

NEWS IN *brief*

HC directive to demolish BGMEA

Bhaban hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolan (Bapa) yesterday expressed contentment that the High Court has ordered demolition of the BGMEA building at Hatirjheel in the city.

In a written statement, Bapa described the ruling as historic and said it would serve as a milestone in protecting other water bodies across the country.

Bapa leaders also strongly demanded rapid implementation of the HC order and punishment to those who have misled the country's leaders to illegally construct the building, reads the statement signed by Bapa general secretary Dr M Abdul Matin.

Nine awarded CR Das gold medal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deshbandhu CR Das Research Council has announced the name of nine personalities who are awarded "Deshbandhu CR Das Gold Medal" for their outstanding contributions in their respective fields over the last three years.

The awardees are recipients are Air Vice-Marshall (retd) AK Khandaker, freedom fighter; Advocate Sultana Kamal, human rights activist; Valerie Ann Taylor, medical social service; Tamara Rahman Ali, social service; Shaikh Seraj, promotion of agriculture; Emdadul Haque Milon, literature; Iftekhar Uddin Farhad, industrialist; Musa Ibrahim, conquering Mount Everest; Neaz Ahed, banking; and Dr Shuvo Roy, bio-medical engineering.

The awards for the years of 2008, 2009, and 2010 will be handed over to the recipients at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city in the month of May, says a press release.

Former secretary Abdullah Haroon Pasha, chairman of the Award Selection Committee of the council, will preside over the ceremony.

Charges against Tuku framed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal President Sultan Salauddin Tuku and 10 others for assaulting police and ransacking vehicles during a dawn-to-dusk hartal on November 14, 2010.

The court also issued an arrest warrant against Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Councillor Abul Khair alias Dablu and framed charge against him in absentia as he went into hiding since filing of the case.

After rejecting the discharge petitions submitted by Tuku and the others, Metropolitan Magistrate Joynab Begum of the Speedy Trial Court-8 passed the order and fixed May 3 for the trial.

The accused, now on bail, claimed themselves innocent and demanded justice before the court after the charges were read out to them.

The other accused are Nizam Makdum alias Masum, Moniruzzaman Dudu, Nizamuddin, Azmal Hossain Pilot, Abul Bashar Siddiqui, Shahjamal Khan, Towhidul Islam, Abu Hanif, Mohammad Rabiul Islam and Mohammad Selim.

According to the prosecution at about 6:30pm on November 14 last year, a group of 25 people led by Tuku and Khair assaulted sergeant Abul Bashar Akond and vandalised several vehicles at Russell Square in the city's Dhanmondi area during the countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal, enforced by the main opposition party BNP.

Police arrested ten picketers from the spot while Tuku and Khair fled the scene.

Zahidur new DG of Ansar, VDP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Major General Md Zahidur Rahman was appointed director general of Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP), says a press release of Ansar and VDP Headquarters yesterday.

He began discharging duties on Sunday after taking charge from outgoing director general Major General Chowdhury Hasan Sarwordi Bir Bikram, NDC, PSC, on March 31.

TAGORE'S 150TH BIRTHDAY

Dhaka team goes to Delhi today

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, *New Delhi*

A five-member official delegation from Bangladesh arrives here today to finalise joint celebrations of Rabindranath Tagore's 150th birth anniversary.

The delegation led by Bangladesh Culture Secretary Suraiya Begum will hold meeting with its Indian counterpart headed by Jawahar Sircar here on April 7 and 8. They would add finishing touches to the joint commemorative programmes expected to start in Delhi on May 7 and in Dhaka the next day.

Sircar led an Indian delegation to Dhaka last year to finalise Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's proposal to his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina for the celebrations.

The decision for joint celebrations was taken during Hasina's visit to New Delhi in January last year and was contained in the joint communiqué issued after her talks with Manmohan.

High commissioners of both countries, secretaries of the culture ministries, and representatives of Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Dhaka University had discussions during the Indian delegation's visit.

Scholars and cultural personalities like Sankho Ghosh, Bharati Ray, Sutapa Talukdar, Ramendu Majumdar, Sanjida Khatun, Sayed Hassan Imam and Laila Hassan also attended these talks.

The Indian delegation visited some of places in Bangladesh, including Shilaidaha, associated with Tagore. Tagore had introduced modern methods of cultivation at Shilaidaha and later at Santiniketan.



PHOTO: BNP

James Larocco, director of Near East South Asia, a center for strategic studies, meets BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. US Ambassador James F Moriarty, extreme right, was also present.

