

NEWS IN *brief*

**BGMEA remark on maternity leave condemned**

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Several rights bodies have condemned Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) remark that if the duration of maternity leave is extended, it will result in higher birth rate.

The organisations in separate statements yesterday said BGMEA had ignored the fact that a new born needs a mother's full attention and care till it is at least six months old.

The government proposed an amendment to the Labour law, 2006, which increases the maternity leave from 16 weeks to 24 weeks.

The organisations, including Samajik Protirodh Committee, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, and Ain o Shalish Kendra, urged the

**Roadside structures demolished**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday demolished around 250 illegal structures constructed on footpaths and roads at Mirpur section 13 and 15.

The drive started at 12:00 noon for three hours. The structures were constructed illegally blocking footpaths and roads, said Sheikh Kamal Hossain, executive magistrate, who led the drive.

The authorities concerned were given a 24-hour ultimatum by the LGRD and cooperatives ministry to

**EU, UNDP to help strengthen local governance**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) yesterday signed a contract to jointly launch a programme for strengthening local governance.

Ambassador William Hanna, head of the Delegation of the EU to Bangladesh, and Stefan Priesner, the UNDP country director, signed the contract on behalf of their respective organisations at the EU Dhaka office, said a press

**Dr Shahidullah's role recalled**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday said noted linguist and researcher Dr Muhammad Shahidullah contributed a lot to mother language throughout his life.

Shahidullah loved and respected his mother tongue, Bangla, and he stood against all sorts of conspiracy against the existence of the language, they said.

They said this at the programme, organised by Bangla Academy, at its conference room in the capital, to mark the 127th birth anniversary of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah.

Addressing the event, educationalist Prof Anisuzzaman said Dr Muhammad Shahidullah, also a famous Bengali educationist, writer and philologist, encouraged the young generation to learn Bangla language to use it at all the arenas of national and individual activities.

**Huge amount of Yaba seized**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Law enforcers recovered 23,841 pieces of Yaba tablets and arrested two people in this connection in Cox's Bazar and Moulvibazar on Monday.

Our Chittagong correspondent reports, Border Guard of Bangladesh (BGB) seized 21,851 pieces of Yaba tablets from Leda Border area in Teknaf upazilla in Cox's Bazar on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off, BGB men conducted a drive in the area around 7:00pm, and recovered the contraband items.

Our Sylhet correspondent reports, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two people and seized 1990 pieces of Yaba tablets in Moulvibazar on Monday.

In a drive, Rab arrested two men with the tablets on Srimangal-Moulvibazar highway in Srimangal upazila in Moulvibazar, says a press release.

Arrested Manirul Islam and Md Yousuf Bhuiyan were handed over to police.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a photo session with deputy commissioners after an open discussion with them as a part of Deputy Commissioners' Conference at Prime Minister's Office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

**4 govt agencies succeed in e-procurement**

UNB, Dhaka

Four key government agencies have successfully completed piloting of electronic government procurement (e-GP) at identified procuring entities, said a World Bank release yesterday.

The agencies are Roads and Highways Department, Local Government Engineering Department, Rural Electrification Board and Bangladesh Water Development Board.

Now, electronic procurement is set to be rolled out at a much wider scale in these agencies, in a step towards bringing more transparency and accountability in the public procurement system.

These agencies are also piloting procurement performance monitoring system, the release said.

The World Bank (WB) is supporting Bangladesh to introduce electronic public procurement through Public Procurement Reform Project (PPRP II).

A WB team recently reviewed the status of PPRP II and noted that the project is progressing well with positive contributions towards improving transparency and competitiveness of the system.

The WB has provided \$24 million concessionary interest-free credit for the project which will be completed in March 2013. Over 80 percent of the committed amount has already been disbursed.

The Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU) under the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the government has been implementing the project in coordination with the four key agencies.

The WB team highlighted the need for strengthening CPTU with adequate staffing and enhancing efforts for expeditious rolling out of e-GP and procurement monitoring at the four agencies.

**Stop graft in teachers' recruitment**

*DCs urge at conference*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alleging that teachers' recruitment process at non-government educational institutions is plagued with "corruption and irregularities", deputy commissioners (DCs) yesterday called for a stop to this practice to ensure recruitment of competent teachers.

