday approved 10 development projects involving Tk 6,653 crore, including one to develop infrastructure in municipalities (pourashavas) at a cost of Tk 1,151 crore from the government fund.

The approval was given at its meeting at the NEC in the city with Ecne Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. "Of the total project cost of Tk 6,653 crore, Tk 6,055 crore will come from the government exchequer while the remaining Tk 598 crore as project assistance," Planning Division Secretary M Monzur Hossain told journalists after the meeting.

He said the project will be implemented in 254 municipalities and two other projects were earlier approved for infrastructure development in some 54 municipalities. "The pressure of people towards the municipal towns is increasing and businesses are also flourishing fast

there. The project has been taken to increase facilities in the municipalities that lack funds, he said, adding that roads and drains will be developed under the project.

The Ecne meeting also approved establishment of the Essential Drugs Company (3rd plant) to be implemented at a cost of Tk 315 crore, to be borne by the government exchequer.

Under the project, a penicillin production unit, an IV fluid unit and a contraceptive unit will be set up on 10 acres of land in Gopalganj. Besides, there will be arrangements for quality control, production of raw materials and other packaging materials.

The project objectives include production of different life savings drugs including contraceptive materials for local consumption, as well as for export purpose. The project will be completed by September, 2013.

The other projects approved in the meeting are flood control embankment protection project on the right bank of the river Jamuna at Antartara, Daripara and adjacent areas in Bogra

(Tk 117 crore); stipend project for primary education 2nd revised (Tk 3900 crore); higher education quality enhancement project (HEQEP) revised (Tk 681 crore); extension and development project of Pathantuli road in Chittagong (Tk 40 crore); river dredging project in Madaripur-Charmuguria-Tekerhat-Gopalganj (Tk 148 crore); construction of new motel in Motel Saikat compound in Chittagong and to extend sideways of Hotel Shaibal in Cox's Bazar (Tk 45 crore); Kotalipara-Rajoir road development project (Tk 85 crore); and Nakla-Nalitabari-Nakugaon Land Port road development project (Tk 171 crore).

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Planning Minister AK Khandker, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen, Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan, LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quaderattended the meeting.

Many leave schools for mistreatment: Study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Many children are also excluded from schools for sitting on back benches, wearing dirty clothes and not being among the top tier in their classes, says a study.

It says these children are branded as bad students and remain largely ignored and overlooked by their teachers.

The study titled "Exploring the Dynamics of Exclusion in Education" was conducted on 183 children in 17 schools of four districts in the country.

The Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) conducted the study in collaboration with Save the Children Sweden Denmark.

The findings of the research were unveiled at a programme at the Spectra Convention Centre in the city yesterday.

"Many students are even excluded and mistreated for wearing unclean clothes or having unkempt nails," said Sarwan Basher, research associate at FIVDB. "Many of them are from underprivileged families and therefore may not actually afford new clothes."

Speaking as chair, former advisor to the caretaker government Rasheda K Choudhury said the country's constitution underlines education as a fundamental principle, which is more than just a basic right.

Members of the parliament MA Mannan and Hafiz Ahmed Majumdar, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) Dr Qazi Khaliqzaman Ahmad and Country Director of Save the Children Sweden-Denmark Birgit Lundbak also spoke.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:40pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 29.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 09.0 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.8	12.6	74	57
Chittagong	28.4	14.0	69	55
Rajshahi	26.4	10.0	97	74
Rangpur	22.9	10.7	93	79
Khulna	27.5	13.0	95	73
Barisal	28.0	12.0	78	80



Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Muslim Mia, father of Rozina Islam, a senior reporter of the Daily Prothom Alo, says press release.

To mark the day, His family will hold a milad-mahfil and Qurankhawni after Asar prayers at his Basabo residence.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.



People greet Arch Bishop Patrick De Rozario CSC at Kakrail Church in the capital on his arrival in Dhaka for Chittagong yesterday. Rozario has been appointed Arch Bishop from Vatican City recently. The appointment letter was read out at the felicitation programme attended by priests, fathers, and sisters from Ramna Church in the city.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA



Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Zulfia Ahmad, daughter of late Capt (rtd) SA Laskar and Begum Hamida Laskar, passed away at Combined Military Hospital yesterday.

She left behind her husband, daughter and one son. Her quikhwani will be held at Banani DOHS mosque after Asr prayers on Friday.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to pray for the departed soul.