

BIWTA to launch 2 new rescue vessels

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) will add two more rescue vessels to the existing two, Hamza and Rustam, said Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan yesterday during a human chain at Sadarghat launch terminal.

The new vessels – Nirbhik and Pratyay – will be four times capable than the old ones, with the capacity of 250-tonne each, he said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will formally launch the vessels at Mawa terminal on May 28.

BIWTA Chairman Dr Md Shamsuddoha Khandakar said the government bought the new vessels from South Korea after receiving a loan of Tk 350 crore from the Korean government.

Hamza and Rustam, each with 60-tonne capacity, were bought from Germany in 1964 and from Belgium in 1983 respectively. Both of the vessels should have been withdrawn many years earlier, as the usual service period of a rescue vessel is about 20 years, said another BIWTA official.

About necessary steps to reduce waterway accidents, the shipping minister said apart from government initiatives people's awareness was much needed.

Social organisation Nongor arranged the event to create awareness about waterway accidents.

Every year, a significant number of people die in launch accidents across the country.

Nongor Chairman Shuman Shams informed that four vessels were sunk in a single day [May 23] in 2004. Seeing this, they have been arranging such human chain programmes since 2005 demanding that the government declare May 23 as the waterway safety day.



An inquisitive child peers at coins from around the world on display at an exhibition, organised by Bangladesh Numismatic Collectors Society and inaugurated at the General Post Office auditorium in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Four people injured in fire in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four people, including three of a family, sustained severe burn injuries in a fire in the capital's Mugda yesterday.

The injured, Anwaruzzaman Shipon, a confectionary shop owner, his wife Faria Zaman Mou and their three-year-old son Anisuzzaman Apurba, and seven-year-old Arman, are undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police said gas from a water tank, beneath Shipon's room, had entered the room. They suspected that Shipon lit a cigarette in the room which caused the fire.

However, injured Mou claimed the fire began when an electric fan exploded and spread due to the gas.

Baby Islam's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 4th death anniversary of noted cinematographer and film director Baby Islam.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and qurankhwani will be held at Motaharun Nesa Maternal and Infant Care Hospital in Chuadanga.

Shararitu, a cultural organisation, will place wreaths at his grave at Banani Graveyard in the capital, said a press release.

The organisation will also arrange a memorial meeting on his eventful life at his Dhanmondi residence, it said.

All well wishers and relatives of Baby Islam have been requested to attend the programmes.

Country's lone ethnology museum in neglect

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

The country's lone ethnology museum displaying the lifestyles and heritage of 37 ethnic groups of Bangladesh and four other countries is gradually losing its charm and visitors for poor collections and lack of publicity.

Experts say it will be a tourist attraction if the authorities enrich the collection of objects and artefacts and take steps to draw tourists.

"The museum could earn huge revenues and become a place of recreational learning for visitors," said Shamshul Hossain, a former curator of Chittagong University Museum.

Documents show that the number of monthly visitors dropped to around 3,000 from more than 7,000 in the early 1990s.

Curator of Chittagong Ethnological Museum Mohammed Amiruzzaman recognised that the number of visitors had sunk for lack of promotion and that the museum was in a shabby condition.

Sitting on 1.30 acres of land in Agrabad area of Chittagong city, the museum opened to the public in 1974. The four galleries and a hall room portray 26 ethnic minorities of Bangladesh and 11 others from India, Pakistan, Australia and Kyrgyzstan.

Exhibits include outfits, tools, musical instruments, weapons, ornaments, idols of deities, paintings, photographs, dioramas, and sculptures. There are also some stones of the Berlin Wall, fall of which led to the reunification of East and West Germany in October 1990.

Visitors, however, say the objects available in the museum are too inadequate to

completely present the lifestyles of even seven or eight groups.

"Most of the ethnic communities are displayed through only a few exhibits, which present an incomplete image," said Md Mohiuddin, a visitor, who has been to the National Museum of Ethnology in Japan.

"Unlike this museum, there you could find almost every detail of the lifestyles of the ethnic groups and complete narratives through the thematic presentations of objects," he said.

The Bangladeshi ethnic groups include Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Chak, Tanchangya, Murong, Khumi, Garo, Bawm, Pankho, Lusai, Khyang, Monipuri, Khashia, Oraon, Hajong, Mandai, Dalue, Hodi, Bona, Polia, Koch, Rajbangshi, Santal, Munda and Ho.

