

8th wage board in first week of Feb

Says Azad

BSS, Dhaka

The government is going to announce the formation of 8th wage board for journalists in the first week of February.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad told journalist leaders while a delegation of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) called on him at his office here yesterday, said an official handout.

BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury led the delegation while its Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, former president Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Vice President Dr Utpal Kumar Sarker, Joint Secretary General Saiful Islam Talukder and Executive Committee members Akram Hossain Khan, Kartik Chatterjee, Madhusudan Mondal, Khairuzzaman Kamal and Rafiqul Islam Sabuj were present.

During the meeting, they also discussed various issues relating to the welfare of journalists and their professional duties.

Hizb ut-Tahrir 'leader' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested an alleged leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh and seized a huge number of books, posters and leaflets of the banned religious outfit from his residence in the city's Sabujbagh.

The detainee, Mohamamd Anisuzzaman, 39, hailed from Faridpur village under Titas Upazila in Comilla, is a former teacher of two colleges in the city.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Anisuzzaman from his Kadamtola residence around 2:30pm and seized the books, posters, leaflets and a computer from there, said Officer-in-Charge Kaiyum Ali Sarder of Sabujbagh Police Station.

"We have information that Anisuzzaman is a leader of the banned Hizb ut-Tahrir and he had been carrying out militant acts dodging the eye of law enforcers," he said.

A case was filed in this connection.



Devotees fill up every inch of space available on this train, eager to get back home from the second phase of Biswa Ijtema, the world's second largest Muslim gathering after Hajj, on the banks of the river Turag in Tongi on the outskirts of the capital. The photo was taken at Mohakhali yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: AMIRAN HOSSAIN

BDR CARNAGE Missing statue recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-kg touchstone statue which went missing from the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) museum in Pilkhana during the carnage on February 25-26 in 2009 was recovered from a store in the city's Hatirpool on Saturday.

Abu Taher, owner of the store, "Taher Enterprise", and Mahiuddin Ahmed, a retired havildar of the then BDR, currently Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), were also arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel during the recovery.

"We are sure that the statue was looted from the then BDR museum during the carnage," said Rab-2 Commanding Officer Kamal Hossain, adding that Mahiuddin is associated with antiques smugglers.

He, however, could not identify whether the statue represented a god. Neither could he mention its age.

Kamal, also the additional deputy inspector general of police, said acting on a tip-off, they raided the store and made the arrests. "Both the arrestees and statue were handed over to Shabbagh police."

OC of Shabbagh Police Station Shirajul Islam said member of Border Guard Security Unit, BGB's intelligence wing, nayek Alamgir Hossain filed a case in this connection and the arrestees would be produced before the court today.



A few of the 28 rare snakes, recovered yesterday from a man in a bus on the eastern side of Bangabandhu Bridge in Tangail, being released in Satchhari Reserve Forest of Habiganj. Inset, one of the two boxes the snakes were confined in.

PHOTO: COURTESY

One held, 28 rare snakes seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers arrested a man on suspicion of breaking wildlife laws after he was found carrying 28 rare snakes in a bus on the eastern side of Bangabandhu Bridge in Tangail yesterday.

The country's Wildlife Protection Act prohibits trapping, killing and trading of any wildlife.

The snakes, five Indochinese Rat Snakes, locally known as Daraj, and 23 Binocellate Cobras, locally known as Khoiya Gokhra, were cramped inside two wooden boxes, says a Bangladesh Forest Department press release.

The snakes would be released in Satchhari Reserve Forest of Habiganj under

the supervision of Tangail Divisional Forest Officer Asit Ranjan Paul, as directed by Dr Tapan Kumar Dey, conservator of forest, wildlife division of forest department.

Dr Tapan also asked the officer to take necessary legal action against the arrestee, Zahurul Haq.

The country is home to 75 species of venomous and non-venomous snakes, now endangered due to a loss of their habitat.

Moreover, smugglers, including river gypsy communities based in Savar, are involved in the illegal trade due to the big demand on the international market for snake venom used in making lifesaving drugs, added the release.

Zero tolerance of terrorism

Reiterates PM

UNB, Joypurhat

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the local administration to take the harshest steps against militancy and terrorism as the government would show zero tolerance towards the twin dangers.

"No matter which party they belong to, take the toughest steps against them," she told a view-exchange meeting with top officials of the local administration.

Joypurhat Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Roy presided over the meeting held at the Circuit House.

Speaking at the meeting, the premier said the government is committed to making Bangladesh a drug and terrorism-free country.

On strengthening local governments, she said, "The government wants decentralisation and it is strengthening the local governments to reach the state facilities to the

doorsteps of people." The prime minister reiterated that the elections, held under the present government, were fair and peaceful.

"The EVM (electronic voting machine) is properly being used in the elections and it'll be used in the polls in future too," she said.

She also laid emphasis on converting the offices of Islamic Foundation into research-oriented institutions to get desired outcomes.

She stressed the importance of a master plan for the development of Joypurhat Town.

She also focused on crop diversification and setting up of food processing industries in Joypurhat since it is a food-surplus region.

Hasina directed the government officials and employees to perform their duties with honesty and sincerity so that the country's overall development is ensured.

Plot in army condemned

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal (ML) General Secretary Dilip Barua yesterday said the recent abortive bid to dislodge the democratic government was apparently designed to establish a communal and fundamentalist state by dividing the nation.

In a statement, Barua, also the industries minister, thanked the army for foiling the plot against the government, which is working to ensure people's economic emancipation under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

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