They pointed out problems and gave suggestions to this end at the "DC Conference on the Education Ministry and the Primary and Mass Education Ministry" held at the Cabinet Division yesterday, said meeting sources.

A lot of money changes hands during the teachers' recruitment process and such a practice should be stopped, they added.

Some 16 DCs participated the interactive session with Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Ameen and State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain.

The DCs of Khulna, Narshingdi and Kishoreganj districts suggested that a district-based recruitment board or central service commission headed by the DCs can be formed to appoint competent teachers at non-government educational institutions.

Some other DCs suggested following the recruitment process of government primary schools in recruiting teachers for non-government schools.

The education minister informed the DCs

that they are undertaking a process to form a separate body like PSC to recruit teachers.

Standard education is being disrupted and corruption is spreading as the people from non-government level are being nominated as the heads of the school managing committees (SMC) or governing bodies of private schools, the DCs said.

They suggested nominating government officials as the heads of the SMCs.

Some proposed to fix a minimum educational eligibility for the heads of the SMCs.

Few DCs opposed the appointment of education cadres in different administrative posts as, they said, this created scarcity of teachers.

Some DCs proposed to be given authority to enquiry into any allegation about educational institutions and take action against it. Previously, they could not take action against any institution despite getting different allegations, they said.

The DC of Netrokona said the rate of stipend recipients in his district is 45 percent while the rate in Mymensingh is 90 percent. He suggested to bring equity in the stipend recipients.

Some DCs suggested giving 100 percent stipends in the haor and baor regions.

Talking to reporters, Nahid said they will consider the issues raised by the DCs.

On nominating government officials as the heads of SMC, he said the head of SMC would be nominated as per the existing rules.

'FRAUDULENCE' Outsourcing company offices

vandalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defrauded clients of an online outsourcing company yesterday vandalised its two office buildings in the capital's Dhanmondi protesting officials' "sudden disappearance."

Witnesses said the client also blocked Satmasjid road for half an hour and vandalised a bus.

BDS Click Centre, also an MLM company which assures of "earning through online", on Satmasjid road and its sister concern BDS Security Services on road no-8/A of Dhanmondi were ransacked during the agitation.

The clients alleged that all staff of BDS Click have disappeared from the office.

The officials acted suspicious which was observed after visiting the office recently, said Syed Nifad, a client.

Nifad said he opened 34 accounts at Tk 47,600 three months back. In the first month, he could withdraw money from the account but then the company officials showed a dilly-dally approach.

The victims told The Daily Star that the MLM company charged them Tk 700 to Tk 2,100 for opening an account by offering ways of earning easily Tk 2,100 to Tk 21,000 by clicking on websites, after taking advance payment from them.

Police said they sealed BDS Click Centre office from where a firearm was also recovered. The clients have filed two cases against the BDS Click officials.

The BDS Click Managing Director Md Zillur Rahman and Director Faruk Ahamed were not available for comments in this regard.



Teachers and students of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) at a silent procession on the campus yesterday demanding resignation of its vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

**13 killed, 41 hurt in road accidents**

METRO DESK

Thirteen people were killed and forty-one others injured in road accidents in Dhaka, Barguna, Comilla, Rajbari, Sirajganj, Chapainawabganj, Dinajpur, Kurigram and Madaripur yesterday.

Staff correspondent reports, Ha-Meem Group General Manager (production) Moktar Hossain, 45, was killed when a bus crushed him on Nabinagar-Kaliakoir road at Palashbari in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday morning.

Angry locals vandalised the bus following the accident.

Our Patuakhali correspondent reports, two people died when their motorbike carrying them hit a tree beside Patuakhali-Kuakata road at Urshitala in Amtoli upazila of Barguna district yesterday.

The victims are Moshir Rahman, 32, a police constable, and Joni Talukder, 35, of Barisal town.

UNB from Comilla says, two people were killed and two others injured when a truck rammed a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Beltali in the sadar upazila in the early hours

of yesterday.

One of the deceased is Akter Hossain, 25, driver of the auto-rickshaw.

In Rajbari, Tania Akhter, 4, daughter of Tafazzal Mondal, died and her mother was injured as a bus hit them while they were crossing Doulatdia-Khulna highway at Canalghat in Goalanda upazila yesterday.