The five groups from Pakistan are Pathan, Swati, Sindhi, Kafir and Punjabi. The Indian ethnic communities include Adi, Muria, Mizo and Futtowa. The remaining two come from Australia and Kyrgyzstan.

The curator said, "We have submitted a project design to the Department of Archaeology (DoA) in April to upgrade the museum, including gradually and regularly increasing collectibles, improving presentation style and launching publicity campaign."

"If the project is approved by the cultural affairs ministry, hopefully the museum could be turned into an attractive tourist destination," he said.

An official seeking anonymity said the project could be worth more than Tk 2 crore.



Chittagong Ethnological Museum sits in Chittagong city's Agrabad area, gradually losing its charm and visitors for poor collections and lack of publicity. Inset, some of the artefacts featuring the lifestyle and heritage of 37 ethnic groups of Bangladesh and four other countries on display in the country's lone ethnology museum.



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Obituary

CITY DESK



Razia Sultana, ex-student of Dhaka University and a former school

teacher, died at her residence in London in the UK on Monday. She was 74.

Her body will arrive in the country on Sunday. She will be buried the same day at Mirpur intellectuals' graveyard in the capital following her namaz-e-janaza after Asr prayers at Gulshan Azad Masjid.

All well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Syeda Sufia Begum, wife of Moulvi Helal Uddin and mother of Syed Altaf Hossain who is the general manager of The New Nation.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held and food will be distributed among the destitute today after Juma prayers at her residence in Mehediganj of Barisal.

All have been requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Road crashes kill nine

CITY DESK

Nine people were killed and 20 others injured in separate road accidents in the country yesterday.

Our Netrakona correspondent reports, two labourers were killed and five others injured when a truck carrying them veered off the road and fell into a ditch at Challisha in Netrakona Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead, Dukhu Mia, 50, and Jillur Rahaman, 40, hailed from Sunamganj. The injured were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Our Dinaipur correspondent adds, eight people were injured when a bus collided head-on with a truck at Mohepur village in Phulbari upazila.

The injured, including the bus driver, were taken to Phulbari Upazila Health Complex.

Our Moulvibazar correspondent adds, two people were killed as a truck hit a roadside tree after the driver lost control over the steering amid heavy rainfall near Motiganj bazar at Sreemangal upazila.

The dead are the truck driver, Abdul Mannan, 31, of Narail, and his helper Shihab Uddin, 24, of Jessore.

Our Mymensingh correspondent reports, Borhan Uddin, 35, of Nandail upazila, died after a truck ran him over at Kanarampur in Ishwarganj upazila.

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds, Shawkat Hossain, 55, an employee of Mobarakganj Sugar Mill, died after a truck rammed his motorbike in Kaliganj municipality of Jhenidah.

Our Barisal correspondent reports, a woman was killed and six other people were injured when a bus of Seba Paribahan rammed the three-wheeler carrying them at Narayanpur bus stand in Barisal.

The deceased is Mukta Begum, 26. Of the injured, four-year-old Abdullah, son of Mukta, was admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Our Noakhali Correspondent reports, Md Sayed, a class-VI student, died after a truck hit him on Steamerghat-Sonapur road at Atokpalia near Haris Chowdhury Bazar yesterday.

Agitated locals torched the truck, however, the driver managed to escape.

Other schoolboys blocked the road for an hour and vandalised 10 vehicles, including four trucks and three buses.

Our Lalmonirhat Correspondent adds, a person was killed and another injured as a truck rammed their motorbike at Dowani intersection in Hatibandha upazila yesterday.

The deceased is Mohadev Chandra Roy, 40, of Nilphamari.

Highway police caught the driver, Rayhan Miah.



Urs

The annual Urs of Shah Syed Azizul Bari will be held; Venue: Paribagh Mazar premises; Time: 11:00am (munajat).

Discussion

Swadesh Jagoron Parishad will hold a discussion on necessity of dialogue to hold a transparent election; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Buddha Purnima Festival

Bangladesh Buddha Kristi Prachar Sangha will organise the second day of Holy Buddha Purnima Festival-2013; Venue: Dharmarajika Bouddha Mahavihara, Sabujbagh; Time: 8:00am.

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