

NEWS IN brief

One of seven Narayanganj burn victims dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
One of the seven victims, who suffered burn injuries in a fire at a four-storey building in Narayanganj on Sunday, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.
Nasir was admitted with 95 percent burns. He was an electrician at an NGO, Society for Social Service, housed on the ground floor of the building at Fatullah, said doctors.
At least 30 people were hurt during a stampede after the fire originated reportedly from an electric short circuit.

Free treatment today at public hospitals on Bangabandhu's birthday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
All public hospitals today will provide free healthcare services to outpatients from 10:00am and 12:00noon to mark the 95th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
Specialists at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) will also provide free services, but from 9:00am to 2:00pm.
The health ministry and BSMMU made the announcements in separate media releases yesterday.

3 jailed for selling banned fishing net

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
A mobile court yesterday sentenced three traders to one-year imprisonment in Barisal city for selling the banned fine-mesh gill net, known as "current jal".
Goutam Poddar, Ashotosh Poddar and Amit Kumar Saha alias Vutto were detained near Fariapatty area.
During a drive against catching and selling fish fries, the team also recovered such nets over 4,000 kilograms from different shops in Bazar Road area.

Ctg fires gut 25 tin-roofed houses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Twenty-five tin-roofed houses were gutted in Chittagong city and Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong early yesterday.
At the upazila, 20 houses were gutted by a fire originated from an oven at one of the houses in Kithabchar area, said fire service officials who estimated the damage at Tk 15 lakh.
Meanwhile, a fire, originating from an electric short circuit, burnt five houses in South Patenga Nazir para area, said fire officials who estimated the damage at Tk 3 lakh.

BATB wins "Most Female Friendly Organization" award

CITY DESK
British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) has won the "Most Female Friendly Organization" award in private sector, says a press release.
Bangladesh Brand Forum handed over the award on the eve of International Women's Day, to Shehzad Munim, managing director, BATB, and Rumana Rahman, head of HR, BATB.

CCTV camera installation in multi-storey buildings starts in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj
The local authorities of Narayanganj have started setting up close-circuit television cameras in multi-storey buildings at different key points in the wake of recent petrol bomb attacks reportedly from rooftops.
Narayanganj Police Super Khandaker Mahid Uddin inaugurated the programme by setting up CCTV cameras at Shapna Nir Bhanban at Ukilpara and Samabay Market in Chasara yesterday.

WVB collects 1.5 million signatures for UpForSchool project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) collected above 1.5 million signatures from across the country as part of a global campaign to advocate children's right to education.
The campaign "UpForSchool" aims to attract world leaders to invest in education for around 1.5 million out-of-school children in Bangladesh, said a press release.
WVB collected the signatures during different programmes, including youth rallies and child forum. The petition can be signed at upforschool.org

BGS observes World Glaucoma Week

CITY DESK
Bangladesh Glaucoma Society observed World Glaucoma Week and World Glaucoma Day on March 14 by holding a discussion, a press conference and a rally in the capitals' Dhanmondi.
Prof M Nazrul Islam, BGS president, presided over the discussion where Prof Ava Hossain, Prof Jalal Ahmed, Prof Shahabuddin, Prof Arif Mia, Dr Nazneen Khan, Dr Zakia Sultana and also journalists talked about increasing awareness of glaucoma which is the cause of silent and irreversible blindness.

Police want to bring back

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several murders in 1992-93.
Masud fled to India in 2001 as Dhaka Metropolitan Police put him on a list of 23 most-wanted criminals and announced bounty for his capture. There are at least eight cases against him for murder, possessing illegal firearms and extortion, according to Ramna police.
Meanwhile, asked about the extradition of Nur Hossain, the prime accused in the Narayanganj seven murders, the police chief said they were also working on it.

ASK concerned over

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Dighinala to protest the setting up of the BGB offices which, they claim, were built evicting indigenous families.
ASK demanded that the government release the arrestees and resolve the problem after discussions with the indigenous people before constructing any establishment in the hilly areas.
At least six indigenous people and four members of the joint forces were injured in the clash.



Clockwise from left, concrete pillars erected, for construction of a mosque, inside the pond of Hazrat Bayezid Bostami shrine in Chittagong city, the habitat of the rare Bostami Turtle, which has already been declared extinct in the wild and is believed to be surviving only in Bangladesh and India. Another threat is water pollution, largely caused by unsupervised feeding of the animals by visitors. Though the wildlife management division supports the breeding programme, a forest official said there had been no instructions to protect the endangered species.