Our Sirajganj correspondent adds, two people were killed and 20 others injured as a bus hit a nosimon (three-wheeler) on Bogra-Nagarbari highway at Takiadighar in Raiganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased is Parimal Kumar, 35, the bus driver.

The injured were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital and Raiganj Upazila Health Complex.

In another accident, schoolboy Masud Rana, 7, son of Mafiz Uddin, was killed instantly as CNG-run auto-rickshaw ran over him on Sirajganj-Belkuchi road at Saratia in Belkuchi upazila yesterday.

Agitating people blocked the road and torched two CNG-run auto-rickshaws.

In Chapainawabganj, schoolgirl Urmi Khatun, 12, daughter of Ruhul Amin, died after being crushed by a truck on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid land port highway at Fultala of Shibganj upazila yesterday.

In Dinajpur, bus driver Md Lutfar Rahman 55, was killed and his 14 other passengers were injured when the vehicle collided with a truck on Dinajpur-Dhaka highway at Laxmitola in the sadar upazila yesterday.

The injured were rushed to Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital.

In Kurigram, motorcyclist Anwar Hossen, 25, died and another got injured as a three-wheeler hit the motorbike on Roumari-Rajibpur road in Kattimari Bazar area of Roumari upazila yesterday.

Injured Shafiar Rahman, 26, was rushed to the upazila health complex.

In Madaripur, farmer Ratan Sheikh, 55, was killed and three other college students were injured as a bus rammed an easy-bike on Dhaka-Barisal highway at Rajoir upazila bus stand yesterday.

Angry people blocked the highway for about four hours.

**WB LOAN CANCELLATION Yunus has no link**

*Says US envoy*

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Dhaka Dan Mozena yesterday ruled out any link of Prof Muhammad Yunus with the scrapping of the Padma bridge loan agreement by the World Bank.

Asked whether the issue of Prof Yunus's removal from the Grameen Bank by the government influenced the World Bank to cancel its loan commitment, Mozena said, "It is wrong...it is really very wrong. There is no link between them."

He also ruled out any involvement of the United States behind the World Bank's decision to not fund the Padma bridge construction.

"I was very disappointed that the World Bank chose to cancel the loan," Mozena said at a meet-the-press programme organised by Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

In an oblique reference to the long row over the corruption allegation in selection of consultants for the bridge, the US envoy expressed his disappointment that the World Bank and the Bangladesh government were not able to proceed with this critical project. "I know investigation is on in Canada," he said.

Replying to a question whether the United States will play any role in reopening dialogue between the World Bank and the Bangladesh government, Mozena said he is trying to get better understanding of the process. "US is not part of the crisis...this is an issue between the World Bank and the Bangladesh government," he added.

"I must hope that the Bangladesh government and the World Bank can find a way to meet each other's needs," he said, reiterating that the US always supports the construction of Padma bridge.

JICA Meanwhile, a senior official of Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) in Dhaka yesterday said they are seriously watching what steps Bangladesh is taking about alleged corruption involving the Padma bridge project.

Jica Senior Representative Kei Toyama said this while talking to reporters at the New Haripur Power Plant Project in Narayanganj.

Japan is seriously considering the corruption issue involving the Padma bridge project, he said.

However, Deputy Prime Minister of Japan Katsuya Pkada at a meeting with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in Tokyo on Monday conveyed that the Padma bridge project could be undertaken under a new framework of donor arrangement as World Bank has cancelled its funding commitment in the project.

He assured the foreign minister that Japan would pursue the donor groups including the Asian Development Bank to embark at a negotiated settlement in respect of the project.

Jica President Akihiko Tanaka also during a meeting with Dipu Moni in Tokyo on Monday expressed regret at the World Bank's decision.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Khulna divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:49pm and rises tomorrow at 5:19am.

Country's highest temperature 33.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 24.9 degrees at Sandwip.

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	32.0	26.1	87	73
Chittagong	31.0	25.5	95	79
Rajshahi	33.0	26.8	88	77
Rangpur	31.7	26.8	74	76
Khulna	33.0	26.0	92	86
Barisal	32.2	25.9	90	79
Sylhet	32.2	26.2	90	95