NEWS_{IN} brief

2nd Edition

Bangladesh to purchase 120 carriages from India

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will procure 120 broad gauge passenger carriages from India under the Indian Line of Credit.

An agreement was signed between Indian firm RITES Ltd and Bangladesh Railways on January 21 in this regard, said a press release yesterday. The carriages will begin arriving in Bangladesh from July this year and the delivery will be completed in two years. Minister for Railways Md Mazibul Hoque and High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Pankaj Saran were present at the event.

PM mourns Dr Selim's death

UNB, Dhaka

Dr Mohammad Selim, the eldest son of national leader Captain M Monsur Ali and elder brother of Health Minister Mohammad Nasim, died in London yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in a massege, expressed profound shock at the death of Selim, a former MP and former presidium member of Awami League.

Free spine, knee surgeries conducted at NITOR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) in collaboration with The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, UK conducted spine, knee, and hip surgeries for free from Tuesday to yesterday.

Headed by orthopaedic surgeon Prof Simon Carter, a team of physicians including Badrul Amin Siddique and MA Malek treated 27 patients, who needed hip and knee replacement and other critical operations, said a press

Aminbazar land office ransacked

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Armed miscreants ransacked the office of assistant commissioner (land) in Aminbazar area of Savar yesterday.

Faruk Ahmmed, the assistant commissioner (land) of Aminbazar, said the miscreants numbering 9-10 stormed into the office breaking open the door after tying the security guard with ropes and ransacked the

They were yet to ascertain whether anything valuable went missing, he added. A case was filed.

Indian high commission to celebrate Republic Day Jan 26

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The High Commission of India will organise Republic Day celebrations at New Chancery Complex on UN Road in Baridhara in the capital on January 26.

To celebrate the day, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Pankaj Saran will unfurl the Indian National Flag at 9:00am.



Chief of Army Staff General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan pays a courtesy call on President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in the capital yesterday. Maj Gen Sheikh Mamun Khaled, vice-chancellor of the Bangladesh University of Professionals, who accompanied the army chief, invited the president to attend the university's second convocation to be held on its campus on February 1. PHOTO: PID

Abu Sayeed Mahmud's death anniversary observed STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 11th death anniversary of Abu Sayeed Mahmud, founding managing director of Mediaworld which owns The Daily Star and founder chairman of Ekushey TV, was observed yesterday.

Sayeed passed away in London on January 22, 2004. He was 71.

He was one of the architects of The Daily Star, and it was his untiring zeal and commitment to free media that set the course for the subsequent success of this paper.

As the chairman of ETV, Bangladesh's first terrestrial private television channel that went on air on April 14, 2000, Sayeed was its principal inspiration and organiser.

Sayeed was born in Sylhet in 1933. Widely acclaimed writer Syed Mujtaba Ali was his maternal uncle.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

Labour unrest closes Savar RMG factory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

The authorities of Birds Garments Ltd, a garment factory in Buribazar of Ashulia, yesterday shut down the factory for an indefinite period amid demonstration by workers demanding, among others, an increase in salary.

The workers tried to demonstrate in front of the factory after seeing the closure notice but were barred by police.

Talking to The Daily Star, Md Nizam, general manager (operation) of the factory, said they were forced to close the factory by the workers' continuous demonstration.

Mostafizur Rahman, director of Ashulia Industria Police, said workers of the factory have been demonstrating since Tuesday to press home several demands, including annual salary hike and permission to use mobile phones at

Additional policemen have been deployed in the factory area to avoid any untoward incident, he added.

Credible polls only

the people their democratic rights.

He observed that the ruling party's obstinate attitude to remain in power at any cost would be ruinous for the country, and it would have to pay dearly for this. The Awami League-led grand alliance has retained power

through a voter-less election, which has been accepted neither at home nor abroad, he said. The SCBA chief accused the government of suppressing

dissent views by restricting assemblies and freedom of expression and trampling the people's basic rights guaranteed by the constitution.

