

More BRTC

FROM PAGE 16
a cost of Tk 5,000 crore, he added.
The minister informed the House that the 55-kilometre four-lane project is now waiting for approval.
"Construction will be done by the Bangladesh Army."
24.88 LAKH REGISTERED VEHICLES
In a scripted reply, Quader said 24.88 lakh vehicles have been given registration by the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) as of January this year.

The minister also said 855 registered vehicles hit the road every day across the country.

6 CHILDREN DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Meher Afroz Chumki yesterday told the House the government has been constructing six children development centres under the supervision of Bangladesh Shishu Academy for the welfare and rehabilitation of street children.

Of the six centres, one is specially earmarked for girls to be built at Azimpur in the capital. The rest five will be constructed at Gazipur and Keraniganj in Dhaka division and Rajshahi, Khulna and Chittagong divisions.

She said the government has taken various steps to rehabilitate the street and underprivileged children across the country.

The centres have provisions for supplying food, accommodation, education, treatment and cultural training, she added.

Digital makeover

FROM PAGE 16
It is hoped visitors to the exhibition will get a deeper sense of the emotions the 19th Century artist was trying to convey in the works.

"Science is vital in identifying the pigments that have faded, but then there is a lot of interpretation that we rely on from conservators and art historians who really know the hand of the artist, and know how to dial that virtual knob more or less," explained Dr Francesca Casadio, Mellon Senior Conservation Scientist at the Chicago institute.

"This is just a visualisation of what we think the faded colours looked like, but barring the invention of a time machine it will always still be an approximation."

Dr Casadio was speaking here in Washington at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The three versions of the Bedroom in Arles were painted over a period in 1888 and 1889.

Schoolboy framed

FROM PAGE 3
held Al Amin and later handed him over to police on the night of November 28, when he went out to buy medicines for his ailing mother," said Shahidul, who was implicated in another case.

"It's a violation of human rights as police produced my brother before a Dhaka court with drug charges, showing him to be 21, when he is actually 14," Shahidul said.

Sub-inspector of Pallabi Police Station Billal Hossain, who filed the case against the teenager and submitted the charge sheet, declined to speak, but suggested that this correspondent should talk to the officer-in-charge (OC).

OC Dadan Fakir told The Daily Star that the man who arranged the press conference was a drug addict himself and his family was also involved in drug peddling.

He said he could not say whether the boy was a drug peddler or not, before investigation.

About the age of Al Amin, he said he seemed to be 18 or 19 at the time of arrest.

Asked why his age was written 21 in the charge sheet, which was submitted on January 5, the OC said, "If there was any negligence by any officer in providing information, we will take action against him or her."

Now boy gets

FROM PAGE 4
Quoting victim's mother, police said Sajib went outside home on Sunday evening following a quarrel with her and returned home next day with the injuries.

Sajib told his mother that unidentified miscreants threw acid at him, said police adding that they were investigating the matter.

Rajuk's parking

FROM PAGE 5
They later demolished shops of another building. The Uttara team demolished ten shops, an office room and an ATM booth of National Credit and Commerce Bank on the ground floor of a building opposite Mascot Plaza, said Khandokar Zakir Hossain, executive magistrate.

Rajuk launched the drives simultaneously in Gulshan, Dhanmondi and Uttara on January 18 in a bid to recover the designated car parking spaces and remove illegal access ramps built occupying footpaths and road width.

No tolerance for doctors' negligence: BMA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Leaders of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) of Chittagong here in a views-exchange yesterday said the organisation would not stand by any doctor in case of intentional professional negligence.

They also demanded the government should enact a law regarding the doctors' professional safeguard and Chittagong Medical University to be established on Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) campus, said Mohammad Sharif, secretary general of Chittagong BMA, addressing the views-exchange with Zahid Malique, state minister for the ministry of health and family welfare, organised by CMCH at Shah Alam Bir Uttam auditorium of CMC.

"We have kept the government hospitals out of the purview of the strike," he said, emphasizing the need of a law regarding the safeguard of patients and doctors.

