

NEWS IN *brief*

Schoolboy crushed under wheels of bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolboy was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus near Dhaka Zoo at Mirpur in the city yesterday. Mohammad Babu, 12, son of Abul Hossain, used to live at Muktiyoddha Complex on the zoo road. He was a student of a local primary school. A bus of Bengal Paribahan crushed him around 7:00am while he was riding a bicycle, leaving him dead on the spot, police said. Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College

Elderly man found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police recovered the body of an elderly man who was found with a noose around his neck tied to a tree near his house at East Bakkhali village in Sitakunda upazila yesterday. It was not known how Nabab Ali, 65, died. Police suspect the incident to be a suicide. Ali's body was not hanging from the tree. On information from locals, police recovered the body and sent it to Chittagong Medical College for autopsy, said Golam Faruk Bhuiyan, sub-inspector, Sitakunda Police Station. An unnatural death case was filed in this connec-

Zillur Rahman's 84th birth anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 84th birth anniversary of President Mohammad Zillur Rahman, also a key organiser of the country's liberation war in 1971.



At this stage of life, the president has vowed firmly to continue to work for the welfare of the people. Zillur was born to a prominent family in Bhairab upazila, Kishoreganj in 1929. His father Meher Ali Miah, a reputed lawyer, was chairman of Mymensingh local board and member of the district board. Zillur did his BA and MA in history from Dhaka University in 1951 and 1952 respectively. He also earned an LLB degree from DU in 1955. Before becoming the 19th president of Bangladesh on February 12, 2009, he served as the

Firearm seized in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized a locally made gun and four bullets raiding a house in Pekua, Cox's Bazar yesterday. On information, a team of Rab-7 conducted the drive to arrest a gang at the house in Mehernegar village in Pekua. The miscreants, however, fled.

Theft in city flat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A theft was committed in a flat of a six-story building near the Indian High Commission in the city's Gulshan early yesterday. Officer-in-Charge of Gulshan Police Station Rafiqul Islam said criminals cut the grill of the windows of the flat on Road No # 141. He said tenant Abu Yusuf Mohammad Musa and his family members found furniture and other things of the flat ransacked and the grill cut in the morning. Later, they informed police of the incident. Owner of the flat said the thieves looted gold ornaments and money worth around Tk 5 lakh. Police detained guards of the house Alamgir and Akmat for interrogation, the OC said.



Observing International Women's Day: (Anti-clockwise from left) BDCyclists, 1 Degree Initiative, and ABC Radio organise a cycle procession, brought out from in front of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. A painting on display in an art exhibition at the city's Galleri Kaya. Prothom Alo and Acid Survivors Foundation form a human chain in front of the Central Shaheed Minar.

PHOTO: STAR

Art exhibition on women's day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Galleri Kaya has organised an art exhibition in the city to mark International Women's Day. Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni inaugurated the exhibition at the gallery in Uttara yesterday. The exhibition, titled "Freedom in Creativity", is showcasing 34 paintings and four sculptures of 17 women artists of Bangladesh. The artists are Tahera Chowdhury, Nazli Laila Monsur, Saeda Kamal, Farida Zaman, Naima Haque, Tandra Das, Masuda Kazi, Ivy Zaman, Dilara Begum Joly, Fareha Zeba, Atia Islam Anne, Kanak Chanpa Chakma, Nasima Haque Mitu, Tayeba Begum Lipi, Shulekha Chaudhury, Nazia Andalib Preema and Maksuda Iqbal Nipa. The exhibition will continue till March 19 everyday from 11:00am to 7:30pm.

Special BCS preliminary test today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The preliminary test for 32nd (special) Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) under Public Service Commission (PSC) will be held today. About 24,964 candidates are expected to appear at the one-hour long test in 18 centres of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet simultaneously at 10:00am against 1,489 vacant posts, said the PSC officials. Although over 26,000 candidates applied for the special BCS examination, application of around 1,473 candidates were cancelled because of errors in the applications and related documents, they said. "The candidates will have to take their seats in their respective examination centres before 9:20am," said Mir Mosharraf Hossain, public relation officer of the PSC. The candidate will be allowed to use normal calculators in the exam halls. But scientific calculators, handbag, mobile phone, books and other electronic material will not be allowed in the exam halls. The PSC uploaded seat plan and other instructions on its website: www.bpsc.gov.bd.

