



Arial Beel Deserted

(Clockwise from top left) Not a farmer is seen in the vast Arial Beel of Munshiganj that the government has selected for building Bangabandhu International Airport. A girl gathers the broken pieces of glass of the house in Hashara area of Sreenagar, Munshiganj after police allegedly ransacked it yesterday. The burnt police outpost at Hashara bazaar that was set ablaze on Monday. Riot police frisk a pedestrian at the market. Hashara bazaar was completely deserted, as people fled the area fearing police action. The wailing mother of Ajit Sarkar who was arrested over Monday's violence. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

SSC EXAMS BEGIN

6,583 candidates absent, 23 expelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 6,583 candidates were absent on the first day of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and its equivalent examinations while 23 students were expelled for resorting to unfair means.

Eight education boards, one Madrasa Education Board and one Technical Education Board are conducting the month-long SSC, Dakhil and SSC vocational examinations for 2011 with the examinees taking Bangla First Paper examination on the first day yesterday.

Among the expelled students, nine are from Madrasa Board; five from Technical Board; three each from Dinajpur and Dhaka Boards; one each from Rajshahi, Jessore and Barisal Boards, according to the education ministry control room.

This year the total number of examinees under ten education boards is 13,15,002, which is around 1.08 lakh more than the last year's. Some 6,78,293 male and 6,36,709 female students from 26,297 educational institutions are taking part in the exams in 2,181 centres across the country.

Apart from having the highest number of

expelled students, Madrasa Board also had the highest number of absentees on the first day of the exam. Some 3,367 students did not take part in the exam from this board alone.

Of the rest of the absentees, 862 are from Dhaka board; 630 from Jessore; 405 from Comilla; 380 from Technical; 311 from Rajshahi; 266 from Dinajpur; 147 from Barisal; 138 from Chittagong and 77 from Sylhet boards.

But there was no report of disturbance from any centres across the country.

The examinees said the question was easy and they did not feel any problem in yesterday's exam.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid visited Mohammadpur Government High School and Lalmatia Girls High School centres in the capital and expressed satisfaction over the peaceful atmosphere there.

He said the government is earnestly trying to ensure a safe, peaceful, and copying-free atmosphere in the exam centres, and a sign of that atmosphere is being witnessed in the exam centres.

The examinees would sit for Bangla Second Paper exam tomorrow.

PROF AZAD KILLING Charge framing against 4 cops March 30

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed March 30 for framing charges against four police officials, including the then officer-in-charge (OC) of Ramna Police Station, in a case filed for falsely implicating and torturing a Dhaka University student in connection with attempt to kill Prof Humayun Azad.

The cops are Mahbubur Rahman, the then OC of Ramna Police Station, sub-inspectors Rezaul Karim and Naser Ali of the police station and sergeant Anwar Hossain.

Third Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Ali Hussain set the date after the four accused and the complainant of the case appeared before the court.

A gang of miscreants attacked Prof Humayun Azad in front of Bangla Academy when he was on his way back home on February 27, 2004 leaving him seriously injured.

Concern over Arial Beel violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday expressed concern over the violent incident in Arial Beel area for establishing a new airport that left a police officer dead and hundreds of people including journalists injured on Monday.

In a statement, Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) said any form of protest should be peaceful and ASK did not support such a violent form of protest.

It also said though development and people's support is synonymous but the opinion of the people often seen ignored while formulating a development project.

The government should be alert about it otherwise it would not be possible to resist repetition of such tragic incident, it said.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) leaders said the government's obstinacy about constructing airport in face of people's protest has made the situation violent.

"Such obstinacy is a reflection of irresponsible behaviour of the government and it is harmful and suicidal for the country," CPB leaders said in a statement.

The people are not clear about some questions including the rationale of a new airport, benefits of the people and the country, amount of destruction of arable lands and fisheries by the project, they said.

The government has to think about these matters carefully and set their next course of action, they said.

The CPB leaders demanded stop of the activities in Arial Beel area.

Gono Sanghati Andolan and Gonotantrik Baam Morcha urged the government to cancel the initiative immediately.

Jatiya Press Club and Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh protested and condemned the incident of beating journalists and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the culprits.