Mujibul Haque Khan, Chittagong BMA president, also the vice-principal of CMC, said, "Brilliant students

would be discouraged to join the profession if there is no such law...We want a medical university on CMCH campus as there are available lands here."

The minister said formulation of a draft of a law is now at the final stage and it "would be enacted" immediately. "Professional negligence is a punishable offence and there is a law at present to try any crime of that sort," he said.

"However," he said, "Enactment of a law cannot ensure an end to this problem; doctors must be cautious to avoid any unwanted situations and must come forward to improve the doctor-patient relationship."

Regarding the medical university, he said BMA leaders' demand would be considered during the selection of a site.

Ehteshamul Haque Dulal, director (administration) of directorate general of health services, and Wahid Hossain, director general of directorate general of family planning, also spoke, among others, with Prof Selim Mohammad Jahangir, CMC principal, in the chair.

Khaleda has to surrender

FROM PAGE 16
The bench of Justice Md Nuruzzaman and Justice Abdur Rob had also lifted previous HC orders in the case -- granting bail to Khaleda in 2007 and staying her trial in 2008.

On September 2, 2007, the ACC lodged the Gato graft case with Tejgaon Police Station against Khaleda, her youngest son late Arafat Rahman Koko, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and 10 others. The case was filed under the Emergency Powers Rules (EPR).

According to the case statement, there was corruption in the awarding of a contract to Global Agro Trade (Pvt) Company Ltd (Gatco) for container management at inland depots in Dhaka and Chittagong. The graft alleg-

edly cost the state exchequer over Tk 1,000 crore.

After hearing a writ petition filed by Khaleda, the HC on September 30, 2007, granted bail to her and issued a rule upon the government and the ACC to explain why bringing corruption charges under the emergency powers rules should not be declared illegal.

The HC on July 15, 2008, stayed the case proceedings against Khaleda and issued another rule upon the government and the graft watchdog to explain why the case proceedings should not be quashed.

Khaleda was arrested in the case on September 2, 2007. She was freed the following year after she secured bail in Gatco and three other cases.

New tech aims to speedily repatriate South Asia's trafficked children

REUTERS, Siliguri

Charities in South Asia are piloting new software which aims to speed up the repatriation of rescued victims of human trafficking who have been smuggled from countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh and forced into slavery in India.

South Asia, with India at its centre, is the fastest-growing and second-largest region for human trafficking in the world, after East Asia, according to the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Charities focusing on the rehabilitation of victims say repatriation is often one of their biggest challenges and can, in some cases, take years.

There is a lack of effective international coordination between states to verify victims' identities and trace their places of origin - often remote, impoverished, interior regions with poor telecommunications and infrastructure, they add.

Developed by aid agency Plan India and Bangladeshi social enterprise Dnet, the Missing Child Alert (MCA) is a database programme - with the victim's data, including their name, photo and place of origin - which can be shared between South Asian nations.

"We've had cases that have taken

up to three years for the person to be repatriated back to their home countries and they are stuck in shelter homes for all that time," Mohammed Asif, Plan India's director of programme implementation, said on Saturday.

Mahmudul Islam

FROM PAGE 16
Canada. His body will be kept at the hospital's mortuary until they return home.

The noted lawyer will be buried at his village home in Rangpur. Attorney General Mahbubey Alam expressed deep shock at Mahmudul's death and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

He said Mahmudul served as the attorney general from 1997 to 2001. He became assistant attorney general in 1992.

Mahmudul was born in Rangpur in 1936. He passed higher secondary examinations from Rangpur Carmichael College and received a law degree from Dhaka University.

As amicus curiae, he gave opinions on constitutional issues at different times. He also wrote several books, including the Constitutional Law of Bangladesh.

Boy rescued from Gazipur

FROM PAGE 1
Police during a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.

Based on his information, the DB team rescued Mobarak and arrested Nazma.

Monirul said father of the child paid around Tk 17,000 to the abductors through mobile banking services. He collected the money from other fruits vendors.

Faruk requested the kidnappers not to harm the boy and promised to pay more money.