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Memorial meet on Khokon today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A memorial meeting on the life of former general secretary of Dhaka University unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), Abdul Khokon, who passed away after suffering a stroke on October 2, 2011, will be held at Kazi Azhar Ali College grounds at Fakirhat of Bagerhat district today. Fakirhat upazila Awami League, its different associated bodies and his family will jointly organise the meeting.

Women break barriers by cycling

TANZIN CHOWDHURY

White Swan, Pink Fuchsia, Cinderella, Bahon Dahon, Laali - such were the names of some of the cycles which were pedalled by a group of females on the city streets yesterday morning. It was especially pink and red-coloured bikes which ruled the streets, two of the most favourite colours among females, under the coconut clouds with a spring breeze blowing. All of it was for a cycle procession by women, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, to observe International Women's Day. Cyclists, among whom were daughters, wives or even mothers, started gathering in front of Sangsad Bhaban on Manik Mia Avenue after 6:00am for the cycle procession. The procession commenced at the avenue, moved on to Mirpur Road and ended at Karwan Bazar around 8:00am

via Panthapath. Tilka Binte Wali, a young entrepreneur who joined the procession, said, "It was like Eid day for us ladies, cycling the city streets freely as if we were living our lives free from all stereotyping norms and restrictions that society imposes on us everyday." "Cycling is an effective way to instil a sense of independence and empowerment among females," she said, promising to teach cycling to her two daughters. Some 50 female cyclists joined the celebration. BDCyclists, 1 Degree Initiative, and ABC Radio jointly organised the event to mark Women's Day. Noor A Nazia, a member of BDCyclists, said, "Our motto is to encourage more and more females to take up cycling as a mode of transport so that they can avoid the harassment they face while commuting on public transport."

SEISMIC RETROFITTING OF BUILDINGS

Fund constraints obstacle Says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to fund shortages and lack of modern technology and coordination among government bodies, the government was still lagging behind in retrofitting important structures to withstand heavy earthquakes, said food and disaster management minister yesterday. "The buildings, including the Prime Minister's Office, Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Secretariat, are under severe threat as a heavy earthquake in the city may cause a huge loss of lives and property," said the minister, Dr Muhammad Abdur Razzaque. Razzaque was addressing a workshop, "Appropriate Techniques for Seismic Retrofitting of Buildings in Bangladesh" organised by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Public Works Department (PWD) in a city hotel. Retrofitting is a technique applied by constructing additional pillars made of concrete or steel to support and provide extra

protection to buildings, said seismic experts. Though most of the country's buildings may collapse during a heavy earthquake, the government was not capable enough to take due steps due to lack of awareness among people and coordination among government bodies, he said. Razzaque emphasised people's involvement in the disaster risk reduction procedures. "We will be able to overcome risks from the disaster to a large extent if house owners stop ignoring Bangladesh National Building Code." Razzaque also expressed the need to form several task forces, comprising local government division, PWD and experts from home and abroad, to strengthen buildings with seismic retrofitting technology. Housing and Public Works Secretary Dr Khondaker Showkat Hossain presided over the programme where State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan, Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shiro Sadoshima and Jica Chief Representative Dr Takao Toda also spoke.

