

Nation observes Bangabandhu's birthday today

METRO DESK

The government and various socio-cultural and political organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the 91st birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Children's Day.

BSS adds: The nation will observe the 91st birth anniversary of Bangabandhu and the National Children's Day today with due respect and festivity.

The day is a public holiday. Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television and private TV and radio stations will air special programmes, while national dailies will publish special supplements highlighting the significance of the day.

Paying rich tributes to Bangabandhu, President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion.

President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will visit Tungipara, the birthplace of Bangabandhu, this morning and place wreaths and offer munajat at his mazar there.

The prime minister will address a children's rally on the mazar premises, open a library and distribute sewing machines among the distressed people.

After returning from Tungipara, the president will inaugurate the National Children's Day programme to be arranged by Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela at Bangabhaban at 12 noon.

Bangladesh Awami League has drawn up countrywide elaborate programmes to observe the day in a befitting manner.

The programmes include hoisting of the national and party flags at Bangabandhu Bhaban in the city and Awami League offices across the country at 6:30 am, placing of wreaths at the portrait of the Father of the Nation in front of Bangabandhu Bhaban at Dhanmondi at 7:00am.

A central delegation of the party led by its President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will place wreaths at Bangabandhu's mazar at Tungipara.

Sheikh Hasina will address as the chief guest a discussion to be organised by Awami League at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city at 4:00pm on Friday.

Court summons 'bribe taker' SI April 13

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday summoned a sub-inspector of Mirpur Police Station to appear before it on April 13 in connection with a case filed against him for his involvement in taking Tk 5,000 as bribe from the complainant of a case.

Judge Mohammad Zohurul Haque of Senior Special Judge's court passed the order after taking the charge against SI Rakibul Hassan into cognisance.

On March 3, Jahangir Alam, assistant director of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), submitted to the court the probe report against the SI.

Jahangir in his report said he investigated the incident that SI Rakibul took Tk 5,000 in bribe from Ferdous Ara, complainant of another case.

During the investigation, Jahangir recorded statements of Ferdous Ara and 14 others and found Rakibul involved.

ACC Assistant Director Anwarul Haq filed the case against Rakibul on December 19, 2010 with the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka for committing such offence.

CNG-RUN 3-WHEELER IN CITY

Hassle continues as drivers flout rules

HELEMUL ALAM

Around 10:00am on Thursday, young boy Morshed Hossain with a plaster cast on his broken leg at Pallabi 11½ bus stop in the city was struggling to hire a CNG-run three-wheeler.

But the drivers present there did not want to go to his destination, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital in Shahbagh.

After futile effort for over an hour, Morshed hired a rickshaw and went to Purabi bus stop, adjacent to Pallabi, in quest of one but faced the same situation.

Though a driver showed his interest to go, he demanded Tk 200 as fare, a distance that costs Tk 100 to 150 by metre. On the other hand, even if Morshed goes by metre, he has

to pay Tk 20 more on what the metre read reaching his destination, in compliance with the driver's demand.

I was talking to Morshed while he was bargaining with the driver, Ruhul Amin. As soon as Ruhul realised that a journalist is present, he immediately expressed his willingness to go by metre, without additional charges.

"I failed to reach the doctor by 11:00am as the drivers are unwilling to go there," said Morshed.

Similarly, Afroza Begum, a resident of Forashganj in Old Dhaka, was in urgent need to reach Shikdar Medical College Hospital as her relative died in the morning. She too failed to hire any auto-rickshaw after trying for about an hour.

When one did agree, he said he could go only up to Dhanmondi 15 instead of the full distance to Shikdar, putting the blame on an empty gas tank.

Like Morshed and Afroza, many city dwellers are suffering this phenomenon: the CNG-driven 3-wheeler drivers are not obey-

ing the government decision to go by metre.

According to the government decision, every CNG-run three-wheeler is also bound to go as per passenger requirement.

Violation of these rules is frequently occurring, as drives by both Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Traffic and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) are now infrequent.

Tapan Kumar Sarkar, director enforcement of BRTA, said its special drives are now paused and will resume soon.

During the drive, beginning January 16 and ending February 8, BRTA filed 1,062 cases against defaulting drivers and fined them around Tk 4.91 lakh, said Tapan.

For similar reasons, the team also seized 40 CNG-run three-wheelers and scrapped them on dumping grounds, he said.

"The mobile court's job includes checking whether any auto-rickshaw driver is charging extra fare, is going by metre and going to destination as per passenger requirement.

"It also sees whether seals of the designated company and BRTA are on the metre after calibration and whether any

privately owned three wheeler is plying commercially," said Tapan.

Additional Commissioner Mili Biswas of DMP Traffic said they are continuing drive against the violators.

The government took the decision on January 16, setting a charge of Tk 25 (previously Tk 14) for the first two kilometres and Tk 7 (previously Tk 6) for each subsequent kilometre.

Responding to the owners' demand, the government also increased the daily rent an auto-rickshaw driver has to pay to the owner to Tk 600 from Tk 450. The government fixed the minimum fare at Tk 25, from a previous Tk 18.

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Treasurer of Dhaka University (DU) Prof Mijanur Rahman and Vice President Research of Saskatchewan University of Canada sign an MoU between the two universities at a local hotel yesterday. DU VC AAMS Arefin Siddique, Commerce Minister Muhammad Faruk Khan and Premier of Saskatchewan Province of Canada Brad Wall were also present.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Proposal on 832 flats for low-income group okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will provide 1,230 square feet flats to low and medium income people at Mirpur in the city within a price range of Tk 45 to 50 lakh on hire purchase basis.