Jabbar and Nazma used to torture Mobarak and let his parents hear the sound of his crying over the phone to get the money, Monirul said.

Though the family told the abductors about their poor financial condition, they did not release the boy, he added.

Later, the family filed a case with Uttara Paschim Police Station on February 4 this year.

During primary interrogation, Jabbar told police that he used to abduct children for ransom and kept them confined to the houses of his four wives who stayed in Gazipur, Gaibandha, Meherpur and Sirajganj, according to detectives.

However, Jabbar did not admit to killing any children in captivity, Monirul said, adding that they would

interrogate him further.

The DMP official said Jabbar, who was not acquainted with the victim's family, might have abducted the boy thinking him to be a son of a rich person.

Detectives produced them before a Dhaka court yesterday seeking seven-day remand for each. The court granted three-day remand each for interrogation.

Several DNA

FROM PAGE 3
suspects arrested on suspicion of playing a role in the pre-planned murder, he said in reply to a query during a press briefing at the DMP media centre.

He said the same would be done with seven others whom detectives identified to have taken part in the killing and whom police were trying to arrest.

Two persons hacked the Bangladeshi born US citizen and his wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya near Teacher-Student Centre on February 26 last year after they came out from the book fair. Bonya narrowly survived.

The year saw killings of four others, bloggers Oyashiqur Rahman, Ananta Bijoy Das and Niladri Chatopadhyay Niloy and a publisher, Faisal Arefin Dipan of Jagriti Prokashani.

Mahmudur

FROM PAGE 16
petition from police seeking to show the acting editor arrested in the bomb blast case.

Police also sought seven-day remand for Mahmudur to quiz him in connection with the case although he was not named in the first information report of the case.

Sub-inspector Harun-Or-Rashid of Shahbagh Police Station, also the investigating officer of the case, submitted the petition to the court.

The case was filed on January 28, 2013 with Shahbagh Police Station against 44 leaders and activists of the BNP-led 20-party alliance for their alleged involvement in blasting crude bombs in front of the Dhaka University central playground.

SEDITION CASE

Sahidur Rahman, a prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal-1, filed the sedition case against Mahmudur with Tejgaon Police Station on December 13, 2012, under the Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006.

In the case, the acting editor was charged with sedition for publishing alleged Skype conversations between Justice Md Nizamul Huq, then chairman of ICT-1, and Ahmed Ziauddin, an expatriate Bangladeshi legal expert.

On April 11, 2013, Mahmudur was picked up from his newspaper office in the capital's Karwan Bazar.

The newspaper stopped printing in mid-April that year.

BNP BLAMES GOVT

BNP Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed accused the government of creating barriers to Mahmudur's release.

"The Amar Desh acting editor was expected to be released from jail today [Monday], but he was shown arrested in another case," he told a press conference at the party's Nayapalton headquarters.

Rizvi demanded the government free Mahmudur on bail as his health was not good.

Bangladesh 63rd

FROM PAGE 16
Women Lawyers' Association, said the country has a good legal infrastructure as well as partnerships between government and non-government organisations in providing legal aid to protect child rights.

However, lack of victim protection law, slow progress of investigations of cases, lack of strong monitoring and sometimes involvement of law enforcers and political elites impede the due legal procedures, she told The Daily Star.

CRIN Director Veronica Yates said: "When we think of children and justice, the first image that comes to mind is usually one of children breaking the law. Rarely do we consider children and their right to use the legal system to protect their human rights or to seek redress when their rights have been violated."

The research took into account whether children can bring lawsuits when their rights are violated, the legal resources available to them, the practical considerations for taking legal action, and whether judges apply international law on children's rights in their rulings, said the rights body in a press release.

Families now

FROM PAGE 16
Ali, 13, an orphan, who went into hiding in fear, was rescued by police from Sundorpur village in Poba yesterday. He was admitted to Poba Upazila Health Complex with bruises.

Another victim Zahid, 15, a class-ten student at Bagsara High School, has been undergoing treatment at the same health complex.

