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Busy roads barricaded

People suffer as students, workers halt traffic for hrs to realise their demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commuters suffered a lot yesterday due to tailbacks as students and garment workers blocked two important points in the capital, halting traffic movement for more than three hours.

Students of different universities and colleges blocked Shahbagh intersection, demanding expansion of age limit for government jobs from 30 years to 35.

Traffic from Shahbagh to Bangladesh Engineers' Institution, Hotel Ruposhi Bangla, Kantaban and Dhaka University was barred, which caused severe traffic jams across the capital. During the blockade that lasted until 2:00pm, the students also burned tyres.

Under the banner of "Sadharan Chhatra Parishad", three to four hundred students first formed a human chain in front of the National Museum at Shahbagh from 9:00am to 11:30am, witnesses said. Then they staged a sit-in at the intersection, blocking the roads.

While ending the programme, the Parishad convener gave the government a one-week ultimatum, threatening to announce a tougher programme if their demand was not met by the time.

In the meantime, several hundred workers of Samahar Garments in Tejgaon industrial area took position on the

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Students take to the streets, setting up roadblocks by burning tyres, at Shahbagh intersection in the capital yesterday to press for raising the age limit for government jobs from 30 to 35.

PHOTO: STAR

Mobile tech can help a lot

Bangladesh must tap huge potential of such technology to serve people in health, development sectors, The Daily Star roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scope to use mobile technology for health sector is huge and everyone would have to find opportunities to use it properly for improvement of people's lives, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said mobile technology could be used more effectively in awareness campaigns related to health rather than traditional campaign tools such as news media or

billboards. But internet speed was required to reach the target.

The roundtable titled "Turning the Future: Mobile Services and its Impact on Health and Development Sectors in Bangladesh" was jointly organised by EATLApps.com, a concern of Advanced Technology Ltd (EATL), and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday.

Ministers, regulators, current

and former government high officials, academics, ICT experts, health administrators, development organisation officials joined the roundtable.

Key note speaker Nizam Uddin Ahmed, chief executive officer of EATL, said Bangladesh had the full potential to utilise mobile phone services to improve health and development indicators.

He said partnership and collaboration was essential between

public and private sectors for optimum use of mobile services.

He said 80 percent farmers of the country use mobile phones for contact with buyers and sellers and 50 percent farmers sell their goods after direct contact with their buyers.

He said texting was very low as a large segment of the mobile phone users were illiterate. He suggested

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'Nobody helped us'

Delhi rape victim's friend recounts event

AGENCIES

Claims of police incompetence and public apathy stirred fresh outrage yesterday in the case of a New Delhi gang-rape victim after her boyfriend recounted witnessing the horrific crime for the first time.

The 23-year-old student died in hospital two weeks after she was attacked on December 16 in a private bus in New Delhi, prompting street protests over the Indian authorities' failure to stem rampant violence against women.

Speaking to AFP and an Indian news channel, the boyfriend said passers-by ignored the naked and bloodied couple for 30 minutes after they were thrown out

of the bus and police then wasted more time arguing over who had jurisdiction.

"A passer-by found us (after the attack), but he did not even give my friend his jacket," he told AFP in the interview which also raised questions about the medical treatment given to the woman at a government hospital.

The graphic account from the man in a television interview added fuel to public anger over the death in a country where official statistics show one rape is reported every 20 minutes.

The woman's friend told the Zee News television network he was beaten

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A "Death Clock" at Bijoy Sarani in the capital shows the number of deaths from tobacco-related diseases in the country.

Launched yesterday by Progga, an anti-tobacco campaigner, the clock shows that 20,529 people have died since August 27, 2012.

Story on page 2.

PHOTO: STAR

WAR CRIMES 2005

Nepalese army officer charged

BBC ONLINE

A Nepalese army officer yesterday charged in the UK with two counts of torture during his country's civil war in 2005.

Colonel Kumar Lama faces a British trial under a law that allows prosecution of alleged war criminals.

The 46-year-old officer, currently seconded to the UN, was held at his East Sussex home by Metropolitan Police officers on Thursday.

Col Lama will appear before Westminster Magistrates' Court later.

He is charged with intentionally "inflicting severe pain or suffering" as a public official on two separate individuals.

Police said the charges relate to two separate incidents that allegedly occurred between April and May 2005 at the Gorusinghe Army Barracks in Nepal.

His arrest in St Leonards-on-Sea led to the Nepalese government summoning the UK ambassador in Kathmandu to protest.

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Preteen girl allegedly raped, killed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 11-year-old girl was found dead in a house at Jheelpar Bastee near their house at Gudaraghat in the city's Mirpur Section-1 yesterday afternoon.

Her body was hanging with the ceiling of the house with a piece of cloth, neighbours said.

Mother of the girl named Chandni, who was a student at a school run by a non-government organisation, alleged that her daughter was raped and then killed.

She filed a case with Shah Ali Police Station last

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REPAIR WORK Quader visits Meghna bridge

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday visited the site of Meghna bridge as the repair work

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FIRE PANIC IN CTG RMG FACTORY 35 hurt in stampede

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least 35 garment workers were injured yesterday when a fire alarm went off, causing a stampede among the factory staff in Chittagong yesterday.

The garment factory, Pacific Jeans 2000, is located in Chittagong Export Processing Zone.

Seeing sparks from a fluorescent tube, a worker set off the fire alarm around 7:30am, sending the workers into a panic, the factory's Group General Manager MN Huda told The Daily Star.

Fearing a fire in the factory, the workers "tried to escape to safety", he said. "We sent them to Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority [BEPZA] Hospital for primary treatment."

Of the injured, seven were later sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital for better treatment, said Abu Taslim, director of the BEPZA hospital.

SM Abdur Rashid, general manager of the BEPZA, said, "The workers were injured when they tried to escape. No one was seriously injured in this incident."

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PRAYER TIMING January 6

Azan	5:30	6:05
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:30	5:35
Esha	7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you support the BNP-led 18-party alliance's countrywide daylong hartal on Sunday protesting the latest increase in fuel prices?

Yes	(71%)
No	(27%)
No Comments	(2%)

TOTAL VOTES: 355

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think that the ruling Awami League government failed to take proper steps to curb graft in its four year tenure?

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