Nazrul slams government as Khaleda sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan here yesterday criticised the government, as a ruling Awami League leader sued BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia over Monday's violence in Munshiganj that left a policeman dead and many people injured.

Munshiganj district town AL President and public prosecutor (PP) Advocate Abdul Matin yesterday lodged a case against Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia for instigating the violence. The case was filed with Munshiganj Judicial Magistrate's Court.

Khan also blamed the government for undertaking to build an airport grabbing the farmland of Arial Beel only for publicity of one man's name. He called for mass movement against the misrule of the AL-led government.

He was addressing a rally at Laldighi Maidan in the port city yesterday. Chittagong divisional unit of Jatiyabadi Sramik Dal organised the rally on the occasion of its biennial conference inaugurated by BNP Vice Chairman Abdullah Al Noman.

Former Foreign Minister Morshed Khan was the chief guest at the rally. On the same occasion, the unit Sramik Dal also gave a reception to Nazrul Islam for his being a member of BNP standing committee.

BNP Chittagong city unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Chittagong City Corporation Mayor (CC) Mohammad Manjur Alam were not present at the rally, though their names were announced as guests.

Azad for objective journalism

BSS, Dhaka

Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday said the grand alliance government believes in free flow of information.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a function marking the 12th anniversary of vernacular daily Jugantar on the premises of its Motijheel office.

Now the journalists can work freely, he said and stressed the need for objectivity and accuracy in publishing reports.

Abul Kalam Azad said publishing reports on different problems is not the only responsibility of the media. There should be proper guidelines for resolving those problems, he added.

BNP Standing Committee Members Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain and Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, Rashed Khan Menon, MP, veteran journalist and columnist ABM Musa, former Dhaka University vice-Chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, former caretaker government adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury, educationist Dr Farashuddin Ahmed.



Seminar

Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd will arrange a scientific seminar. Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Time: 12:30pm.

Workshop

A workshop on 'Management of Major Irrigation System and Its Challenges: A Way Forward' will be held. Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Time: 9:30am.

Anti-tobacco programme

National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh and United Forum Against Tobacco will jointly launch an anti-tobacco awareness programme. Venue: National Heart Foundation Hospital, Mirpur-2, Time: 9:30am.

Sit-in

Work for Better Bangladesh Trust will hold a sit-in programme. Venue: In front

Steps set to get Ganges water share: Ramesh

BSS, Sangsad Bhaban

The government is taking all necessary measures to uphold the country's interests through securing adequate amount of Ganges water as per the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty signed with India in 1996.

Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen said this in the House in reply to a question from Anwar Hossain of Pirojpur-3.

He said that works for dredging the Karnaphuli River and protection of Laxmipur from Meghna River erosion are now under process for approval of the Ecneq.

"The government is preparing a DPP for re-excavation of rivers and canals and the water resources ministry needs 11 lakh tonnes of food to start the work under the food for work programme," he added.

The minister said the government is also making efforts to procure dredging machine from abroad to launch the dredging works in major rivers.

Ramesh Sen said the water resources ministry has undertaken a plan to reconstruct 36.51 kilometers of embankment in the Aila-hit Bhola district at a cost of Tk 28.24 crore.

The Daily Star

JOB OPPORTUNITY

The Daily Star, the most widely circulated English daily of this country, is going to appoint the following competent candidates for building maintenance of the newly constructed 9-storied The Daily Star Centre at 64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215:

- 1 (one) Diploma Engineer (Mechanical or Electrical) with minimum 10 years practical experience in planned preventive maintenance work & smooth operation of central air-conditioning system, lifts, sub-station, generators, CCTV, fire protection, plumbing, etc of high rise building.
- 1 (one) Electrician-cum-Plumber with minimum 10 years practical experience in operation & maintenance work of the above systems and assist the Diploma Engineer in day-to-day work.

Attractive salary package for competent candidates. Applicants fulfilling the above requirements are requested to apply with full Bio-Data along with attested copies of all educational, experience and training certificates and a recent passport size photograph to the In-charge HR, The Daily Star, 64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215, so as to reach by 10 February, 2011. Envelopes must be marked with the post applied for on the top.