The two teenage boys were beaten up badly by a group of brutes in Chowbaria village on Friday over flimsy claims that they may have stolen a mobile phone.

Although they protested their innocence and howled in pain, the tormentors, including an army soldier and a Rab member, continued beating the kids.

Someone among the crowd filmed parts of the disturbing incident and shared it on social media, triggering an outcry.

On Saturday, Zahid's father Emran Hossain filed a case against 13 people. Emran yesterday told this correspondent that the attackers phoned him twice from an unknown mobile number and asked "not to do any excess" over the matter.

One of the callers threatened him with dire consequences, while another threatened to evict them from the village, he said.

Shariful Islam, officer-in-charge of Poba Police Station, said, "We are investigating the allegation. Who will evict them when police are dealing with the matter sincerely?" the OC asked.

Meanwhile, locals staged a demonstration in Duari village yesterday, demanding immediate arrest of the culprits involved in the torture.

They brought out a procession in the area and later blocked Naogaon-Rajshahi highway for about half an hour from 12:30noon.

Torturers let go of the kids, after taking Emran's signature on a blank paper. They also threatened him against telling it to anyone or going to the police.

Nepal wants India ties back on track

PM's maiden visit to Delhi starts Feb 19

PTI, Kathmandu

Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli yesterday said his maiden visit to India this week is aimed at bringing bilateral ties back on track by clearing "misunderstandings" even as he defended the new Constitution, opposed by Madhesis, as "inclusive and democratic".

"There were some misunderstanding in the relations with our neighbour [India] and we have to correct the misunderstanding and bring back the relations on track. For that I am visiting India soon," Oli said ahead of his eight-day visit to India starting on February 19.

Oli's much-anticipated visit to India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi comes days after agitating Madhesis, largely of Indian-origin, ended their crippling protests and blockade that had soured the bilateral ties.

"My visit to India is aimed at normalising the past uneasy situation and also to further promote our age-old ties," Oli said in his address at the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) special workshop on "Democratic Transition in Nepal".

"The year 2015 remained a landmark in our history as we were able to promulgate the new Constitution despite the hardship facing the people due to the five-month-long blockade in the country's southern border, even after suffering from the devastating earthquake that hit the country ten months ago," Oli said.

"The new Constitution promulgated on September 20, 2015 was inclusive and democratic as it has all the features of a democratic Constitution including guarantee of human rights, independent judiciary, social justice and equality," he asserted.

The Constitution was endorsed by overwhelming 85 percent members of the Constituent Assembly, he added.

Madhesis say the new Constitution leaves them politically marginalised by dividing the country into seven provinces.

Oli said that his government is pursuing the policy of dialogue, unity and consensus among all political parties in case of certain demands and grievances by some groups.

"Now the government will concentrate on pushing ahead rapid social and economic transformation in the

country in consonance with the rising aspirations of the people."

Nepalese people are still undergoing hardships in their daily life and it might take some time to withstand the after-effects of recent disruption of supplies along the southern border, said Oli.

As the supply system has already been resumed, normal situation will prevail soon so that the government can focus more on development and reconstruction works, he pointed out.

In the near future, Oli said he will visit China "to further deepen bilateral relations and enhance fruitful economic cooperation with our friends so that we can utilise our natural and human resources for our benefit".

"Nepal pursues the policy of seeking best of friendship and cooperation with all friendly countries with particular focus on her immediate neighbours," he said.

Book fair

FROM PAGE 3

Dr Anisuzzaman said it is very difficult to narrate the whole life of a person in a book. "Still, the attempt taken by the photographer is a huge endeavor; the dynamic lifestyle of Humayun has been portrayed through the photographs."

Noted academician Muhammed Zafar Iqbal said Humayun was not given his due recognition. "But now he is," he added.

Finance Minister AMA Muhiit termed the album a magnificent work done by Nasir.

Minister of Cultural Affairs Asaduzzaman Noor said Humayun will live in the hearts of people through his words.

