

INDIGNATION KEEPS SPREADING

NEWS IN brief



Mannan new envoy to Mauritius

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
The government has decided to appoint Abdul Mannan Howlader, secretary to the government and currently on deputation to foreign ministry, as the next high commissioner of Bangladesh to Mauritius.



A BCS cadre (administration) of 1981 batch, Howlader served in different government organisations, including member of Planning Commission, secretary to the shipping ministry, and chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, said a foreign ministry press release yesterday.

6,000 Yaba tablets seized in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Police recovered 6,000 Yaba tablets from a truck at a motor garage in Ek Kilometre area under Chandgaon Police Station in Chittagong city yesterday.

On information, a team of detective branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police conducted a drive at the garage around 1:00pm and recovered the Yaba tablets, said police.

The driver and helper of the truck fled the scene sensing the presence of the law enforcers.

Cop dies as train hits him in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A police constable was killed as a train hit him from behind at a level crossing in the capital's Khilgaon yesterday.

Jibon Shaha, 32, who was posted at Rajarbagh Police Lines, was going to Gulshan area from his Khilgaon residence to discharge his duty, said Dhaka Railway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abdul Majid.

He was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on arrival.

3 pro-AL lawyers sent to jail in Abdul Ali murder case

UNB, Sylhet
A Sylhet court yesterday sent three pro-Awami League lawyers to jail in a case filed for killing Jubo League leader Abdul Ali.

Judge Khandakar Kamaluzzaman passed the order when the trio surrendered before the court seeking bail.

The lawyers are additional public prosecutor Mahfuzur Rahman, also publicity secretary of district AL, Ajmal Ali and Habibur Rahman.

Abdul Ali was shot dead in Companyganj on October 24 last year.

Victim's wife Halima Akter filed the case against 29 people.

Chemical warehouse gutted in N'ganj

BSS, Narayanganj
A chemical warehouse was gutted in a fire at Tanbazar of Narayanganj yesterday noon.

The warehouse, Noha Enterprise, was housed on the ground floor of a five-storey building, said fire service officials.

Five units of Narayanganj and Hajiganj fire stations extinguished the blaze. A huge quantity of dye and chemicals, including hydro peroxide and different types of acid, was gutted by the fire.

The cause behind the fire and extent of damage could not be ascertained immediately, fire service sources said.

Missing Nawhata mayor

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by after Gafur's wife Fazilatunnesa Parul filed an abduction case with Poba Police Station on January 19 as some unknown persons demanded ransom worth Tk 50,000 through SMS.

Gafur died on January 3 and was buried on (Investigation) Abul Kalam Azad, citing the records of Azimpur graveyard.

During the funeral, Mim claimed that Gafur was her brother, said the OC.

The body was kept at the Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy, he added.

During a three-day remand each, the arrested three admitted to police that Mim's husband Harunur Rashid, who runs the NGO, murdered Gafur after calling him out to Dhaka as he was angered by the affair, said Poba Police OC Motiar Rahman.

Harun is on the run, said the OC.

Clockwise from left, Sector Commanders' Forum--Liberation War '71 forms a human chain on the Dhaka University campus yesterday in protest against the killing of freethinker writer Avijit Roy. Engineers and Architects for Environment and Development, and Progotishil Chhatra Jote at similar programmes in the area.

Sector Commanders Forum to build memorial for Avijit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sector Commanders Forum (SCF) will build a memorial at the site where writer and blogger Avijit Roy was killed to pay tribute to the victim.

"We will also request the government to build a token mausoleum at the scene," said Harun Habib, acting secretary general of the forum, yesterday.

He made the announcement at the forum's human chain formed under the banner "Save Humanity, Crush Militancy" on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

On behalf of the forum, Harun demanded immediate arrest and trial of the killers of Avijit and attackers of Prof Humayun Azad, who was hacked by assailants on February 27, 2004.

Abu Osman Chowdhury, vice chairman of the forum, said militant forces are active in the country to destroy the spirit of the Liberation War.

So, the pro-liberation and progressive forces must join hands to remove the fundamentalists and militants, he added.

Meanwhile, Pragatishil Chhatra Jote, an alliance of leftist student organisations, organised a rally in front of the National Museum in the capital also demanding immediate arrest and punishment for the culprits responsible for Avijit Roy's death.

The killing reveals intolerance of different opinions, speakers said at the rally.

"It seems that there is no punishment for killing people for expressing their thoughts," said Samina Luthfa, assistant professor of sociology of Dhaka University.

Prof MM Akash, an economist, said, "The country is apparently going backwards in terms of tolerating different opinions."

He stressed that religion is a personal matter, and added that the state and society should be run by scientific thoughts and logic.

Another human chain under the banner "Engineers and Architects for Environment and Development" was held at the same place with a similar demand.

Unidentified assailants killed Avijit and badly wounded his wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya on the DU campus Thursday night.

No more

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pro-BNP-Jamaat lawyers have been demonstrating respectively against and in support of the 26-year-old custom since last month.

The two groups argued in this regard yesterday as well, prior to the association's meeting.

The practice came into force in Chittagong courts in 1989, marked by HM Ershad's autocratic rule.

Metro rail construction to start in Q1 of 2017: Project director

TAWFIQUE ALI

With soil examination ongoing, construction of the much talked about metro rail in the capital is now set to commence by the first quarter of 2017, said the project director.

The metro rail is aimed at easing perennial traffic congestion in the capital and providing an improved, faster and comfortable means of public transportation.

