

NEWS IN *brief*

Maasranga staff demand trial of Sagar-Runi killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Staff of Maasranga Television have demanded trial of killers of Sagar Sarowar, a news editor of Maasranga Television, and his wife Meherun Runi, senior reporter for ATN Bangla.

They made the demand yesterday at a human chain programme in front of the private television's office in the capital.

"There has been no progress in the investigation into the murder of the journalist couple, though five months have already gone," said Shah Alamgir, head of News of the television channel.

On February 11, Sagar and Runi were killed in

61 BNP men sent to jail in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday sent 61 local leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations to jail in connection with the death of three people during hartal in Biswanath upazila in Sylhet on April 23.

Additional District and Sessions Judge-III Manzurul Haque Khan passed the order rejecting appeal for bail extension.

A total of 89 accused including seven union parishad (UP) chairmen obtained ad-interim bail from a High Court bench for two months.

Of them, 61 appeared before the court seeking extension of their bails in the case yesterday.

On April 23 this year, the three people were murdered during a nationwide hartal called by the BNP demand-

Man found dead in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of an unidentified man from a hotel at Sayedabad in the capital early yesterday.

A staff of the hotel informed police of the body in a room of Hotel Rumi.

The victim, aged around 50, was found with a leather belt tied around his neck, said AKM Abul Kashem, officer-in-charge of Jatrabari Police Station.

He said according to the hotel register two guests named Billal and Salam from Daudkandi of Comilla

Dr Cecep Effendi new Cirdap DG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Cecep Effendi from Indonesia joined the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) on July 6 as its seventh director general for a four-year term (2012-16).

He succeeds Dr Durga P Paudyal of Nepal who served from 2004 to 2012.

An academician and activist, Dr Effendi specialises in decentralisation and democratisation, working in national and local government agencies in profes-



French Ambassador to Bangladesh Michel Trinquier pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Dhaka's proposal sought for Saarc News Agency

UNB, Dhaka

Saarc Information Centre (SIC) has formally sought a proposal from Bangladesh for establishing a permanent Saarc News Agency (SNA) for the better flow of information in the South Asia region.

Talking to the news agency about the proposal for the SNA, Information Secretary Hedaetullah Al Mamoon yesterday said, "This is a very good initiative and we've taken it positively."

He said SIC Director Laxmi Bilas Koirala in a letter to Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) City Editor Ajit Kumar Sarkar on Tuesday requested for submitting a proposal for establishing SNA as per the Bangladesh proposal placed during a seminar held in Paro of Bhutan recently.

In his letter, Koirala lauded the well-thought-out idea on establishing the Saarc News Agency. "I would like to place on the

record my appreciation for the work carried out by you for realisation of the Saarc News Agency for better flow of information on Saarc in the region," said the SIC director.

Sources at the information ministry said its secretary Hedaetullah Al Mamoon, BSS City Editor Ajit Kumar Sarkar and Director General (Saarc and Bimstec) Syed Masud Mahmood Khundoker had a meeting at the secretariat in this regard and decided to send a project concept paper prepared by Ajit Kumar Sarkar through a formal channel soon.

The concept paper proposed for setting up a permanent news agency in the South Asia region with organisational structure, news inflow and outflow and a sustainable plan in 3-5 years, according to the sources.

The government is eager to extend cooperation to the initiatives that would promote trade, investment and development issues as well as enhance image of Saarc countries, they said.

Govt firm to ensure democracy: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday iterated her government's firm commitment to ensure functioning of democracy for continuation of development activities in the country.

"In keeping with such commitment even beyond Bangladesh, my government got the 'Saarc Charter of Democracy' adopted in 2011," she said when newly appointed French Ambassador Michel Trinquier met her at her office.

After the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed the reporters.

Hasina said the country could not achieve the desired development in the last 41 years due to undemocratic rule for many years.

She said Bangladesh attaches great importance to its relations with France whom it considers as a most valued friend and partner in Europe and also in the global arena.

The prime minister sought more French investment in Bangladesh considering the congenial business environment, easily trainable workforce, and attractive package of fiscal incentives.

She assured the new envoy of all possible help and cooperation in discharging his duties and wished him success in his new assignment.

Ambassador Trinquier expressed satisfaction over the existing friendly relations between the two countries.

Padma bridge with own fund not feasible

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The decision to construct the proposed Padma bridge with local funds is "unrealistic" as the government would not be able to implement it, a top BNP leader said yesterday.

The World Bank cancelled its credit for the Padma bridge project due to corruption by the government, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told reporters after visiting the grave of the late president Ziaur Rahman, founder of the BNP in the capital.

Fakhrul said the government made conflicting statements on the bridge funding to defend itself. Once it said it would ask the WB to reconsider the loan cancellation. Then it said it would construct the bridge with local funds.

The project will get the highest priority if BNP is voted to power next time, he said. "We will build it with the help of the World Bank and other donor agencies."

Fakhrul also said BNP would construct two bridges over the Padma river.

BNP standing committee members MK Anwar and Nazrul Islam Khan, Vice-chairmen Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and presidents and general secretaries of different fronts and associated bodies were also present with the leader to pay tributes to Ziaur Rahman.

MIRSARAI TRAGEDY 1st anniversary observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The first anniversary of the fatal Mirsarai road crash, which killed 45 people, was observed in Mirsarai upazila in Chittagong yesterday.

