

NEWS IN brief

Bus helper dies in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bus helper was killed and a student of Jagannath University (JNU) was injured in separate road accidents in Motijheel and Sadarghat yesterday.

Bus helper Sohel Habib, 25, died on the spot when his head hit a pick-up van queuing at a filling station near Notre Dame College as he was getting on a running bus.

First-year student Murad Hasan, 22, of JNU philosophy department was injured when he fell down while getting on a running bus in front of the university around 1:00pm.

Following the accidents, agitated JNU students vandalised two buses of United Paribahan. They also tried to barricade the road but police brought the situation under control.

Pritilata's 100th birthday today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 100th birth anniversary of Pritilata Waddada, the illustrious anti-British revolutionary from Bengal, who sacrificed her life to liberate her motherland from the colonial rule in 1932.

Pritilata 100th Birth Anniversary Organising Committee will announce a countrywide programme to mark her birthday at Bengal Gallery, Dhanmondi at 11:00am today.

Born in Chittagong on May 5, 1911, Pritilata dreamed of freedom of her country from British rule.

In early 1930s she joined the armed resistance movement led by Mastarda Surya Sen who in 1932 planned an attack on Pahartali European Club.

On September 23, 1932, Pritilata was assigned to lead a team of 10-12 men that would attack the Club. The raid was successful but Pritilata, dressed as a man, was trapped.

She committed suicide by swallowing cyanide that the team was carrying and thus end her short endeavor in fighting for freedom of her country.

Bakul Murder: 3 cops face court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Three court police appeared before a Dhaka court yesterday to explain about the evidence (alamat) of the Rehana Akhter Bakul murder case.

The policemen of Mymensingh Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court submitted three separate petitions to the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1, Dhaka seeking time for filing their written explanation.

After the hearing, the judge fixed May 11 for the explanation. The policemen are Shahid Shokrana, the court inspector, SI Habibur Rahman and former SI Ibrahim Khalil.

Earlier on April 27, Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the tribunal asked the three policemen to appear before it by yesterday for their explanation why they had destroyed evidence of the murder case before its disposal. Bakul was killed by her husband over dowry at Jatia village in Bhaluka upazila of Mymensingh on May 7, 1997. Later a murder case was filed.

Int'l Day of Midwife today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is observing International Day of the Midwife today as elsewhere across the globe through various programmes.

On the occasion, Dr Babatunde Osotimehin, executive director of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), gave a statement yesterday.

The statement said more than one in three women in developing countries give birth alone or with only relatives, barely bothering for a safe delivery.

Birth related complications could easily be prevented by a health worker with the right skills, the right equipment and the right support, he added.

Currently the global shortage of professional midwives is an estimated 350,000, he said, adding that investing in human resources for health is one of the soundest investments a country can make.

PM leaves for Turkey May 7

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka on May 7 for Turkey on a four-day visit to attend the fourth UN Conference on LDCs to be held in Istanbul.

This conference takes place every ten years with the first held in 1981.

Hasina will visit Topkapi Museum and Blue Mosque in Istanbul on May 8.

In the afternoon, she will deliver her statement at the summit of the LDC Group at Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre.

In the morning of May 9, she will attend the inaugural ceremony of the fourth UN Conference on LDCs at Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre.

She will attend a working lunch to be hosted by the Turkish prime minister before joining the afternoon session, which will be followed by ribbon cutting session of the LDC Trade Fair. Hasina will visit the Bangladeshi Stall at the fair.

Later, she will call on Nepalese prime minister and have a meeting with the Turkish prime minister at the same venue.

She will witness the signing of an agreement between the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) for establishing Turkish Bangladesh Business Council (TBBC).

After that Hasina will have meetings with the EU Head of Delegation, head of state or head of government of Finland and Belgium, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Then she will attend a dinner to be hosted by Turkish President Abdullah Gul at Ciragan Palace in Istanbul.

On May 10, Hasina will speak at the morning session of the fourth UN Conference on LDCs at Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre.



Subinay made UN resident coordinator in Sri Lanka

METRO Desk

Subinay Nandy, a national of Bangladesh, has been appointed UN resident coordinator or humanitarian coordinator and UNDP resident representative in Sri Lanka.

Before entering upon the new office this May, Nandy has almost 20 years' experience with the UNDP, says a press release.

As UNDP country director, he served in China very recently and in Vietnam from 2004 to 2007.

Alongside developing and expanding UNDP's support to Vietnam, Nandy played a leading role in the development of the first "One UN" pilot.

