

MARCH 27

YESTERDAY



Left, Road 98 in the capital's Gulshan-2 had been totally shut to traffic for over two months before The Daily Star published three photos on Saturday of heavy construction materials occupying the almost entire road. Right, all the materials were removed yesterday. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Four SSC examinees arrested for gang raping schoolgirl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar
Four out of five rapists, who uploaded the rape video after failing to realise money from the victim in Savar, were arrested yesterday.
All the rapists are SSC examinees. Mostafa Zafar, Anower Hosen, Al-Amin, and Khairul Islam were arrested while the prime accused, Razib Miah, of Dhamrai's Kulla union, went into hiding.
The victim said on December 24 the five raped her in the roof of her tutor's house. "The tutor was outside and the five tricked me into the roof. The culprits last week blackmailed me for Tk 10,000 and also wanted to molest me again. As I refused, they uploaded my video."

Hakim Arif made chairman of DU Communication Disorder dept

DU CORRESPONDENT
Prof Hakim Arif, former chairperson of Linguistics department, has been appointed chairman of the newly-established Communication Disorder department of Dhaka University, said a press release.
Students graduated from Mass Communication and Journalism, Linguistics, Psychology, IER (special language), MBBS and Speech Therapy can apply for the 30 seats under the masters programme which will start in July.
Courses including autism, professional speech therapy and paralysis will be taught under the programme. The bachelor programme will start from next year.

Rajshahi college students protest exam fee hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Students of Rajshahi Government College demonstrated on the campus yesterday protesting fee hike in the final examination of honours third year.
At a rally, the agitating students claimed that the fee was increased by Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,500 in different departments this year.
Principal Prof Hobibur Rahman told The Daily Star that the college authorities are not responsible for the fee hike.
The National University increased the examination fee by Tk 500, he said, adding that in the last year it was Tk 1,300.

Youth fatally run over by train

CITY DESK
An unidentified youth was crushed under the wheels of a train in Shahapara area of Gazipur city yesterday morning.
The legs and hands of the deceased were severed from the body, said Dadon Miah, assistant sub-inspector of Joydebpur Railway Police outpost.
Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

8 BNP, Jamaat men arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg
Police arrested five Jamaat-e-Islami and three BNP activists in different upazilas of Chittagong yesterday.
During an overnight drive in Boalkhali, Sitakunda, Satkania and Lohagara upazilas police arrested them.
They were accused in several cases filed over subversive activities, said police.

Illegal drug rehabilitation centre sealed, executive director jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg
A mobile court of Chittagong district administration sealed an unauthorised drug rehabilitation centre in Agrabad CDA area of Chittagong city yesterday.
The court, assisted by the Department of Narcotics Control in Chittagong, also jailed its Executive Director Md Shahiduzzaman for one year, said the officials.
Seven victims found at the centre were shifted to an authorised drug rehabilitation centre in Kataganj area of the city, they added.

Blogger Oyasiqur's killing protested in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
The activists of Barisal Gonojagoron Mancha yesterday formed a human chain in front of Aswani Kumar Hall of Barisal city demanding immediate arrest of the killers of blogger Oyasiqur Rahaman Babu.
They also demanded speedy trial and exemplary punishment for the killers.
This kind of killing may recur if the perpetrators go unpunished, said the speakers at the programme.

BCBL official in Ctg

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notifying the authorities that funds from their accounts are missing, said Kazi Abul Kashem, manager of the branch.
Mayeen surrendered at the police station on Monday night. Kashem filed a case against the two yesterday.
However, the bank has not yet determined the exact amount swindled. An audit team from the bank's head office in Dhaka visited the branch yesterday to look into the matter.
A team from Bangladesh Bank also visited the branch. It assured the clients that they would recover their money.

Take preventive measures against cancer: Doctors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Health experts yesterday urged the government to strengthen preventive measures to reduce patients of cancer, one of the leading causes of deaths in the country.
Every year, about two lakh people get cancer and 150,000 of them die from the disease. Presently, the country has 12 lakh cancer patients and the number is likely to increase in the coming years, they said.
Addressing a discussion on "Cancer Detection, Treatment: Opportunities and Cost", they further said the public sector does not have adequate treatment facilities for cancer patients, while treatment in the private sector is very costly.
Dr Habibullah Talukder Ruskin, associate professor at National Cancer Research Institute and Hospital, said, "A few years back, a major operation for breast cancer would cost between 15 and 50 thousand taka but the cost now is over one lakh taka."
Dr Fatema Ashraf of Shaheed Suhrawardi Medical College Hospital said prevention is more crucial than cure.
Tobacco use, child marriage, frequent pregnancy, unsafe sex, unhygienic practices during menstruation, obesity, bad food habits and use of chemicals in food are some of the major causes of different types of cancer, experts said.
Dr Rehana Akhter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University suggested that the government take measures such as reducing water and air pollution and improving soil health.
She emphasised more awareness in this regard as early detection of cancer can lead to cure.
Public Health Foundation of Bangladesh (PHFB), Centre for Cancer Prevention and Research and Education for Human Resources Centre Cancer Support organised the discussion at Jatiya Press Club. PHFB President Prof Dr Mozaherul Huq moderated the discussion.

To watch the video of cancerspecialist Dr Habibullah Talukder's interview, scan this QR code with your smart phone.



TO USE QR CODE ON YOUR SMARTPHONE, INSTALL FREE QR READER SOFTWARE LIKE "I-NIGMA BARCODE SCANNER" FROM GOOGLE PLAYSTORE OR APPLE STORE. TURN ON THE SOFTWARE AND HOLD THE PHONE CAMERA OVER THE QR CODE TO GET THE VIDEO LINK.

