

NEWS IN brief

4kg gold in TV set seized at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Customs officials seized four gold bars weighing around four kilograms worth about Tk 2 crore at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital Thursday night.
Acting on a tip-off, the officials searched the belongings of the passengers of a flight coming from Singapore that landed at the airport around 10:30pm.
The gold bars were found inside a television, said Wazed Ali, assistant commissioner of customs.
The carrier left the television abandoned at the green channel, he added.

Fire breaks out in Gazipur factory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur
A fire broke out in a recycling plant at Masuma Textiles in Monipur area of Gazipur Sadar upazila yesterday, burning its garment accessories including machineries, yarn, and cotton.
Md Shahin Mia, station officer of Gazipur Fire Service and Civil Defence, said the fire originated from an electric short circuit of a tin-shed warehouse of the plant around 1:15pm.
Four fire fighting units from Gazipur and Bhaluka doused the blaze around 4:00pm.

Youth found dead in mess

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A youth was found dead in a mess in the capital's Mohammadpur Thursday night.
The deceased was Tawfiqul Islam alias Emon, son of Nurul Islam of Kurigram.
Police recovered the body hanging from the ceiling fan with a rope from the house on road no-2 at Mohammadia Housing Ltd, said Mohammadpur Police Station Sub-inspector Nazrul Islam.
The reason behind the death could not be known immediately.

CNG-run rickshaw strike called off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
CNG-run Auto-rickshaw Owners and Workers Association yesterday called off their three-day strike scheduled to start tomorrow in the capital as the government has withdrawn its decision to take the 11-year-old three-wheelers and taxis off the roads.
"We have withdrawn our strike, as BRTA authorities assured us that the lifespan of CNG-run auto-rickshaws and taxis will be extended to 15 years," said ATM Nazmul Hasan, member secretary of the association.

NSU MBA admission test Wednesday

CITY DESK
The admission test of MBA (spring-2014) of North South University (NSU) has been rescheduled due to unavoidable circumstances.
The test, scheduled to be held today, will now be held on Wednesday at 10:00am on the campus, says a press release.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the first death anniversary of social activist Jahanara Imam, grandmother of Asif Kabir, assistant press secretary to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
On the occasion, a milad mahfil and special prayers will be held while blankets will be distributed among the poor at her Sadhupara residence in Pabna.



MOLLAH EXECUTION Bangalees in UK protest Pak resolution

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH, London
Bangalees living in the UK demonstrated before the Pakistan embassy in London protesting the Pakistan parliament's resolution criticising the execution of war criminal Quader Mollah.
The demonstration was organised on Thursday by ICT Support Forum, a platform of pro-liberation organisations including Gonojagoron Mancha, Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, Awami League, Mohila League, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Jubo League, Ainjibi Parishad and Projonmo-71.
After the demonstration, a memorandum was handed over to the Pakistan embassy. The memorandum read, "We the UK Bengali community are disappointed to learn that the Pakistan parliament has passed a resolution to condemn the sentencing of war criminal Abdul Quader Molla for his crimes committed during Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971."

Boycot Pakistani products

Urges Gonojagoron Mancha; threatens tougher movement if cops not punished within 7 days for baton charge on its activists
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Anti-war criminal platform Gonojagoron Mancha yesterday issued a seven-day ultimatum threatening "tougher action" if the government did not take punitive measures against policemen who charged baton on its activists, freedom fighters and war heroines on Thursday.
That day the demonstrators had tried to move towards the Pakistan High Commission from the nearby Gulshan 2 intersection in the capital and besiege it after the end of its 20-hour ultimatum at 3:00pm.
This ultimatum was issued demanding that the government suspend diplomatic ties until Pakistan sought an apology for passing a resolution in its National Assembly on December 16.
The resolution expressed concern over the December 12 execution of war criminal and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Quader Mollah in Bangladesh, saying he had been "hanged for supporting Pakistan in 1971."
Tomorrow at 11:00am the mancha will submit a memorandum, demanding the "tougher action", at the home ministry and another memorandum, demanding to sever the ties, at the foreign ministry, said one of the mancha organisers.
The organiser, Maruf Rasul, addressing a rally over the demand in the capital's Shahbagh, said during the ultimatum's period, they would hold countrywide campaigns urging to boycott Pakistani products.
Prominent author Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal and

MP ASPIRANTS' WEALTH TIB slams ACC reluctance to conduct probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Expressing concern over the massive wealth Awami League contestants of the upcoming polls amassed in the last five years, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) criticised Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) decision to not immediately launch a probe.
TIB in a statement yesterday also urged ACC to take immediate steps in this regard.
TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said if the wealth seems inconsistent with that of the contestants' known source of income, it is illegal.
"Corruption will spread to a greater extent everywhere from the highest level of the state if it is not possible to bring the persons involved in amassing such huge wealth to book," he said.
He said the wealth statements submitted to the Election Commission

BNP-Jamaat tie an 'unholy marriage'

Says visiting Canadian delegation, stressing separation of religion from politics
UNB, Dhaka
Expressing deep concern over the "ongoing and increasing" attacks on religious minorities, a Canadian delegation yesterday said only a clear separation between religion and politics could ensure the rights of all Bangladeshis, including minorities.
"If you want to be a politician, be a politician. If you want to be a man of religion, be a man of religion," Rev Majed El Shafie, head of the delegation and founder of One Free World International (OFWI), told a press conference at the capital's Jatiya Press Club, urging political parties not to make the "unholy marriage" between religion and politics.
Terming the alliance between opposition BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami an "unholy marriage" which, he thinks, is becoming a danger and threat to Bangladesh's peace and stability, Shafie said they were not here to support the government or the opposition.
"That's not our position. Our position is simply to keep politics for politicians and keep religion for the religious people...you can't use violence as a way of communication," he explained.
Responding to a question, Shafie said they did not meet the Jamaat leaders and told the BNP representatives straight that the Jamaat today was not the same old Jamaat.
"There might be a backfire due to the unholy marriage." Any type of marriage goes through some difficulties like divorce and separation after a certain period, he said.
The delegation included two Canadian Members of Parliament (MPs), Brad Butt and Jay Aspin, also vice chair of Canada Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship Group.