'Enforce laws to end violence against women'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent personalities and rights activists yesterday stressed the need for mass awareness and strict implementation of existing laws to end violence and discrimination against women. Although different government and non-government organisations are conducting awareness campaign, violence against women is still prevailing, they said at a human chain. Laws must be enforced strictly to end the offence, they added. Dr Iftekaruzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), said crimes and human rights violation could not be stopped due to non-implementation of laws. Terminating acid attack the most brutal and barbaric form of violence against women, columnist Syed Abul Maksud demanded death penalty as the maximum punishment for this crime. At least 84 incidents of acid violence occurred in 2011, while the number was 115 the previous year, shows a statement of Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF). The human chain was organised at the Central Shaheed Minar jointly by ASF and Prothom Alo Assistance Fund for acid victim women, with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation, marking the International Women's Day. Prothom Alo deputy editor Anisul Hoque, joint editor Abdul Quayum, actor Azizul Hakim, singers Fahmida Nobi and Mahmuduzzaman Babu, and dozens of acid victim women joined the human chain. Similar human chains were formed by the same organisations in 10 districts of the country. Meanwhile, different socio-cultural, human rights, and non-government organisations yesterday observed the day with elaborate programmes. Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 67 women and human rights organisations, held a public rally at the Central Shaheed Minar. Rights activist Sultana Kamal chaired the rally while State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury, among others, spoke on the occasion. Campaign for Good Governance, Actionaid Bangladesh, Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)-Bangladesh, Department of Women and Gender Studies of Dhaka University, Sacheton Nagorik Committee (Sanak) at Savar, Nari Unnayan Shakti, Steps Towards Development, National Domestic Woman Workers Union, Bangladesh National Council (BNC) of Textile Garments and Leather Workers, United Federation of Garments Workers, Biplobi Nari Sanghati, National Garment Workers Federation, Jatiya Gonotantrik League, and Bangladesh Nari Mukti Andolon also organised programmes to mark the day. On the occasion, the Asia Foundation Bangladesh distributed 7,500 books at different educational institutions across the country. South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) and Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation issued separate press releases, marking the day.

Dissolve Biman board Demand CBA leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The CBA leaders of Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday demanded immediate resignation of the chairman and all members of the Biman board saying that the national flag carrier has incurred a loss of around Tk 1,000 crore due to the board's inefficiency. The CBA leaders also warned that if the board is not dissolved by March 15, they would go for a tougher movement. The ultimatum and the one-point demand came from a human chain formed on around one kilometre of the road stretching from VVIP Gate to Hangar Gate from 11:00am to 12noon. Under the banner of "Biman Bachao Oikya Parishad," more than a thousand members from seven trade unions of Biman took part in the event. Convenor of the parishad, Moshirur Rahman, at the human chain also demanded formation of a new board with the civil aviation minister as its chairman as well as efficient and experienced persons as its members. Bapa president Helal Uddin also spoke at the event. Earlier on Wednesday, the Parishad was formed at meeting by the leaders of Bangladesh Airline Pilots' Association (BAPA), Flight Engineers' Association, Society of Aircraft Engineers' of Biman, Biman Cabin Crew Association, Biman Officers Association, Biman Employees Union and Biman Sramik Union to press home the demand.

Women cops vow to end discrimination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total 109 policewomen yesterday pledged to strengthen their unity and work harder to free women's lives from discrimination and treat them with respect and dignity. The pledged was a part of an eight-point "Dhaka Declaration" decided at the end of the first, two-day-long, Asia Region Women Police Conference organised by Bangladesh Police Women's Network (BPWN) and International Association of Women Police (IAWP) at Police Staff College in the city. The declaration was decided on the basis of panel discussions and training and view exchange sessions during the conference. Addressing the concluding ceremony, Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandakar said the police department came a long way in developing the leadership of policewomen, a longstanding priority of the government. The conference will open up new space for better synergy, cohesion and effective collaboration among the policewomen of the participating countries, he added. Of the participants, 39 policewomen arrived from 13 countries while the rest were Bangladesh Police members. Additional Inspector General of Police of Criminal Investigation Department Mokhlesur Rahman, IAWP President Jane Townsley and Rector of Police Staff College Nazmul Haque were present.

Korea to train 5 officials on renewable energy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Korea will train five officials of Jatiya Sangsad on renewable energy under the programme of "Solar Power System in Bangladesh Parliament", supported by Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica). The two-week training, beginning on March 11 in Seoul and Seongnam in Korea, would help the trainees learn more about solar power system and new regeneration energy. The programme has been designed to share Korea's experience on clean energy and to strengthen partnership with Bangladesh in this field, said a Koica press release.



Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and the regions of Tangail and Mymensingh. Weather may remain usually dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said. Day and night temperature may rise slightly over the country. The sun sets in the capital at 6:05pm today and rises at 6:12am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 34.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 17.5 degrees Celsius at Rangpur. 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 | 24.0 | 76 | 33 |
| Chittagong | 29.2 | 22.8 | 79 | 82 |
| Rajshahi | 33.0 | 18.0 | 38 | 39 |
| Rangpur | 31.2 | 17.5 | 48 | 31 |
| Khulna | 33.0 | 23.2 | 81 | 55 |
| Barisal | 33.4 | 23.2 | 83 | 74 |