Dr Kamal demands protection of Langalbandh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj
Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday demanded a national committee to protect Langalbandh, a place on the bank of the Brahmaputra, where 10 Hindu devotees were killed in a stampede Friday while preparing to take part in a holy dip.
The grabbed lands must be freed before next Ashtami Snan, the occasion of the Hindu ritual, all sixteen ghats repaired, and the river re-excavated, he told reporters after visiting the roads, temples at Langalbandh.
The stampede was triggered by rumours of the collapse of a bridge where hundreds gathered on that day.
Dr Kamal demanded a proper investigation into the tragedy.
Addressing the locals, he said, "Langalbandh is a pride for us." So all should come forward to save it, he added.
"We are here not to blame the government, but rather we want to draw its attention for united efforts to observe the holy ritual smoothly," he said.
Earlier, local lawyers observed one minute of silence remembering the dead.
The place became ritually important after Swami Vivekananda took a holy dip there in 1901.

Police still

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Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Farid Ahmed. Hundreds of teachers and students of different schools and members of political and socio-cultural organisations also participated in the two hour long human chain in Kachari Bazar area.
On March 20, Ayesha Siddiqa Sumaiya, 13, a class-VII student, was alone at home when an unidentified gang entered the house and strangled her after rape.



Detectives and Shahbagh police detained "goat thieves" on College Road in the capital yesterday, and seized the animals, inset, that the alleged gang tried to make away with in a van. PHOTO: STAR

Boost allocation for women in budget Seminar urges government

UNB, Dhaka
Speakers yesterday demanded greater budgetary allocation in the next national budget to foster women's empowerment and increasing their social status.
They made the demand from a seminar titled "National Budget 2015-16: Expectations of Women," organised by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.
Former senior research fellow of BIDS Dr Pratima Paul-Majumder presented the keynote paper.
Dr Majumder said the 2014-15 budget was particularly disappointing, as the total budgetary allocation for women, by bringing their empowerment into the fold of mainstream national development, has gone down even as the number of gender-sensitive projects has gone up.
Despite everything, women continue to lag behind men in terms of achieving parity in almost every field. Dr Majumder said this can be addressed, but programmes like vulnerable group development (VGD), vulnerable group feeding (VGF) or microcredit won't be able to ensure the ultimate development of women. Rather, she advised ensuring proper budgetary allocation in women's education, health, safe housing, transportation and training IT sector.
Allocation for women's health went down by 4 percent in the 2014-15 budget from the 2013-14 allocation.
Former Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali attended the seminar as chief guest. Chaired by BNPS Executive Director Rokeya Kabir, Dr Saima Haq Bidisha, UN women's program coordinator Tapati Shaha also spoke on the occasion.

Murders of bloggers worry

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worrying trend of attacks against online activists, said Robert Watkins, UN's resident coordinator in Dhaka.
In a statement, Watkins added that the UN was concerned that this murder contributed to a reduction in the freedom of expression and opinion in the country.
US CONCERN
Voicing its concern, the US Embassy in Dhaka posted a statement on Facebook yesterday, saying, "We are horrified and deeply saddened by the murder of Washiqur Rahman Babu, and we offer our condolences to his family and friends."
The statement adds that the United States firmly supports freedom of expression for all people. "This is a universal human right, both in Bangladesh and throughout the world."
"We stand in solidarity with the people of Bangladesh as they confront religious intolerance and violence."
IHEU CONDEMNES
The murder has shocked the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) too, reported a correspondent from London.
Bob Churchill, director of communications at the organisation, commented, "We are deeply saddened that yet another rationalist voice has been so brutally silenced in this vile backlash against bloggers. Our thoughts are with Washiqur's family and we stand in solidarity with the many individual thinkers and writers from Bangladesh who exercise their right to discuss religion frankly and critically."
He said, "This is a human right, freedom of expression, and it should be respected and protected in Bangladesh, as it should be respected and protected everywhere."
'RESULT OF PAST IMPUNITIES'
Meanwhile, the Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminals of 1971 yesterday said the murder of Oyasiqur was a continuation of the militants' campaign against liberal intellectuals and bloggers, which started through the attack on unorthodox writer Prof Humayun Azad in 2004.
In a statement, the anti-war criminal platform reiterated that the murder was the result of past impunities, and demanded immediate arrest of all culprits.
It also questioned the role of patrol police at the time of killing and hailed the courage of two hermaphrodites, who came to Oyasiqur's rescue and caught two of the three attackers.
The attack came one month after writer-blogger Avijit Roy was killed in a similar fashion, by cleaver-wielding youths.
Such killings might not have happened if the previous attacks were investigated properly and the people behind those given harsh punishment, the statement said, alleging that fundamentalists and Jamaat-e-Islami men pervaded every nook and corner of the administration.
"We renew the demand that Jamaat-e-Islami, which is the epicentre of all fundamentalism and terrorism, be banned politically and rooted out socially, economically and culturally," the statement read.

Hasan's war

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Originally from Brahmanbaria, Hasan had been living in Tarail with his family for many years, including the period of the Liberation War. Though politically inactive now, he was once involved with Nezam-e-Islami, another anti-liberation organisation.
According to the prosecution, Hasan was commander of Tarail thana Razakar and set up a camp of the force of collaborators at Tarail Police Station on April 23, 1971. 26 prosecution witnesses testified against the 65-year-old. He is facing six charges of crimes against humanity and genocide committed in Kishoreganj in 1971.

BNP wants

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The BNP men to get involved in such an incident when they are on the run to avoid abduction and police harassment?" it said.
BNP believes that a section has been spreading this false information to undermine the party nationally and internationally, it added.

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