"We intend to sign contracts with the qualified bidders by the end of 2016 for construction of the 20km elevated overpass on which the rail track will be set up," said Md Mofazzal Hossain, the project director.

The entire alignment stretching from Uttara third phase to Bangladesh Bank will be divided into four segments, he said. Aspiring bidders would be called by this July for pre-qualification, and the tender for final hiring would be floated by the end of this year.

The consultants have already

submitted the basic design of the metro rail system, fashioned as Mass Rapid Transit Line-6, and the soil test is required to finalise the detailed design and construction of metro stations and elevated viaduct, said Hossain.

After Uttara, Mirpur and Khamarbari, boreholes are now being made to extract samples for geo-technical examination at Farmgate and Karwan Bazar.

Headed by the communications secretary, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, which will own and operate the metro rail upon completion, is studying the basic design on the basis of which consultants will prepare the detailed design, he added.

Under Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project, official name of the metro scheme, Tk 328 crores have been paid to Rajuk for 22 hectares of land in Uttara third phase, where depot (maintenance and resting place for metro), workshop, operation control centre, electrical building, washing plant and train-

ing centre will be built, said Hossain.

"We are soon going to float a tender for land development for depot and other facilities and another tender by the end of this year for construction of the structures," he said.

Replying to a question, Hossain said, "We follow the example of Delhi Metro as a successful model in the region."

According to Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica), 14 trains will operate every three minutes and carry 60,000 passengers every hour in both directions, drastically cutting the number of private cars on roads.

The metro rail will have 16 stations through Uttara, Mirpur, Rokeya Sarani, Khamarbari, Farmgate, Sonargaon Hotel, Shahbagh, Doel Chattar and Topkhana road.

The first tender for pre-qualification to procure 24 locomotives, 144 coaches and equipment for the depot was floated early January.

The metro will save Bangladesh from an annual economic loss of Tk 200 billion, equivalent to 1.5 percent of the country's gross domestic production, according to Jica's immediate past country representative.

According to the communications minister, the Tk 22,000 crore (US \$2.5 billion) project will be completed by 2019.

A consortium of consultants led by Nippon Koei Ltd of Japan and including Nippon Koei India Ltd, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd, Mott MacDonald Ltd, India, and Mott MacDonald Ltd, UK, and Development Design Consultants Ltd Bangladesh was hired in November 2013.

It will prepare the detailed design, supervise construction work and help manage the project with Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority as its implementing agency. Japanese government will lend Tk 16,600 crore while Bangladesh government will bear the rest.



Soil resistivity testing under way at the capital's Karwan Bazar and Farmgate, inset, for the construction of the metro rail, which is scheduled to start in early 2017.

PHOTO: STAR

Climate change threat

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their fish production but also for generating employment.

A sound management for rational utilization of the fisheries should be taken immediately to protect the fishery resources of the Padma river along with other water-bodies and floodplains from continuous degradation

along with protecting the native fish species from their endangering situation.

Prof Golam Sabbir Sattar of geology and mining department of Rajshahi University said there are huge small rivers, canals and beels in the region which now become green paddy fields during every dry season due to massive siltation.

Forkan shot Patuakhali Hindu

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Two days later, she was sent back home in a critical condition.

"Forkan Mallik and Akabbar Gazi took me to Patuakhali Circuit House and they along with the Pakistani army men raped me," Sundar quoted the victim as saying.

Earlier, Habibur Rahman Badshah gave almost a similar testimony over the rape.

Forkan's lawyer Raju Ahmed Rajib started his cross-examination before the three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan adjourned the proceeding until today.

Forkan, an alleged Razakar commander of Mirzaganj upazila, faces five charges of murders committed in the southern district during the nine-month war in 1971. The 63-year-old accused, however, has pleaded not guilty before the tribunal.

Meanwhile, the tribunal sent to two war crimes suspects of Jamalpur to jail after they were produced before it yesterday.

Jamalpur police arrested Shamsul Haque, 75, and AKM Yusuf Ali, 83, hours after the tribunal issued arrest warrant for eight alleged Al-Badr members including the two on Monday.

ICT-2 clears

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imprisonment until the end of the court session on that day and fined him Tk 5,000 for two articles he posted on his personal blog.

Over two weeks later, 50 people issued the statement, observing that the tribunal's order would restrict freedom of expression. One of them, Khushi Kabir, later pulled out her name.

Last chance

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Shishir Manir told The Daily Star that he and four other defence lawyers will meet him in Dhaka Central Jail this morning to get final instruction from him about filing the review petition.

He said they have already prepared the draft of the review petition which will be filed today or tomorrow if their client wants.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The USAID Agro-Inputs Project (AIP) in Bangladesh, implemented by CNFA, invites proposals from reputed event management firms/companies to:

Organize and Manage a 3-days Agricultural Fair in Jessore Town

Event management firms or companies having direct experience in organizing and managing agricultural fairs in Bangladesh are requested to collect all relevant bidding documents (service requirements and cost submission format) from the **AIP website (www.aipbd.org/opportunities/rfps/)** from **March 4, 2015**.

Bidding Conference

Interested bidders are encouraged to read bidding documents in details and participate in a bidding conference at 10:00 am, March 16, 2015 at Hotel De Castle Ltd., House 72, Road 21, Block-B, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Phone: +880 2 8812888 for more clarification.

The deadline for (hard copy) proposal submission 17:00, March 29, 2015.

Bidders must not make inquires to USAID. If necessary, please contact: info@cnfabangladesh.org