Transfer clean tech to LDCs *Dipu Moni urges developed economies*

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday requested developed economies to take positive actions in transferring clean technology to developing nations particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Bangladesh.

"The availability of technology will help us switch from fossil fuel to clean energy option, which is crucial. Equally critical is the availability of technology at affordable price. International initiatives are needed to bridge this technology gap," she said at the first assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in Abu Dhabi.

Dipu said for a country like Bangladesh, high initial investment and lack of proper technologies are the main barriers to achieving the goals. She said the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology can play a significant role in human resource development in clean energy technology.

She said South Asia has a huge energy demand and is dependent on fossil fuel. Nuclear power is gradually becoming prominent in the power landscape. Solar, wind and other renewable energy has also potential,

but to a lesser extent.

Dipu said countries like Bangladesh may be able to enhance capacity for exploring renewable energy potential with international and regional co-operation.

"Our challenges are formidable and global level collective actions are needed to face them. We must invest more on development of technologies on efficient uses of renewable sources for power," she told the meeting.

She said "If we continue to depend on fossil fuel, we would be making irreversible damage to our ecology and bio-diversity. We must rise now and do the needful to contribute to saving our environment, a global public good."

Dipu said despite multiple crises in the past few years, Bangladesh economy has grown at a steady rate of above 6 percent annually in the last one decade. This has created enormous demand for energy and power.

"But we could not fulfill the increasing demand. We could have easily attained growth rate of over 8 percent, had it not been constrained by energy shortages," she said.

The foreign minister said Bangladesh has taken up a number of initiatives on alternative and renewable energy given fast diminishing

fossil fuel reserve as well as harmful effects of hydro-carbon on climate change.

"We have already installed over six hundred fifty thousand solar home systems in remote and rural areas and partnering with the private sector. We are also seeking to use biomass and biogas sources."

She said the government's goal is to create an energy mix with a good balance of hydrocarbon, with various forms of renewable energy to attain sustainable development in an environment friendly manner.

"We have significant coal reserves. But, we are faced with the challenge of employing clean coal technology," she noted.

Dipu said the present government has been encouraging investment in renewable energy and infrastructure development by exempting the commercial production of renewable energy with a tax holiday of 15 years.

She said the government is also planning to meet 25 percent the demand from nuclear source in the near future.

However, she said "We will certainly factor in nuclear safety issues based on our experience with nuclear disasters such as Fukushima Daiichi."

S Arabia to recruit more Bangladeshi workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After a decline in the last three years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is now looking to boost recruitment of manpower from Bangladesh.

A five-member delegation of Saudi Arabian National Recruitment Committee arrived in Dhaka to discuss the issue, officials in expatriates' welfare ministry said yesterday.

The delegation held a meeting with the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) at its office in the capital yesterday. The leaders of Saudi private recruitment agencies said they require a huge number of workers in various sectors.

Saudi Arabia will soon start recruiting more Bangladeshis, Baira Secretary General Ali Haider Chowdhury told The Daily Star after the meeting.

They need workers including domestic helps, personal drivers, doctors, engineers and many more, he added.

"However, one of our crucial issues in the meeting was reducing migration cost. The other was increasing the salaries of our people," Chowdhury said adding, the delegation members assured they would seriously look into the matters.

The Saudi team will hold meetings today with the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain and the officials of the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

Ensure uninterrupted supply of diesel, power *Matia asks ministries*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday asked ministries of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources and Communications to ensure uninterrupted supply of diesel and electricity to meet the need of running irrigation pumps during the peak boro season.

She made the directives to officials following some reports that diesel supply was hampered in various parts of the country, hence creating problems in irrigation, said Agriculture Secretary CQK Mustak Ahmed.

Matia was chairing a meeting at the secretariat where officials from the ministries and Rural Electrification Board were present.

Quoting the minister, Mustak told The Daily Star that now is the peak season for boro cultivation as the plants are flowering and uninterrupted irrigation is crucial.

Hampering irrigation would result in the damage of this major crop, he said. This year nearly 48 lakh hectares of land came under boro cultivation.

Mustak, present at the meeting, said the officials assured that there was no problem in diesel supply. Power ministry officials said every effort was being made to ensure adequate power supply in rural areas.

"Recent rains have turned the situation much better for boro. Demand for diesel is a bit low for now," he said.

One killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

An alleged robber was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and Rapid Action Battalion in Araihaazar upazila here early yesterday.