In memory of the deceased, Chittagong north district unit of Awami League President Engineer Mosharrif Hossain inaugurated a monument titled "Antim" (last moment) at Abu Torab adjacent to Bartakia, the spot where the accident occurred.

Prof Saiful Kabir, Institute of Fine Arts at Chittagong University, erected the monument.

Earlier on Monday, another monument named "Abeg" (emotion) was unveiled by Industries Minister Dilip Barua on Abu Torab Bahumukhi High School premises.

A condolence meeting was held yesterday at Abu Torab Bahumukhi High School. Different schools in the upazila also arranged doa mahfil to observe the day.

On the day, a truck carrying 60 students skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch at Abu Torab in the upazila killing 44 students and a local guardian. The students were returning home after enjoying a school football match held in Mirsarai stadium.

Journalist's motorbike stolen in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified miscreants stole the motorbike of The Daily Star photojournalist from his residence at North Mugda in the capital yesterday morning.

SK Enamul Haq, chief photojournalist of the daily, said he kept his motorbike at the garage of his flat after returning from workplace Tuesday night. In the morning, his son found lock of main gate of the apartment broken and the Pulsar 150cc motorbike missing.

A general diary has been lodged with Mugda Police Station in this connection.



Teachers and students of Abu Torab Government Primary School in Chittagong in a procession yesterday mourning the death of the students who were killed in a road accident on Bara Takia road in Mirsarai on July 11 last year.

PHOTO: STAR

ACC sues 12 railway officials in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday lodged two cases against 16 persons including 12 officials of Bangladesh Railway (BR) in Chittagong on charge of misappropriating around Tk 28.30 crore.

The railway officials are former additional director generals Mokhlesur Rahman and Anhar Mahmud, former financial advisor Mahtab Uddin, former general manager of BR (east) Nurul Amin, and The Railway-mens Stores Limited President Khan Md Abdur Rob, Vice President Sultan Ahmed Talukdar, Directors -- Abdul Halim Mia, Shahid Ullah, Arfan Uddin Ahmad, Nasir Uddin Ahmad, Sirazul Islam, and Railway-mens Store Limited (east) Chief Executive Shahab Uddin.

The other accused are Chowdhury Anisul Haq, project director of Etco Holdings Ltd, Salauddin Ibn Ahmed, chairman of Real Estate Private Ltd and its managing director Md Shahnewaz, and Abdul Jabbar Khan, managing director of Basudha Builders Ltd.

In one case, the accused misappropriated Tk 30 lakh from Real Estate Private Ltd, B 11-12 Syndicate, and Reaz Uddin Bazar, said the plaintiff.

The money was used for taking lease on 76,112 square feet land, owned by BR, in Battalia area without taking permission from the then government in 1995.

DoE fines cement factory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined Premier Cement Mills Ltd Tk 20 lakh for polluting the atmosphere in Munshiganj, said a press release.

Loading and unloading of cement clinkers polluted the air, said DoE Director Mohammad Muniur Chowdhury. The factory was running without mandatory equipment like air filter system, he said.

The factory officials admitted to polluting the air, during a hearing at the DoE.

The DoE ordered the factory to install all equipment required for preventing pollution.

Tanvir Hasan, manager (Brand and Communications) of the mills said they would set up a pollution control plant after adding two more production units in December.

Court to settle Limon case

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Shahara Khatun yesterday said the case concerning college student Limon Hossain, who was maimed by Rab shooting in Jhalakathi on March 23, 2011, will be settled in court.

"Measures will be taken according to the court's decision," she said concerning the secret pressing of a charge-sheet on July 1 in the second case against Limon in connection with obstructing law enforcers from performing their duties.

Shahara was talking to journalists after inaugurating a 20-storied residential building, costing Tk 23.46 crore and capable of accommodating 190 people, for sub-inspectors and sergeants in the capital's Nilkhet.

She also stated that Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members were properly investigating into the killing of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi and the killers would be arrested.

Sagar, a news editor at Maasranga, and his wife, Meherun, a senior reporter for ATN Bangla, were killed in their West Rajabazar flat on February 11.

DHAKA TODAY

Open discussion
Students of Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University will hold an open discussion; Venue: its lecture theatre; Time: 11:30am.

Discussion
Gonotantik Oikya will organise a discussion; Venue: Moitri Auditorium, Mukti Bhaban, 2 Puranan Palatan; Time: 4:00pm.

Recitation
Muktadhara Abritti Charcha Kendra will hold a recitation programme; Venue: Central Public Library; Time: 7:00pm.

Human chain
National Garment Workers Federation will form a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 9:30am.

Human chain
Shamprodayikota-Jongibad Birodhi Mancha will form a human chain; Venue: on the footpath in front of Jatiya Eidgah Maidan; Time: 10:00am.

Workshop
Journalism Training and Research Initiative will organise a workshop; Venue: its office; Time: 10:00am.

Fair
Royal Thai Embassy in Dhaka will hold a fair; Venue: 18/20 Madani Avenue, Baridhara; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

WEATHER TODAY

Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions 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 35.7 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 24.7 degrees at Rangamati.

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	33.5	27.5	75	76
Chittagong	28.5	25.9	85	81
Rajshahi	35.3	26.7	85	90
Rangpur	33.1	26.5	81	100
Khulna	32.8	27.2	86	86
Barisal	31.7	27.2	88	83