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Rare Bostami Turtles of Ctg city in peril

Habitat encroachment, water pollution the reasons

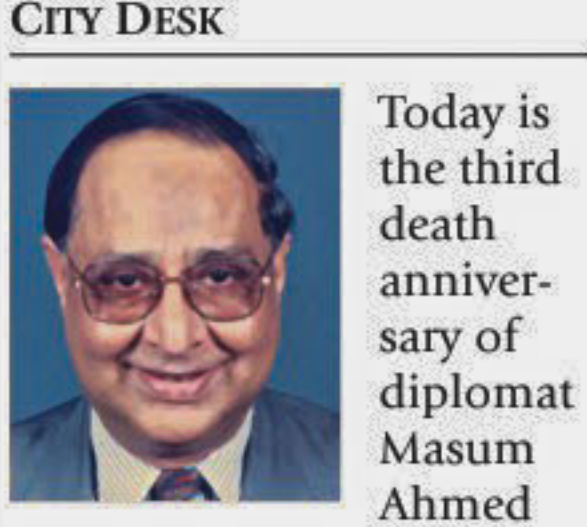
MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg
Habitat encroachment and water pollution are continuously threatening the existence of Bostami Turtle, which was declared "extinct in the wild" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature 13 years ago. But experts say the ongoing breeding season, from February to May, can be utilised to save the rare species, only available in Bangladesh and India.
A small population of Bostamis is living in the pond of Hazrat Bayezid Bostami's shrine in Chittagong city, and wildlife biologists of the Centre for Advanced Research in Natural Resources and Management found some in the wild of Sylhet in 2012.
Farid Ahsan, a zoology professor of Chittagong University, who studied this black soft-shell turtle, in his 1984 survey, recorded around 320

Bostami turtles in the shrine pond.
In 2004, when the entire waterbody was pumped out after miscreants poisoned the water, 408 turtles were found, said a staff of the wildlife management division in Chittagong. There has been no survey since then. According to the staff, 90 turtles were hatched out in 2007, 74 in 2008, 96 in 2009, 28 in 2010, 45 in 2012, and 40 in 2014.
Some regular visitors see the population declining, but Shah Alam, office secretary of the shrine management committee, claimed that it has rather increased, to 700 now.
In another survey, the CU professor showed the nesting ground where eggs were laid was 13,252 square metres in 1987. Now the turtles breed in an enclosure of 300 square metres before starting to live in the pond measuring 94.60 metres in length and 61.27 metres in width.
In a recent visit, this correspon-

dent saw several concrete pillars erected inside the pond, about 10 feet off the bank, for building a multi-storey mosque, an initiative started by the High Court in 2012.
Not only encroachment, unsupervised feeding by visitors is polluting the water. In a 2014 survey, Poribesh Banchao Andolon found that the quantity of dissolved oxygen in the pond water was 2.01mg/L, whereas the congenial level is 5mg/L.
A veterinary surgeon of Chittagong Zoo, Shahadat Hossain, said dirty water may cause serious skin diseases, and most turtles are already having fungal infection. If the water gets further polluted, the animals may die en masse, he warned. The expert put emphasis on changing the pond water annually and strengthening security as the rarity of the species may allure illegal wildlife traders.

In a 1997 study, Prof Farid Ahsan recommended a detailed demographic survey, long-term research and monitoring, introduction of a captive breeding programme in places like Chittagong University campus, Bangladesh Forest Research Institute, Chittagong Zoo, or government land, especially within the cantonment near the Bostami area, analysis on the pond ecology, and study on the association between turtles and fish. He said the turtles do not eat fish but no one has confirmed whether the fish eat baby turtles.
Though the Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division, Chittagong supports the breeding programme of Bostami Turtle, Assistant Forest Conservator Kajal Talukder said they have only been directed to annually enlist the numbers of eggs and hatchlings. "So far I know there is no plan to preserve the turtles," he added.

Death anniversary



CITY DESK
Today is the third death anniversary of diplomat Masum Ahmed Chowdhury.
A doa and a milad mahfil have been organized on this occasion.
He died in Washington after fighting with cancer for five years, says a release.
He served as high commissioner and ambassador in many countries.
Masum, the third son of Giasuddin Ahmed of Sylhet, was an author and a commentator. He also served as the president of Buriganga Rotary Club.

Reshuffle

FROM PAGE 3
Corporation, has been made acting member of the Privatisation Commission which is equivalent to the rank of acting secretary.
The public administration ministry issued separate gazettes to this effect.