The government has been illegally using the law enforcement agencies to hold onto power, he said.

The lawyers' leader also alleged that development projects were rife with corruption.

Describing the BNP-led 20-party alliance's antigovernment programmes as a bid to restore people's voting and democratic rights, Khandker Mahbub claimed that the people were responding to Khaleda Zia's call.

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Obituary STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Anwarul Iqbal, freedom fighter,

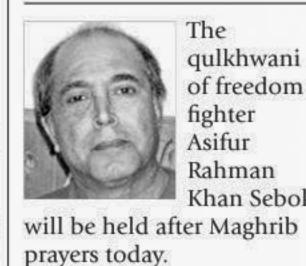
former inspector general of police (IGP) and adviser to a caretaker government, died in Dubai on January 15. He was 65. He left behind his wife,

and two daughters. The body of Iqbal,

founder director of Rapid Action Battalion, arrived at the Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning. He was buried at Banani graveyard.

Qulkhwani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Khan Sebok will be held after Maghrib prayers today. Friends and well-wishers

are requested to attend the programme on 10/2 Iqbal Road in the capital. Sebok, at the age of 66,

died on the way to the hospital on January 12. He had been suffering from various ailments. He left behind two daughters to mourn his death.

Sylhet BCL men clash among themselves

Puja committee fund money the reason

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet city's Madan Mohan College yesterday during a factional clash reportedly after one group tried to extort Tk 20,000 from the other. Some 40 activists of the now dissolved college unit BCL

Six Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists were hospi-

talised with minor injuries and six shops vandalised before

clashed using sticks and iron rods inside the educational institution around 2:00pm and dispersed within half an hour, said witnesses. Sources at the college said Biplop and Rumel had

personal enmities with Bidyut Bhusan Dey, whom the

college authority appointed as member secretary of a committee to observe Saraswati Puja, to be celebrated on January 25. The committee had been allocated Tk 1 lakh to organise the celebrations and Biplop and Rumel demanded the money from Bidyut, leading to an altercation and the clash

between their followers, added the sources requesting anonymity. Though none of the three could be contacted for comment, Principal Abul Fateh Fattah and Sylhet city unit BCL General Secretary acknowledged the incident, stating that

such behaviour had led to the college unit's dissolution last year. No complaint has been filed with police.

"Pro-govt labourers"

FROM PAGE 3 Meanwhile, around 500 activists of four pro-Awami League

organisations aiming to encircle the office were also stopped by law enforcers at the Gulshan 2 intersection, where they demonstrated demanding the same, threatening to stage hunger strikes and sit-ins if it was not met in two The labourers' procession, having a banner "Khete

Khawa Nagarbasi" and joined by some Gulshan unit Bangladesh Chhatra League activists, were stopped at one end of Road 86, some 50 yards from the office, around 11:00am.

Most said they had been told to stage the demonstration, lasting for around half an hour, and they supported the

One Abdul Halim of Badda and one Babul of Dholairpar were leading them, said labourer Abdul Haque, adding, "I work under Babul for Tk 400 per day...I knew Babul worked for Jatiya Party. But, I am not aware of his present political identity."

The strike at Jatiya Press Club was threatened by Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik League while the sit-in in the capital by Bangladesh Muktijodhha Projonmo League.

Bangladesh Muktijodhha Sangsad and Sammilito Garments Sramik Parishad had joined them. The four demanded that Khaleda be arrested and tried for violence centring the blockade.

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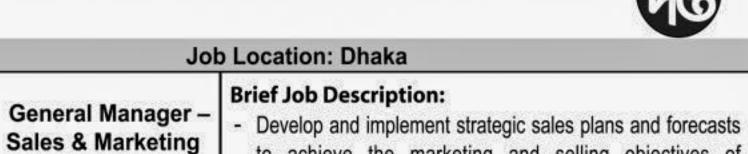
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