The dead is Shafiqul Islam, 42, son of late Chan Mia of Daudkandi upazila in Comilla.

Shafiqul was accused in 38 cases, including seven for murder, police said.

A team of Rab-11 raided Gopaldi Dakshinpara area where a group of robbers were preparing to commit a robbery, said a Rab official of Adamzi camp.

Sensing their presence, the robbers opened fire on the law enforcers. This forced Rab members to retaliate triggering the 'gunfight'.

At one stage, Shafiqul was caught in the line of fire while his associates managed to flee the scene, added the official.

Bullet-hit Shafiqul was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Rab recovered one Italian pistol, one shotgun and two cartridges from the spot.

Confirming the incident, Officer-in-Charge of Araihaazar Police Station Syed Nazrul Islam said the body was sent to the hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Domestic help, employer hurt in rooftop fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female domestic help and her employer suffered injuries after the help allegedly jumped from the rooftop of a four-storied building while the employer fell trying to stop her yesterday at city's Siddiqbazar of Bongshal.

The help Asma Akhter, 20, and the employer Zesmin Lucky, 35, were immediately rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital after the fall.

Zesmin said she was cooking in the kitchen around 4:00pm when she saw Asma suddenly running for the roof.

She followed Asma as her attitude aroused her suspicion. When Asma was about to jump, she grabbed her, resulting in a tussle. At a stage, they fell, claimed Zesmin.

Zesmin said Asma, working at her house for the last two months and whose full address she did not know, was saying she would not work but did not say why.

Asma was unconscious in the hospital till filing of this report.

Sub-Inspector Shafiul Islam of Bongshal Police Station said they were investigating into the matter.

Prof Alauddin passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Prof Dr M Alauddin, former chairman of the ENT department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) passed away due to lung cancer at the hospital's ICU yesterday. He was 65, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter, relatives and a host of well-wishers to mourn the death.

His first Namaz-e-janaza was held yesterday at BSMMU. Former health minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, National Professor Dr MR Khan, and Chief Editor of the daily Manobzamin Motiur Rahman Chowdhury attended the janaza. Another janaza was held at Baridhara in the city.

Prof Alauddin, also former president of Jalalabad Foundation, will be buried at his family graveyard at Shrirampur in Dakkhin Surma Upazila of Sylhet after Zohr prayers today.

His qulkhani will be held at his residence in Dhaka after Maghrib prayers next Friday.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Artist Adil Hoque hands over his painting to Prof Md Monimul Hoque, chairperson of Bangladesh Society for Child Neurology, Development & Disability (BSCNDD), at an event organised on the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day.

'Make autistic children's life meaningful'

METRO DESK

A seminar titled "Role of physicians in management of autism" was held on Sunday to mark the World Autism Awareness Day.

Bangladesh Society for Child Neurology, Development & Disability (BSCNDD) organised the event, said a press release here yesterday.

About 300 people, including doctors, psychologists and therapists from government and private hospitals as well as teachers, students and parents of children with autism and special needs, attended the seminar.

Prof Md Monimul Hoque, chairperson of BSCNDD, presided over the programme while Prof Ekhlaur Rahman was present as the special guest.

Dr Farzana Islam, specialist in Child Mental Health, Pediatric Neurosciences Department, Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Dr Selina Husna Banu, associate profes-

sor, Neurosciences Unit, Shishu Shasthya Foundation Hospital were the speakers at its scientific session.

They highlighted diagnosis and treatment, education and training and role of drugs to fight against autism.

Prof Abid Hossain Mollah, Prof of Neonatology Dhaka Medical College Hospital gave the welcome address.

Prof Ekhlaur said there is alarming rise of Autism Spectrum Disorders being presented to Shishu Bikash Kendra in tertiary care public hospitals.

Prof Mizanur Rahman said, "We have to work together to make the life of an autistic child meaningful. It is a great success that BSCNDD has combined doctors, therapists and psychologists to work together for the benefit of children with special needs."

Chairperson Prof Monimul Hoque said, "Autism is not only preventable but also treatable. It is not a psychiatric problem or mental problem, it is a problem in development."

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka, Barisal, Khulna, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours as 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:15pm today and rises at 5:47am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Barisal and lowest 19.8 degrees Celsius at Rajshahi.

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	32.6	20.6	74	61
Chittagong	29.0	23.8	87	80
Rajshahi	32.5	19.8	68	90
Rangpur	28.0	20.5	71	78
Khulna	33.4	22.2	77	56
Barisal	33.6	23.5	75	72

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