Director General of Bangla Academy Prof Shamsuzzaman Khan, Humayun's wife Meher Afroz Shaon, CEO of Mutual Trust Bank Anis A Khan and CEO of Anyapokash Mazharul Islam were present at the programme.

In another incident, Bangla Academy directed Bangla Prokash not to display or sell the book Humayun Ahmder Sesh Din Gulo' (The last days of Humayun Ahmed) written by Biswajit Saha.

Jalal said they were the notice as the High Court earlier issued injunction over the selling of the book following a litigation filed by Humayun's wife Meher Afroz Shaon for publishing disputed contents.

Retired judge quits

FROM PAGE 16

"Such attitude is unexpected."

On February 10, the attorney general told the SC that the retired HC judge was still living at a government residence and using a car and gunman provided by the government.

Against this backdrop, Justice Nozrul would be going against ethics of judges if he practised law in court, he added.

Talking to reporters at his office yesterday, Mahbubey Alam thanked Justice Nozrul for his move. He added that there was no pressure from the government on Nozrul to do so.

Meanwhile, SC lawyer Eunus Ali Akond filed a writ petition with the HC, seeking orders forbidding retired HC judges to practise law.

In the petition, he prayed to the HC to scrap the constitutional provision that permits retired HC judges to practise law in the Appellate Division.

Eunus told The Daily Star that the 15th amendment of the constitution was said to have restored the original constitution of 1972.

The 1972 constitution did not allow retired HC judges to practise law in the apex court, he said, adding that former

president Ziaur Rahman had amended the constitution in 1978 lifting the bar.

However, under section 33 of the 15th amendment, retired HC judges are permitted to practise law, which is contradictory to the original constitution, Eunus said.

Two retired HC judges -- Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Shahidul Islam -- are practising law in the SC although they are enjoying the state facilities and that goes against the 1972 constitution, he added.

Eunus said he would move the petition before the HC for hearing next week.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha yesterday held the hearing on the appeal of Quasem for the third day. The hearing will resume today.

The International Crimes Tribunal in November 2014 sentenced the Jamaat-e-Islami leader to death, as he was found guilty of abducting, confining and torturing people during the Liberation War.

Around four weeks later, Quasem filed the appeal with the SC, challenging the verdict.

Turkey renews shelling

FROM PAGE 16

The Turkish government denied claims that it had sent troops into northern Syria, where the regime backed by the Russian air force has launched a major campaign, state-run Anatolia news agency said yesterday, quoting the defence minister, reports AFP.

"It is not true," Ismet Yilmaz told parliament on Sunday night when asked whether Turkish soldiers had intervened in the fighting in the Syrian province of Aleppo. "The Turkish military has no intention of intervening in Syria."

Meanwhile, at least 23 civilians were killed when missiles hit three hospitals and a school in the rebel-held Syrian town of Azaz near the Turkish border yesterday, a medic and two residents said.

They said at least five missiles hit the hospital in the town centre and a nearby school, where refugees fleeing a major Syrian army offensive were sheltering. A resident said another refugee shelter south of the town was also hit by bombs dropped by jets believed to be Russian.

"We have been moving scores of screaming children from the hospital," said medic Juma Rahal. At least two children were killed and ambulances ferried scores of injured people to Turkey for treatment, he said.

French charity Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said in a statement that at least eight staff were missing after four rockets hit a hospital that it supported in the province of Idlib in north western Syria, reports Reuters.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said in an interview that Moscow does not plan to maintain its military presence in Syria indefinitely.

"We have no plans... for such a never-ending presence in Syria. We are there pursuing an entirely limited, concrete objective," Medvedev said, according to a transcript of the interview released by the government.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu yesterday accused Russia of acting as a "terrorist organisation" in Syria and vowed to deliver a robust response.

"If Russia continues behaving like a terrorist organisation and forcing civilians to flee, we will deliver an extremely decisive response," Davutoglu told reporters in Kiev, speaking through an official translator.

Ankara has vowed to keep carrying out the strikes despite criticism from Western allies in the US-led coalition, with the spiralling disagreements making the prospects of a ceasefire set to start next month increasingly unlikely.