In recognition of his support to Vietnam, he was awarded the President's Friendship Award.

Nandy also held posts in the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in New York as chief of the Regional Programme and Policy Division.

He was deputy resident representative in Turkmenistan and assistant resident representative in Bangladesh.

Hailing from Habiganj, Nandy is married with one son and is one of the younger brothers of noted singer Subir Nandy.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offers prayers after laying the foundation stone of the Liberation War Museum's permanent building at Agargaon in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 20)

Mass transit system to cut traffic jam stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday stressed on the need for a mass transit system to reduce traffic congestion in Dhaka.

They suggested the government to take proper steps to control the number of privately owned cars coming on to city roads everyday, as cars occupy almost 67.70 percent of city roads.

Proper steps should also be taken to ensure adequate parking facilities and people should be encouraged to use river and rail routes, which need development, to reduce traffic congestion, they added.

Bangladesh Reconditioned Vehicles Importers and Dealers Association (BARVIDA) organised the discussion titled "Immediate measures to check traffic congestion" at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the city.

The government must impose a tax, five to seven times the cost, if a family buys more than one car, said Israfil Alam, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on labour and

employment ministry.

Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, said the government always tends to solve problems faced by car owners, though they constitute only 17 percent of the total number of commuters.

He suggested on facilitating movement of 70 percent of the commuters, mainly pedestrians and those using buses.

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan suggested on increasing the number of traffic policemen, removing hawkers from footpaths, ensuring parking space in markets and encouraging use of schools buses for students to reduce traffic congestion.

Former communications minister Nazmul Huda said it is very important to ensure a better traffic signal system and suggested on discouraging use of small vehicles such as CNG-run three-wheelers and constructing more bus bays.

He also suggested introducing parking facilities on rent throughout the city to reduce indiscriminate parking on

roads.

Emphasising on the need for vehicular registration, parliamentary standing committee on communications Chairman Golam Mousa Rony said 40 percent city vehicles have fake registrations.

Criticising Nazmul Huda for introducing use of CNG in private vehicles, Subhas Sing Roy, political analyst of Bangladesh Television, said the government could reduce traffic congestion by 50 percent by stopping use of CNG in privately owned vehicles.

Abdul Hamid Sarif, secretary general of BARVIDA, presented a keynote speech at the discussion.

BARVIDA President Abdul Mannan Chowdhury; Joint Commissioner of Traffic Police Mahbubur Rahman; deputy secretary of Ministry of Industries Tapon Kumar Nath; BGMEA President Saiful Islam Mohiuddin; former vice president of Dhaka Chambers of Commerce and Industries Sakil Chowdhury and journalist Monir Haidar also spoke.

VERDICT ON 7TH AMENDMENT Hearing adjourned till May 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday adjourned till May 8 for hearing an appeal filed against the High Court verdict that declared illegal the seventh amendment to the constitution that had legitimised the military rule by HM Ershad.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque, fixed the date after a brief hearing on the appeal filed by one Siddique Ahmed of Chittagong, who earlier challenged the seventh amendment to the constitution.

He recently filed the appeal with the SC, seeking bail in the case.

On August 26 last year, the HC delivered the verdict following a writ petition filed by Siddique, who was convicted and sentenced to life-term imprisonment by a martial law court in a murder case in 1986.

Siddique in his writ petition challenged the legality of the seventh amendment that had ratified the proclamation of martial law and other regulations, orders and instructions by Ershad between March 24, 1982, and November 10, 1986.

The petitioner also contested his murder conviction in 1986 by a martial law court, and sought an order for retrial.

BAR ON TEACHERS HC directs EC to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the Election Commission to explain within four weeks why its restriction on the school and college teachers to contest in the Union Parishad (UP) polls should not be declared illegal.

Responding to a writ petition filed by four teachers from Jamalpur and Kurigram, the HC bench of Justice Mirza Hossain Haider and Justice Md Nuruzzaman also directed the EC to allow the petitioners to contest in the upcoming UP polls.

The petitioners are Mohammad Alamgir Kabir, Hamidul Haque, Mokhesur Rahman, and Altaf Hossain.

They filed the writ petition on May 2 challenging the EC decision to restrict the teachers, who are from institutions under MPO (Monthly Payment Order), to run in the election.

In the petition, they said that over 100 teachers have already been elected in the recently held UP elections.

The EC on different dates in April informed their stance on restricting the teachers to contest in the election to the media.

Barrister Bodruddoza Badal appeared for the petitioners.

Three hurt as Buet BCL rivals clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) were injured in a clash between two rival factions of Buet unit Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday.