Activists and supporters of Gonojagoron Mancha stage a rally in the capital's Shahbagh yesterday protesting Thursday's police baton charge on its activists trying to besiege the Pakistan High Commission near the Gulshan 2 intersection. The activists had made the attempt after the deadline of the mancha's ultimatum demanding that the government suspend diplomatic ties until Pakistan sought an apology for passing in its National Assembly on December 16 a resolution criticising war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah's execution.

Govt to train 20,000 youths on outsourcing

UNB, Dhaka
The government has taken an initiative to develop 20,000 youths as IT-Enabled Services (ITES) professionals by training them on Business Process Outsourcing, software development and corporate culture in line with the requirements of local and global markets, said official sources.
The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is implementing the project -- Leveraging ICT for Growth, Employment and Governance (LICT). The ministry has already appointed an international advisor on IT and ITES and has taken an initiative to engage international firms to prepare a curriculum for a global standard ITES training, said ICT Secretary Md Nazrul Islam Khan.
He said the World Bank is providing US\$70 million in credit for implementing the LICIT project to develop 34,000 IT professionals and establish an e-government foundation.

INDO-BANGLA LAND BOUNDARY DEAL West Bengal, Assam differ on outcomes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi
While West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has opposed the land boundary agreement with Bangladesh on the ground that her state stands to lose land in implementing it, another state of India, Assam, says it stands to gain 397.5 acres of land from that country.
Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi yesterday said BJP and AGP's opposition to the land boundary agreement arguing that the state would have to give away land to Bangladesh was an effort to "mislead" the public for their political gain.
"Altogether 665 acres of land is under adverse possession of both the countries and following the land transfer agreement, Assam will regain 397.5 acres of land while Bangladesh will get 267.5 acres," Gogoi told reporters in Guwahati, capital of Assam.
"Where does the question of the state giving away land arise? Actually, both BJP and AGP are out to politicise the issue and their protests only prove they do not want the land to be included within the state," he said.
The Indian government tabled a constitutional amendment

Woman hurt in acid attack 'by husband'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A woman suffered severe burns on her left cheek in an acid attack allegedly by her husband who, she claimed, was jealous of her interactions with a neighbour in the capital's Pallabi yesterday.
Fahima Akhter, 26, is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.
Talking to The Daily Star she claimed that her husband of eight years, Monir Hossain, a laundry shop employee, accused her of having an extramarital affair with the man. Monir is on the run, said police.

REINVIGORATING ACTIVISTS, VOTERS AL to visit districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The ruling Awami League will start touring districts in a day or two to reinvigorate leaders, activists and voters and ensure a "satisfactory" turnout in the January 5 national election, boycotted by the BNP-led 18-party opposition alliance.
Several sub-committees have also been formed to work for the elections, AL Advisory Council Member HT Imam told journalists after an AL election steering committee meeting at the AL president's political office in the capital's Dhanmondi.
Among the sub-committee conveners are Saber Hossain Chowdhury (training affairs), Asaduzzaman Nur (publicity affairs), Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury (media affairs), Dipu Moni (observer affairs) and SK Habibullah (office affairs).
Imam, the prime minister's former adviser and the election committee's co-chairman, said the AL would take "tougher measures" against the BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami if they try to foil the elections.
At another meeting there chaired by AL Joint General Secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak, the AL decided that central leaders, from December 23 to 27, will visit 12 districts where Jamaat-Shibir unleashed terror on AL men and minority communities.
The districts are Satkhira, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Rajshahi, Natore, Chandpur, Laxmipur, Narail and Chittagong.

DHAKA TODAY
Roundtable
The Prothom Alo will arrange a roundtable on the education of indigenous children in their mother languages; Venue: Prothom Alo office, Karwan Bazar; Time: 10:00am.
Human chain
Peshajibi Samannaya Parishad will form a human chain protesting Pakistan's interference in Bangladesh's internal issue; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.
Discussion
Amra Mujib Habo will hold a discussion on current politics; Venue: the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh; Time: 11:00am.

Actor Khaled Khan passes away

FROM PAGE 3
younger brother Shahin Khan told journalists.
Suffering from progressive motor neurone disease for the last 12 years which left the lower part of his body paralysed, the 55-year-old had been admitted to the hospital in a critical and an unconscious state since December 16.
The body will be kept at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, where he was the treasurer, in Satmasjid Road at 10:00am today for teachers and students to pay their respects.
Then the body will be taken to Central Shaheed Minar and then to Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy for people of all walks of life to pay tribute.
The first namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Dhaka University Central Mosque after Zohr prayers.
The body will then be taken to his Moshdoi village under Mirzapur upazila of Tangail for burial after another namaz-e-janaza in the afternoon.
Talking to Ekattor TV yesterday, eminent artist Ramendu Majumdar termed Khaled a talented actor, stating that despite being seriously ill for the last couple of years, he had continued to assist different drama groups.
His only grief was not being able to take on roles, he added.
Juboraaj, as his near and dear ones called him, obtained his post graduation degree from Dhaka University and simulta-

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