

NEWS IN *brief*

Brac University official mugged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers took away valuables from an official of Brac University in the capital's Dhanmondi area last night.

The victim Ekram Hossain said two muggers riding on a motorcycle attacked him when he was returning to his Sukrabad residence by a rickshaw from New Market around 11:00pm.

When the rickshaw reached at Kalabagan playground, the muggers snatched his official bag containing the university's necessary papers and his three credit cards, he said.

Ekram filed a written complain to Dhanmondi Police Station in this regard.

Minister orders transfer of three BRTA officials for graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday ordered to transfer three Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) officials from Chittagong for their alleged involvement in irregularities, corruption and harassment of stakeholders.

The minister gave the order while visiting the BRTA, Chittagong office yesterday.

The three officers are Riazur Rahman, upper division assistant, Abdul Halim, inspector, and

Cancellation of 2-day RU weekly holiday demanded

A RU CORRESPONDENT

Pragatishil Chhatra Jote, a combine of leftist student organisations, demanded that the authorities of Rajshahi University cancel a decision of two-day weekly holiday of the university.

On January 4, the RU syndicate passed the decision which has not been enforced yet.

Leaders and activists of the jote brought out a procession on the campus protesting the decision around 11:30am yesterday.

Later, RU unit Chhatra Union President Shipon Ahmed, Biplobi Chhatra Maitree President Sumon Augustin, Chhatra Front Convener Sohran Hossain and Chhatra Federation General Secretary Utsob Mosaddek addressed a rally.

They also submitted a memorandum to RU Vice Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan to press home their



Agitating teachers and employees of non-MPO educational institutions stage a sit-in on the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) premises yesterday after sending a memorandum to NHRC Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman protesting police's attack on them and for barring them from holding their protest programmes.

PHOTO: STAR

3 workers injured in workplace fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three construction workers sustained severe burn injuries in a fire while they were repairing an underground water tank of a commercial building in Mirpur of the capital yesterday morning.

The victims were Mijanur Rahman, 35, Md Sohel, 30, and Sohel, 28,

Makim Biswas, caretaker of the three-storey building at Mirpur Section-11, said the fire broke out around 9:50am when the workers tried to light a candle to work inside the tank.

Abdul Latif Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station, said accumulated gas might have caused the fire.

The injured were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The hospital sources said Md Sohel and Sohel are in critical condition while Mijanur is expected to survive.

No case has been filed regarding the matter, the police official added.

ENDING REPRESSION ON WOMEN

TIB chief urges AL, BNP for consensus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), yesterday called upon the chiefs of ruling Awami League and main opposition BNP to reach a consensus on freeing the country from women repression.

"Please, come to consensus on this issue and jointly announce that both of you will not tolerate repression against women, violation of their rights and rape in the country," he said.

He was speaking at a solidarity rally and candle lightening programme demanding an end to all types of sexual harassment including rape and violence against women and children and exemplary pun-

ishment to the perpetrators.

The programme was organised by TIB at the central Shaheed Minar in the capital.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman also vowed to continue movement to end women repression in the society.

Addressing the function, Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor AAMS Arefin Siddique focused on raising awareness among the people, especially among the young generation, to end violence against women.

Representatives of different rights organisations and socio-cultural organisation and some professional bodies were present at the function.

Govt slammed for excluding Bhashani's life from textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Awami Party (NAP-Bhashani) yesterday blasted the government for excluding chapter's on Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani from the textbooks of class V and VIII.

Leaders of the party demanded that the government takes immediate measures to restore those chapters in the books.

"Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani is known as Majloom Jononeta" (leader of the oppressed) to all of us. All leaders irrespective of their political identity show respect to him for his role in Bangladesh's struggles for freedom and independence," said NAP Chairman Mohammad Azharul Islam at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

But the government excluded writings on his great role from the textbooks on general history of class V and VIII, he said.

"It was the reflection of narrow mind of top leaders of the present Awami League government," he said adding, "Out of envy they have undertaken this change in the textbooks."

He also said his party will take tough programmes in association with other partners in the BNP-led 18-party alliance if the government does not meet their demand.

Bahrain fire leaves lives in uncertainty

The Daily Star yesterday visited families of three deceased of a fire that gutted a labour camp in Manama of Bahrain on January 11. Residents of two Chittagong upazilas, these men were the sole breadwinners of their families.



Family members of, clockwise from left, Nazir Ahmed, Md Jamal and Mahbub Alam grieve at the loss of their loved ones in their Chittagong residences yesterday. The trio was among 11 Bangladeshis killed in a fire that gutted a labour camp in Manama of Bahrain on January 11.



PHOTO: STAR



Nazir Ahmed

With dried-up tears on her cheeks, his daughter Nasrin Sultana was sitting in their one-room tin-shed house in Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong yesterday, clutching his national identity card.

"My father gave his word to come after the upcoming Ramadan," she said in a low voice.

Residing in Bahrain for the past six years, Nazir had called a couple of hours before the tragedy, assuring his wife Shirin Akhter, 30, of sending some money, which he did infrequently.

