

NEWS IN *brief*

Padma bridge work to start this year: Quader

UNB, Dhaka

The government will begin construction work on the Padma bridge during its tenure even though if it doesn't get fund from the World Bank or any other sources.

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader told journalists at his Secretariat office on Tuesday.

"The Prime Minister herself said the World Bank chapter is closed. The WB issue to finance the project will be over tomorrow. There'll be no further waiting for the WB funding after the given time," he said.

The issue relating to funding of the project will be solved before the February and the work on the main bridge will begin by the government before

Two workers injured in landslide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two workers of kiln were injured in a landslide at Kumira in Sitakunda upazila yesterday.

Fire service station sources said the two workers of Modern Brickfield were cutting a hill when a chunk of earth fell on them.

Fire service personnel later rescued the two.

However, fire fighting officials recovered the body of one Aman Ullah from the spot. But the reason behind the death could not be ascertained.

Machinery workshop built at BRRRI

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A farm machinery research workshop has been built at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRRI) in Gazipur with grant assistance from the Korean government to develop new species of cold tolerant and high yielding rice.

Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) constructed the workshop and supplied state of the art technology for farm machinery to develop research capacity of BRRRI.

The workshop was inaugurated yesterday on BRRRI main campus in Gazipur. Korean Ambassador in Dhaka Lee Yun-Young and BRRRI

Debate contest on ATN Bangla soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A shadow parliamentary debate competition styled "Student Parliament" will begin in private television channel ATN Bangla soon.

Debate for Democracy Chairman Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron will conduct the competition, said a press release.

Interested debaters can participate in the programme by sending applications to the Director, Student Parliament, ATN Bangla through authorities of their universities.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

A bus burns in the capital's Moghbazar after Jamaat-Shibir activists set it on fire on the eve of today's hartal.

Jamaat flexes muscle on hartal eve

15 vehicles damaged, 20 bombs exploded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and pro-Jamaat student organisation Islami Chhatra Shibir vandalised and torched over 15 vehicles and blasted some 20 homemade bombs in the capital on the eve of their call for hartal today.

Police arrested 38 activists in this connection while pedestrians beat up another four on Panthapath, said eyewitnesses and police.

Of the vehicles, five were torched in Dhaka University, Moghbazar, Islambagh, Mirpur and Tongi while at least 10 vandalised in Kamalapur Railway Station, Panthapath and Mohakhali areas. The bombs exploded on DU campus, Naya Paltan and Mohakhali.

Officer-in-Charge Enamul Huq of Kalabagan Police Station said police fired six blank shots when the activists tried to vandalise vehicles in Panthapath.

Equipped with heavy arms, weapons

and Armoured Personnel Carriers, Rapid Action Battalion and policemen were deployed at nearly all of the capital's entrances, strategic points, establishments and markets to ensure security at today's hartal.

Yesterday Jamaat's Chittagong unit did not hold any rally even after getting permission from the authorities.

Police arrested five Jamaat men from Jhikorgacha and Abhaynagar upazila in Jessore and imposed Section 144, banning any gathering of more than four people, in Jessore town for today from 6:00am to 6:00pm.

The ban came as Bangladesh Chhatra League and Jamaat called separate rallies at the same place and time.

Police also arrested 10 Shibir men and a Jamaat leader from Sylhet city.

Section 144 was also imposed in four Sylhet upazilas -- Biswanath, Fenchuganj, Beanibazar and Zakiganj -- for today to avert violence.

Star journo injured by police car

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An on-duty photojournalist of The Daily Star sustained injuries when his motorcycle was hit by the door of a police car at the capital's Sonargaon intersection yesterday.

The injured, Palash Khan, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with injuries in legs and fingers. Palash said he was hit while trying to overtake the car.

"Suddenly the car door opened and hit my bike. When I fell down, the man inside the car slammed the door and hit me for the second time intentionally."

Shahbagh police called it "an accident" and said Assistant Commissioner (admin) Shahed Ferdous opened the door.

Ashulia trainees go berserk

Attack fire fighters, torch fire truck during fire incident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some trainees who allegedly set fire to their pre-employment schooling centre in Ashulia last night torched a fire truck and attacked fire fighters during the fire incident.

The injured fire fighters, including Anwar Hossain, station officer of the Export Processing Zone fire station, alleged that Ashulia policemen, who were escorting them, had fled and left them behind.

Some 10 persons were injured when the trainees locked in a clash with cops and the fire fighters around 8:45pm. Vehicular movement on Abdullahpur-Baipail road was suspended for around two hours.

The fire gutted five tin-shed dormitories and rooms of Singapore Piling South Point Skill Centre in Naroshingapur, which houses some 900 youths to train them up for different jobs in Singapore, said the centre's Supervisor, Yakub Miah.

Fire Service and Civil Defence Director General Ali Ahmed Khan suspected the attackers to be pro-hartal activists. "We will lodge complaints with the home ministry about police's role and take legal steps against the attackers," he said. The trainees were upset over the way the centre was being run, sources said.