Chittagong Union of Journalists stages a sit-in, joined by Awami League leader and ex-mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, in front of the Chittagong Metropolitan Police office yesterday demanding arrest of the Bangladesh Chhatra League men who attacked journalists during an AL rally at Laldighi Maidan on Wednesday. Mohiuddin recently declared that he would run for Chittagong city mayorship in the upcoming election. PHOTO: STAR

Kerry lauds Bangladesh's

FROM PAGE 3
programmes in Bangladesh have come down due to the agencies' coordinated efforts, Musharraf told journalists after the meeting.
Kerry also assured Mahmood US assistance in handing over a convicted killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman while President Barack Obama himself wants Kerry to visit Bangladesh immediately, Musharraf said, adding that the Cabinet thought the visit was a success.
The cabinet also approved the draft "The International Finance Corporation (IFC) Act-2015" subject to the law ministry's vetting.
Musharraf said funds received from IFC as assistance would be deposited in a consolidated fund of the government from where any subscription or payment to IFC would be made and Bangladesh Bank would be the custodian of IFC's assets in Bangladesh.
The cabinet also approved in principle "Bangladesh Rural Development Board Act-2015".

Kaler Dhoni's discussion

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published in the 2015 Amar Ekushey book fair, will be unveiled at the programme beginning at 5:00pm in Jatiya Chitrasahala Auditorium.
Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman will provide over the discussion, while Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Dr Rafiqul Islam, Ahmad Rafique, Asad Chowdhury, Syed Abdul Maksud, Dr Mizanur Rahman, Golam Kuddus, Mahfuz Anam and Ferdous Anam will take part.
Later, a drama, "Gulliver's Safar", based on a story of Abul Mansur Ahmad, will be staged by Vision Theatre.

Embassy still in dark about

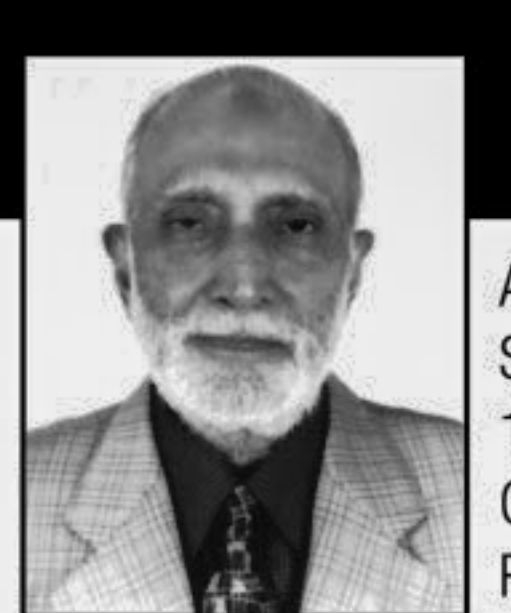
FROM PAGE 3
Anowar Hossain from Noakhali and Helal Uddin from Jamalpur were abducted with seven other foreign nationals by, as reported in international media, the Islamic State's Libyan affiliate.
Family members expressed frustration over the embassy's failure and their concern over the duo's fate.
Anowar's wife Marufa Khatun said they submitted an application to the home min-

istry on Wednesday seeking assistance in rescuing him.
"They assured giving an update on Sunday. But they did not inform us about anything yet," she added.
Helal's elder daughter Helena Akhter said, "We are continuing communication with the Madarganj UNO office. But we could not know anything new about my father." The local lawmaker contacted them last week, she added.

Students protest govt wish

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Aleya Begum, principal of the nursing college, said the public works department handed over the academic building just a week ago.
"We are just starting to use the building," she added.
Dr Bhaskar Saha, principal of the medical college, said 700 students out of 1,100 students of the college are female.
The dormitory of the female students of

the medical college was closed on February 15 after cracks were discovered in five-storey building. The college was also closed on the same day.
He said the request for the academic building was only a temporary solution before inauguration of the new dormitory, which is under construction.
However, the nursing college's principal turned down the request, he added.



OBITUARY

Abdul Malik Choudhury, S/O Late Asaddor Ali Choudhury of Sylhet, passed away at his Dhanmondi residence on Friday, 13th March 2015, aged 90. Mr. A. M. Choudhury retired as the Chief Conservator of Forests. After a period as the Country Representative of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), he had been actively involved with a number of social organizations including Retired Government Officers' Welfare Association, Jalalabad Association, Swanirvar Bangladesh, Bangladesh Cancer Society, Dhanmondi Walkers' Club and Dhanmondi Taqwa Masjid Society to name a few.
His wife Syeda Bulbul Choudhury, former Deputy National Commissioner, Bangladesh Girl Guides' Association, passed away last year.
His kulkhani will be held at his Dhanmondi residence after Asr prayers on Tuesday, 17th March 2015. Well-wishers are requested to attend.

- Dr. Shahdeen Malik, Rezia Sultana Malik
- Anika, Ruhani, Raima
- Shahnaz Malik Ahmed, Nazim Ahmed
- Tarem, Tanzeem
- Shadmani Malik Amin, Dr. Ruhul Amin
- Ikram, Saheel