Informed of the family's sole breadwinner's death by her brother-in-law, a shell-shocked Shirin was reeling over the thought of bringing up three children, all below fifteen years of age, and providing for a mother-in-law in her 70s.

Having no alternative source of income, she urged for assistance from the government and the well-off of society.

PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY, Ctg

A pall of depressive gloom was hanging over the Charkhijirpur residence of Nazir Ahmed, a construction site helper who died in Bahrain fire.

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Jamal

His fears came true with his uncle informing that his father, Md Jamal, working as a mason in Bahrain since 1989, had died in Bahrain fire.

Jamal, scheduled to return for good to his Chiron Member House in Mariarpara village of Chittagong's Patiya upazila at the end of this month, had talked to his family members over phone early Friday.

The youngest of his four children, Liza, a student of class two, said she was eagerly waiting to see him for the first time.

Jamal's death was a bolt from the blue for his two sons who can hardly earn enough by selling betel leaves to support the family.

His octogenarian mother Mohsena Begum, whose third son died from a brain stroke in Bahrain in 2006, kept wailing yesterday, "I want to see my son, bring my son back to me."

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

Instincts told Mamunur Rashid that a 6:00am call from a foreign number on Saturday had something suspicious about it.

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ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

"Mother, I am coming home next week," was what Mahbub Alam, another victim of the fire, said in his last conversation with Saleha Khatun on Friday afternoon.

The bedridden octogenarian Saleha was wailing yesterday at the thought of her son suffocating to death. Her youngest son Jashim, a painter, had seen the unscathed body himself at a Manama hospital morgue in Bahrain.

Working as a painter in a construction company, Mahbub had assured to bring gifts for his daughter Tanisa Sultana Mim, a student of class six, and son Abid Hossain, a student of class four.

Both were eagerly waiting for his return to their East Bathua residence in Patiya upazila of Chittagong.

Mahbub's wife Rubi Akter had been weeping since hearing of his death on Saturday morning. Mahbub had taken a Tk 3 lakh loan from neighbours before leaving for Bahrain in 2008 and only Tk 1 lakh had been repaid.

With two school-going children and the earning member of the family passing away, Rubi yesterday was drowned in her thoughts of finding a way to repay the remaining loan and run her family.

BAHRAIN FIRE Bodies of 11 Bangladeshis to arrive in 10 days: FM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bodies of 11 Bangladeshis who were killed in a fire that gutted a labour camp in Bahrain on Friday afternoon will be brought to the country in seven to ten days, said Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

Two more injured Bangladeshis are still undergoing treatment, she told reporters at a press conference at the ministry.

At least 63 Bangladeshis lost all their belongings in the fire and the Bangladesh embassy in Bahrain was asked to provide them with necessary supplies including food, shelter and treatment, said the foreign minister.

The issue of unpaid wages of the victims will be solved through discussions, Dipu Moni added.

Meanwhile, a senior official at the ministry told The Daily Star that they were inspecting the relevant documents of the victims and later the government will take necessary steps to compensate families of the victims.

On January 11, in the Bahrain capital Manama, a huge fire gutted the labour camp where Asian workers are housed.

The roof of the three-storey building caved in, as the deadly blaze swept through the camp, situated in the crowded Mukharga neighbourhood in the Bahraini capital. It took the fire-fighters around six hours to tame the flames at the 26-room unauthorised structure.

Most of the occupants of the building were Bangladeshis, living in cramped conditions.



Memorial meeting

Jatiya Press Club will organise a memorial meeting on veteran journalist Nirmal Sen; Venue: its premises; Time: 11:00am.

Human chain

Jatiya Oikya will form a human chain demanding capital punishment of convicted torturers of women and children; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Dhakabashi will organise a "kite rally" marking the harvest season; Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy; Time: 11:00am.

Procession

National Garment Workers Federation will hold a procession

demanding safe workplaces and right to trade union; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Discussion

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal will organise a discussion on "Trial of war criminals and our responsibilities"; Venue: Col Taher Auditorium, Bangabandhu Avenue; Time: 4:00pm.

Cultural programme

Bangladesh Chhatra Federation will organise a cultural programme marking its 28th founding anniversary; Venue: in front of Bangladesh National Museum; Time: 3:00pm.

Human chain

Voice Against Violence will form a human chain protesting violence



Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Thick fog may occur over the river basins and moderate to thick fog elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Severe cold wave is sweeping over region of Srimangal and mild to moderate cold wave sweeping over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Mymensingh, Tangail, Madaripur, Sandwip, Sitakunda, Rangamati, Comilla, M Court, Feni, Hatiya, Kutubdia and Sylhet and it may continue as mild.

Night and day temperature may rise by (1-3) degree Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:32pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43am.

Country's highest temperature 25.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 05.7 degrees at Srimangal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	24.1	10.5	74	65
Chittagong	23.9	10.2	91	65
Rajshahi	23.8	08.2	88	77
Rangpur	24.0	08.0	88	68
Khulna	24.5	09.5	94	84
Barisal	24.2	08.2	94	78