Injured BCL activist Joy Prokash, a first year student of chemical engineering, was rushed to DMCH.

Joy's fellow students said rivals led by BCL activists Moksammel and Rana beat and pushed Joy off the second floor of Ahsan Ullah Hall around 5:00pm.

OC Mohammed Ali of Chawkbazar Police Station however said the clash was over a cricket match.

Citizen journalism portal launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A web portal that would highlight and broadcast news stories produced by citizens was launched yesterday.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Mizanur Rahman inaugurated the web portal, www.nagorikkontho.org, at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The site is developed by Population Service Training Centre's (PSTC) with support from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

A UNDP official said citizen journalists from across the country will report their daily experiences and views and post on the web site.

"We want to create a platform for the general citizens to raise their voice," said Tohurul Hasan Tutul of UNDP in his presentation.

Tutul said dozens of volunteers in Rajshahi, Panchagarh, and Babuganj of Barisal were chosen to collect news and opinions from local citizens and report them on the website.

Speakers, at the launching ceremony moderated by PSTC Director Nitai Kanti Das, lauded the initiative, but voiced worries on the authenticity of the news reports.

3 TIB high-ups get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Chittagong courts yesterday granted bail to three high-ups of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in two cases filed for "demeaning judiciary" by its survey report.

After the yesterday's hearing, Judge MM Osman Gani of Chittagong Metropolitan Magistrate Court-2 and Judge Mohammad Ibrahim Miah of Senior Judicial Magistrate Court granted the bail.

The courts also exempted the three -- former TIB chairman M Hafizuddin Khan Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman and Senior Fellow Wahid Alam -- from appearing before the courts in person.

Earlier lawyer of the defendants, Akhter Kabir Chowdhury, prayed to the courts for exempting their clients from appearing before the courts in person and allowing their counsels on behalf of the TIB executives saying that they are "respectable persons" in the society.

The three TIB high-ups were present at the courts. The courts fixed June 28 for further hearing.

M Hafizuddin Khan told The Daily Star yesterday that they are fully respectful to the law. The TIB report has been prepared based on the information collected from the people as well as the media, he said. He added that it was not our intention to defame anyone by the survey.



Shaheed Azim's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 40th death anniversary of Shaheed Mohammad Anwarul Azim.

On this day in 1971, Shaheed Azim, the then administrator of North Bengal Sugar Mills, was shot dead along with 150 staff of the mill by the occupation Pakistan Army.

Shaheed Azim and other staff of the mill were requested by the Pakistan Army to attend a meeting as a ruse and huddled together on the side of a pond on its premises and shot them to death.

Shaheed Azim had organised local resistance to impede the movement of the Pakistan Army.

The pond was named "Shaheed Sagar". In recognition of his role in the liberation war, the rail station near the mill was renamed "Azimnagar".

A milad mahfil and a discussion will be held while a barefooted silent procession will also be taken out marking the day.

Every year North Bengal Sugar Mills, which was administrated by the then EPIDC, and local people commemorate the day.

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY
100% GLUCOSE

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

The sun sets in the capital at 6:29pm today and rises at 5:22am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 32.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and Khepupara and lowest 19.7 degrees Celsius at Srirangal.

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	32.4	23.6	69	64
Chittagong	31.4	25.0	69	87
Rajshahi	32.6	22.2	73	74
Rangpur	24.2	20.5	84	94
Khulna	31.7	22.5	73	79
Barisal	32.4	24.4	71	82
Sylhet	31.4	20.4	84	63

Instant energy, Instant recharge

DHAKA TODAY

Roundtable
Research and Development Collective will organise a roundtable. Venue: Cirdap auditorium, Time: 3:00pm.

Human chain
Paribesh Bachao Andolan will form a human chain. Venue: In front of Fine Arts Institute, Dhaka University, Time: 10:30am.

Celebration
Karmojibi Nari will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Venue: Osmani Smriti auditorium, Time: 10:00am.

DVD unwrapping
A DVD on Marx's Capital will be unwrapped. Venue: Business Studies auditorium, Dhaka University, Time: 4:00pm.

Meeting
Dunirbar Bangladesh will arrange a meeting. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 10:30am.

Trade fair
Indo-Bangla trade fair will be inaugurated. Venue: Sonargaon hotel, Time: 10:30am.

Roundtable
Nagorik Forum will organise a roundtable. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity, Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Journalism Training and Research Initiative will hold a discussion. Venue: TK Bhaban, Karwan Bazar, Time: 10:00am.