Cabinet committee on purchase yesterday approved a proposal to construct 832 such flats under Anandanagar Residential Flat Construction project at Mirpur with an estimated cost of Tk 248 crore.

Each 14-storied building will have 52 flats. Each contractor -- Civil Engineers Ltd, Biswas Trading and Construction, Ena Properties Ltd, and KSLB-JVCEL-H&S JV will construct four buildings.

Housing and public works ministry's proposal said if solar panel is installed and rain water harvesting is added with the

buildings, each flat will cost Tk 48.89 lakh. Without them, each flat will be priced at Tk 45.89 lakh.

The government planned construction of 33 buildings under the project on 7.50 acre land at city's Mirpur.

The committee also awarded China Communication Construction Col Ltd, a consultant firm, the contract to conduct feasibility study for construction of a tunnel under Karnaphuli River in Chittagong at a cost of Tk 12.43 crore.

Proposal to purchase 41,486 electric poles for greater Mymensingh and Sylhet regions was also okayed. Charka SPC Poles Ltd JV got the Tk 79.24 crore work order.

Besides, the committee approved a proposal to import 25,000 metric tonnes of urea fertiliser from Qatar at a cost of Tk 70 crore.

'Block financial sources of militants'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday demanded the government to expedite trial of people who committed war crimes and crimes against humanity and block financial sources of militants.

An immediate trial is a prerequisite to ensure democracy and progress of society, they said, demanding the ban on communal politics and trial of all grenade attacks including the one on 21 August.

Shamprodayikata-Jangibad Birodhi Mancha (a platform against communalism and militancy) organised the rally at Central Shaheed Minar in the city where its Joint Convenor Ziauddin Tarik Ali read out a dec-

laration of the platform.

"Why should we demand the trial? Those who committed crimes against humanity have to be tried. A quick trial would rid the nation of the stigma," said Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali.

Industries Minister Dilip Barua said the trial of war criminals will be held and verdict of the trial will be made effective in this land.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu said the politicians would have to ensure trial of those arrested.



This photo taken yesterday shows Bashbari Khal (canal) near Mohammadpur Beribadh area in the city full of rubbish despite regular drives to keep it clean as locals continue dumping their garbage in it.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

Teen girl jumps to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young woman jumped to death from a six-storey residential hotel while law enforcers were raiding the hotel in the city's Rampura Tuesday night.

Dead is Sumi Akhter, 18, a resident of West Shewrapara in the city. Sumi hails from Bhola.

Rab raided Mirja Abashik Hotel at Chowdhuripara in Rampura at 8:00pm Tuesday.

Parvin Akhter, roommate of Sumi, quoted locals as saying they saw Sumi falling from the building onto the ground and died on the spot.

OC Sayedur of Rampura Police said Sumi jumped in fear while the Rab team raided the hotel.

JCD feud leads

FROM PAGE 20

"We will be able to arrest the others very soon," said the SP. Feuds among different groups of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) caused the murder.

Meanwhile, a dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the JCD, a wing of BNP, was held peacefully in Narsingdi yesterday except for a few stray incidents of chase and counter chase between pickets and policemen.

The police barred district BNP president Khairul Kabir Khokon from holding rallies in the town as a precautionary measure to avoid any violence.

There have been disputes between BNP and JCD rank and file after the recent declaration of new JCD committee in Narsingdi. Those who did not like the new leadership dubbed the new committee as a handpicked one by Khokon.

On Tuesday, a gang of youths entered the college and opened fire on college unit JCD chief Roni.

Roni, also general secretary of the college students' union, died in the attack inside the students' union office. Another student was bullet injured.

Yesterday morning Roni's elder brother Abul Fazal filed a murder case with Narsingdi Sadar Police Station accusing 16 persons, mostly present and ex-JCD leaders and activists of the district, and seven to eight others unidentified.

Fazal said feuds in the rank and file of JCD were the reasons behind the killing.

He also alleged that ex-general secretary of the students' union Mohsin Hossain Bidyut had issued threats to Roni several times.

During yesterday's Hartal, leaders and activists of the district JCD unit brought out a procession in the town and demanded arrests of Roni's killers.

Delwar's death condoled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties and professional organisations in separate statements yesterday expressed shock over the death of Bangladesh Nationalist Party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad said Bangladesh lost a veteran and patriotic politician. He prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam said the country has lost a politician who was dedicated to parliamentary democracy.

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka also expressed shock over the death of the veteran politician.

Jatiya Party Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju and Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam; Bangladesh Jatiya Party Chairman Andaliv Rahman Partha; Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami acting Ameer Makbul Ahmed and acting Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam also expressed shock over the death of Khadaker Delwar Hossain.

Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association and Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Parishad also expressed shock.

They said Delwar played an important role in different democratic movements in the country and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Meanwhile, Chief Whip Abdus Shahid; Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Anisur Rahman Mallik; Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal General Secretary Khalequzzaman and Bangladesh Shikhhak Karmachari Oikkyajote Chairman Md Selim Bhuiyan also expressed shock over the death of Delwar. (Story on Page 1)

Child buried under soil dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-year-old girl died when she was accidentally buried under soil in the city's Shyampur area yesterday.

Suborna Akhter, 6, is the daughter of Mizanur Rahman, a resident Shyampur Wasa Pukur Par.

Suborna was playing with other children near a drain which had loose soil piled on its edge. When she fell into the drain, the mound of soil fell on top of her, said Officer-in-Charge Kazi Ayubur Rahman of Kadamtoli Police Station.

4 brick kilns fined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined four brickfields in Faridpur Tk 8.5 lakh for hoarding and burning logs illegally.

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