



Participants at a kite festival organised by Dhakabasi and Biswakala Kendra on the playground of Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Transport strike
in 3 northern
districts start
today

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

Transport owner groups of
Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and
Panchagarh jointly called
an indefinite strike from
today demanding that the
government take steps to
stop plying of shallow-
machine-run and battery-
run three-wheelers on
highways in the districts.

They also submitted a
memorandum in this regard
to the deputy commissioner
of Dinajpur yesterday.

Dinajpur Transport
Owner Group
Organisational Secretary
Golam Rabbani announced
the strike at a press conference
at its office on
Thursday night.

He said during the strike,
buses, trucks and other
small vehicles would not be
allowed to ply the three
districts.

Road communications
between the three and
other districts will also be
snapped, he added.

Earlier on March 30, the
transport owners at a meeting
decided that they
would enforce a strike if
their demand was not met
within the timeframe they
had fixed, which expired
yesterday.

Arms, bombs
recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Jhenidah

Rapid Action Battalion
(Rab) recovered firearms,
ammunition and bombs
from Dakhalpur Bazar
area in Harinakundu
upazila of Jhenidah
yesterday.

Rab members said,
acting on a tip-off, they
raided the area around
6:00am and recovered a
shotgun, seven rounds of
bullets and seven bombs.

A case was filed.

POLLS-TIME GOVT Govt wants unconditional talks with opposition: Inu

UNB, Kushtia

Asking the opposition to decide
whether they wanted to take part in the
next polls, Information Minister
Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said the
government was ready to sit with them
for unconditional dialogues at any
time.

"You (opposition) must turn up
unconditionally if you want to talk over
the election. The government is standing
on two legs regarding the unconditional
dialogue," he told a primary
school's annual prize-giving ceremony
in Kushtia's Bheramara upazila.

Inu also criticised the opposition for
its demand as a condition for the
dialogue, to release those arrested for
involvement in terrorist activities,
including killing sleeping people on
trains by removing fishplates of rail
tracks, torching buses and trucks and
damaging a girl's eyes.

The BNP-led 18-party opposition
alliance, on many occasions, has
demanded that the government
release its top leaders and thus create
congenial atmosphere for holding a
dialogue.

Inu also alleged that the opposition
had no headache about the election
despite the government's proposal for
dialogue over the election for the last
two and a half years.

He accused BNP Chairperson
Khaleda Zia of hatching a conspiracy to
overthrow the elected government by
instigating the army alongside creating
anarchy across the country.

Kushtia Deputy Commissioner Syed
Belal Hossain, Kushtia Police Super
Mofiz Uddin Ahmed and Kushtia
District unit Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal
General Secretary Abdul Alim, among
others, addressed the function held
with the School Managing Committee
President Amzad Hossain in the chair.

Resist communal
forces: Menon
DU CORRESPONDENT

Lawmaker and Workers'
Party of Bangladesh
President Rashed Khan
Menon yesterday urged
people to resist all militant
and communal forces.

He was addressing a
two-day meeting of the
party's central committee
in the capital.

The 13-point demand of
Hefajat-e Islam, which
opposed women's empowerment,
intended to back-track on the country's
development policies, he said.

BNP, by expressing
solidarity with the
demands, showed its "political
bankruptcy", Menon added.

He said Jammat-e-
Islam, aided by BNP, was
trying to stir up religious
sentiments to instigate
violence for stopping the
ongoing war crimes trial.

LAND BOUNDARY DEAL BJP president hints at support

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

President of India's main opposition Bharatiya Janata
Party Rajnath Singh yesterday indicated that he favoured
a resolution of land boundary issue with Bangladesh but
his party appeared cautious about endorsing the
constitution amendment bill, given strong opposition in the
border states of Assam and West Bengal.

At the Idea Exchange programme at "The Indian
Express" newspaper, Singh said, "I would want that the
government of India should try to put a sweetener... to try
to compensate for the deal. But the boundary dispute
should get resolved. We will try our best, there is no opposition
from our side."

Hours later, the BJP top brass meeting at BJP parlia-
mentary party chairman LK Advani's residence appeared
not to agree and reportedly decided to take a "cautious"
line.

The 1974 India-Bangladesh land boundary agreement
envisages India handing over 111 land enclaves to
Bangladesh in return for 51 enclaves from Dhaka. India
would have to let go of over 17,000 acres of territory in
exchange for a little over 7,000 acres.

The move requires a constitutional amendment with
two-thirds majority which cannot be passed in parlia-
ment without BJP's support.

Bangladeshi
worker 'commits
suicide' in Saudi
Arabia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi worker
allegedly committed
suicide by jumping off
the roof of a two-storey
building in Jazan province
of Saudi Arabia yesterday,
reports Saudi Gazette.

The unidentified man,
aged around 50, fell on his
head and died on the spot,
the report added, quoting
Saudi police.

According to Col Awad
Al-Qahtani, spokesman
for Jazan police, they were
investigating the reason
behind the suicide.

On contact, Md
Emdadul Haque, labour
counsellor of the
Bangladesh embassy in
Riyadh, failed to ascertain
the details of the incident.



Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad brings out a procession in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday demanding a Bangladesh free from communalism.

