

Workers Party's 9th congress in Rajshahi on April 24

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers Party of Bangladesh will hold its 9th national congress from April 24 to 27 in Rajshahi to elect new central leadership.

Party's President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Anisur Rahman Mollik revealed it at a press conference at Shaheed Asad Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Menon, also civil aviation and tourism minister, said the congress would be held with a vow to establishing a non-communal democratic Bangladesh.

Replied to a query, Menon said BNP was in power for two terms, but did not take any step to ensure an equal share of Teesta water with India.

The party is now trying to get narrow political interests by organising long march, he said.

His party also wants an equal share of water of the Teesta and other common rivers, he said, adding that the issue would be raised at the party congress.

Mollik said delegates from communist parties of India, Nepal, Sri Lanka,

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India establishes 'full control' over Bangladesh

Says Fakhru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday alleged that India has established its "full control" over Bangladesh due to the Sheikh Hasina-led government's subservient policy, and vowed to face Indian "water aggression" together with the nation.

"Out of its too much love for India, our government has given away all our weapons to India for realising our due share of water from the 54 common rivers. Now India has established its full influence on Bangladesh," said BNP acting secretary general

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Status of junior commissioned officers of armed forces upgraded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has upgraded the status and salaries of junior commissioned officers (JCO) and sergeants of the Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air forces with effect from April 1.

As per the decision, the JSC post has been uplifted to grade-I from grade-II, while sergeant post to grade-II from grade-III, said an Inter Services Public Relations press release.

There would be changes to the salary structure and rank only, it said, adding that all administrative, operational rules and regulations would remain continuous

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Remains of illegal street shops around Dhaka Medical College Hospital, demolished by Dhaka South City Corporation in an eviction drive yesterday, which sparked a clash between the hospital security guards and the shop owners. Inset, in another drive DSCC bulldozing whatever is illegal on Shahbagh Avenue adjacent to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

PHOTO: COURTESY



JOB TERMINATION IN HONG KONG 13 women returnees want loan exemption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen women, who were sent back home from Hong Kong (HK) prior to completion of their job contracts, yesterday demanded that the expatriates' welfare ministry exempt them from paying the loans they took from Probashi Kallyan Bank to go to the Chinese city.

They placed their demands meeting Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain at his ministry yesterday.

"We had to return home well before the completion of the contracts. But the minister refused to listen to us and was rude to us," Shahina Yasmin, one of the returnees, told The Daily Star.

Echoing Yasmin, another returnee, Beauty Akhter said the minister said he had nothing to do in this regard.

He even blamed us saying that we had to return due to our own faults, she added.

The women returned home from HK between last

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DCC'S EVICTION DRIVE

Street vendors clash with DMCH security guards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Street vendors near Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) clashed with hospital security guards during an eviction drive against them yesterday afternoon.

The vendors wielding sticks chased Ansar members who are responsible for guarding the hospital. They entered the hospital and shattered glass doors of the hospital's emergency unit creating panic among the waiting patients there, said Mushfiqur Rahman, deputy director of DMCH.

Three hospital staff and two Ansar members were injured, he said.

Witnesses said an eviction team led by Executive Magistrate of Dhaka South City Corporation Mohammad Atul Mondal demolished the makeshift stalls set up in

front of the hospital's emergency unit gate around 4:00pm.

After clearing the gate, the team went to hospital's outdoor gate adjacent to the Shaheed Minar. Ansar members assisted the drive.

An Ansar member preferring anonymity said the unruly hawkers attacked them as soon as they came back to the emergency unit gate from the outdoor one.

The hawkers fled away after the clash.

Talking to The Daily Star, Magistrate Atul said they carried out the drive on request of the hospital authorities.

Vendors had not only grabbed the footpaths, they also set up stalls taking a portion of the road in front of the hospital's emergency gate. The drive was made as per the direction of the health minister for smooth movement of the patients, said Atul.

Ctg gold trader's release demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Gold traders at a rally in Chittagong city yesterday evening gave a seven-day ultimatum to the government to release their fellow Nandoram Dhar and his two sons.

On April 7, a taskforce comprising Border Guard Bangladesh and a magistrate raided Nandoram's house at Chiringa Hindupara in Chakoria municipal area of Cox's Bazar.

The team detained Nandoram and his sons Palash Dhar and Suman Dhar and seized 27.5kg gold ornament, six passports and Tk 11.5 lakh from the house. The three were handed over to police.

Bangladesh Jewellers' Association, Chittagong division staged the rally at Central Shaheed Minar.

Addressing the rally, ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, president of Chittagong city unit of Awami League, claimed that the BGB personnel also shot and injured Nandoram's family members.

Subhash Chandra Dhar, general secretary of the association, threatened to go for tougher programmes if the seized

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One dies, 26 fall sick after 'eating watermelon'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A nine-year-old girl died and at least 26 other persons fell sick after eating "chemically treated" watermelon at Kalua village in Kumarkhali upazila of Kushtia yesterday.

Police arrested vendor Rezaul Karim along with 19 watermelons after the incident.

The dead is Smrity Khatun, daughter of Askar Ali of the village.

Askar Ali, a garment worker in Dhaka, purchased the watermelon from railway market in the upazila while returning home from the capital yesterday noon. He ate the fruit sharing with other family members and neighbours.

"All of them began to feel pain in the

stomach and digestive disorders and vomiting after they ate the slices of watermelon," said Askar.

Twelve of the sick persons were rushed to Kushtia Medical College Hospital, where Smrity died around 2:30pm. Later, victim brother Anik, 11,

and another person were shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Physicians at the Kushtia medical suspected that the watermelon they consumed might have "ripened with chemicals."

Samples from the patients and the watermelon have been sent to Dhaka for tests and the cause behind the death can be known after getting the report, Saleq Masud, a doctor of the hospital, told The Daily Star.

Physicians at Kushtia Medical College Hospital suspect that the watermelon they consumed might have "ripened with chemicals."



Christians gather at South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban to celebrate Easter Sunday yesterday. They observe the day celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

PHOTO: STAR



Workers under the banner of the Tea Workers' Association bring out a procession at Zindabazar in Sylhet city yesterday, demanding that the daily minimum wage be fixed at Tk 300. Later, they submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner of Sylhet.

PHOTO: STAR

ATTACK ON ETV JOURNOS

Arrest of responsible Mitford interns demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Television Camera Journalists Association formed a human chain at Saarc Foara intersection in the capital yesterday demanding arrest of the Mitford Hospital interns who attacked the Ekushey Television reporters.

They also sought the prime minister's intervention in the matter to ensure punishment for all involved in the attack.

They threatened to go for tougher movement if their demand is not met.

The interns at the Mitford on April 19 morning beat up three reporters and three videographers of the private television channel and smashed their two cameras on the hospital premises.

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