CONTEMPT OF COURT HC summons expatriates' welfare secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday summoned Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan before it on February 18 in connection with a contempt of court rule for not implementing its verdict.

On August 24, 2010, the court had issued the rule following a contempt of court petition filed by Atahiya-Bin Khuda, an official of a project of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

Earlier on October 8, 2009, the court, in a verdict, directed the secretary to absorb 50 officials and workers of a BMET project to the revenue sector in two months.

DHAKA TODAY

Science, industry and technology fair
Bangladesh Council of Scientific & Industrial Research will organise a science, industry and technology fair; Venue: its Science Laboratory premises; Time: 3:00pm.

Pitha festival
Drishti will hold a pitha (rice cake) festival; Venue: at the base of Shoparjito Swadhinata, Dhaka University; Time: 6:00pm.

Convocation
American International University Bangladesh will organise its 13th

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Mild to moderate cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Faripur, Madaripur, Tangail, Sitakunda, Hatiya, Srimangal, Rajshahi, Pabna, Dinajpur, Sayedpur, Satkhira, Jessore, Kushtia, Khulna and Barisal and it may continue as mild.

Night temperature may rise slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:44pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39am.

Country's highest temperature 28.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 07.5 degrees at Chuadanga.

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	26.2	12.6	63	39
Chittagong	25.9	12.8	94	76
Rajshahi	25.4	09.0	90	60
Rangpur	25.8	10.4	88	55
Khulna	26.6	10.0	77	67
Barisal	25.5	09.5	83	75

FBI to post representative in Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is planning to soon post a permanent representative in Dhaka who will assist Bangladesh authorities in joint investigative endeavours.

The decision to post a representative was discussed this week with some government officials, including Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir and Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandaker, during the visit of Michael S Welch, FBI Assistant Director for International Operations, said a press release.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina spends some time with children being cared for in SOS Children's Village in the capital's Shyamoli yesterday. She went there to attend a function marking 40 years of the presence of SOS Children's Village International in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: BSS

Two arrested with 40,500 firecrackers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested two persons and seized some 40,000 sound-based and 500 aerial firecrackers from their possession in front of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University's second gate in the capital yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Md Saiful Islam, 30, and Md Anwar Hossain, 42, with a covered van around 12:00 noon.

The firecrackers, found stuffed in cartons in the van, were smuggled in from India as those are banned in the country and were supposed to be delivered to Old Dhaka claimed police.

Saiful told journalists that a man paid him to deliver the cartons, which he was told contained imported women's clothing, from a warehouse in Shah-Ali area of Mirpur.

A case was filed with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station in this connection.

BSTI sues 20 brick kilns' owners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) yesterday filed a case with a Chittagong court against 20 brick kilns for manufacturing low quality bricks without licence.

BSTI conducted a drive in 25 brick kilns in Raozan and Rangunia upazilas of Chittagong and found that 20 brick kilns are manufacturing below standard bricks and those kilns also did not have license from BSTI, said a press release.

BSTI filed the case against these brick kilns' owners with the court of Chittagong Chief Judicial Magistrate yesterday.

The kilns are: FM Auto Bricks Industry Limited, Bengal Bricks Company, Kader

Bricks Manufacturer, JBI Bricks, Ilias Bricks Manufacturers, and Hazarat Gafur Ali Bostami Bricks Manufacturers.

The kilns located in Rangunia upazila are: Alhaj Nurul Hoque Chowdhry and Company, National Bricks Workshop, Sadek Shah Bricks Manufacturers (unit-1), Sadek Shah Bricks Manufacturers (Unit-2), Bismillah Bricks Manufacturers (unit-1), Bismillah Bricks Manufacturers (unit-2), Bismillah Bricks Manufacturers (unit-3), Lucky Rangunia Bricks (unit-1), Lucky Rangunia Bricks (unit-2), Ajmir Bricks Manufacturers (unit-1), Ajmir Bricks Manufacturers (unit-2), Ekata Bricks Concern, Al Marwoa Bricks and Fine Bricks Industries.

Obituary

METRO DESK



Md Akhtaruzzaman, deputy manager (accounts) of Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA), working at Uttara EPZ in Nilphamari, died of cardiac arrest at Rangpur Medical College Hospital on Monday. He was 55.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and a son to mourn his death.

Matiur Rahman Khan

METRO DESK



Md Matiur Rahman Khan, former member of appellate tribunal, solicitor and district and sessions judge of Sylhet, died at a hospital in the capital on Tuesday. He was 90.

He left behind his wife, three sons and a daughter.

His qukhwani will be held after Asr prayers at 676, West Ibrahimpur in the capital.

Abdur Rashid Sarker

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Freedom Fighter Abdur Rashid Sarker of Dakkhin Falia village in Gaibandha sadar upazila passed away yesterday from a cardiac arrest. He was 68.

He left behind his wife and four daughters. He was buried with state honour at his family graveyard.