ATTACK ON JOURNO MASUD
Police 'showing apathy' to arrest
main culprit

Alleges victim

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Jessore

Police are "showing apathy" in arresting the main
culprit in the attack on
Masud Alam, Abhaynagar
correspondent of the
Bangla daily Prothom Alo,
the victim told The Daily
Star yesterday.

Around six miscreants
beat Masud indiscrimi-
nately in Dhopadi area
of Jessore's Abhaynagar
upazila on March 28 and
broke his left hand.

Masud, also a lecturer of
Sundali College, was under-
going treatment in the
capital's BirDEM hospital.

He alleged that police
were doing nothing as the
culprits and their "godfathers"
were from the ruling
Awami League.

A case was filed accus-
ing around 10 people,
including Sundali Union
Parishad Chairman
Poritosh Biswas, and his
accomplices Abu Sufian,
Abdul Hannan, Monirul
Islam, Shaheen and Yasin
of Dhopadi in the upazila.

Masud, in his case state-
ment, said the attack was
launched as per the order of
Poritosh as he covered
several stories on corruption,
including misappropriation of a climate
change project fund which
went against Poritosh.

Masud said the main
culprit Abu Sufian, also an
accused in several cases
including murder, was still
at large.

Abhaynagar police Sub-
Inspector Taizur Rahman
Fakir, denying the allega-
tion, said they were trying
to arrest Abu Sufian.

Quader slams misuse of students in politics

DU CORRESPONDENT

Former student leader Obaidul Quader yesterday strongly
criticised the current trend of misusing students in the name
of student politics.

"MPs, ministers, big leaders, small leaders -- all use stu-
dents to serve their own interests," the communications
minister told a seminar in Dhaka University's Nabab Nawab
Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban.

Bangladesh Sociology Association organised the seminar
on "the recent experience on people's rights and movement".

He also asked teachers to support political parties, not
engage with them. "If teachers engage in politics, who will
teach in the classrooms?" he asked.

A section of politicians were giving provocative speeches
before the media to make the current political situation
more volatile, he said.

Quader viewed the Shahbagh movement as a chance to
bring qualitative changes to current politics.

Environmentalist Syeda Rezwana termed the Shahbagh
movement "a message for politicians". People, frustrated
with the governance and deprivation, might take to the
streets at any moment, she warned.

Prof Zia Rahman of DU sociology department,
Information Commissioner Sadeka Halim and Kaberi
Gayen of DU mass communication and journalism depart-
ment addressed the seminar.

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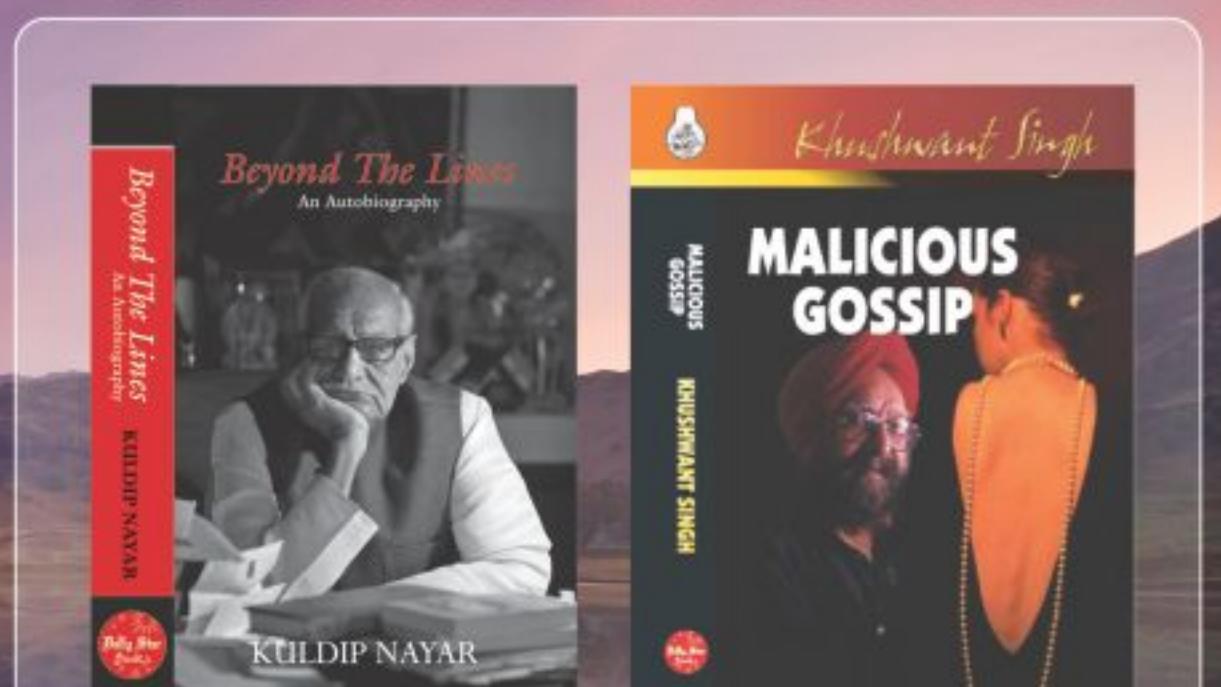
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