

JSD faction announces committee

Amid efforts to reunite the two factions of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, one group yesterday announced its parial central committee. Lawmaker Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal-led faction announced the committee at his office at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with Sharif Nurul Ambia as president and Nazmul Haque Pradhan as general secretary. Badal would act as executive president. The party split over electing party general secretary at its council on March 12. The council re-elected Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu president and elected Shirin Akter MP general secretary. While Inu promised the highest sacrifice for reunition, Badal demanded cancellation of the council. The 11-member standing committee includes Lutfa Taher, Rezaul Karim Tansen, Abu Mohammad Hashem, Indu Nandan Dutta, Mansur Ahmed Aga, Mushtaq Hussain, Mohammad Khaled, and Shafiuddin Ahmed Belal.



Unscrupulous businesspersons pile up sacks full of masonry on the bank of the Buriganga and extend those to 100 feet into the river at Shyampur in Narayanganj so that they can berth vessels and load and unload goods easily, narrowing down the water body. Three to four such berthing points were also set up in the area with Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) turning a blind eye for nearly one and a half years. The photo was taken recently.

SC extends stay on bail of BNP leader Minar

The Supreme Court yesterday extended for two weeks its earlier stay order on bail of BNP leader Mahtab Uddin Minar in Feni's Fulgazi upazila chairman Ekramul Haque murder case. The SC also directed the vice chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University to form a board to examine Minar's health condition and report by two weeks as the accused is referred to the hospital from Birdem. The order came following a petition filed by the government seeking stay on the HC order that granted Minar bail on March 16 for six weeks. The SC chamber judge on March 20, following the government's petition, stayed the HC's bail order. Ekram, 45, also the president of Awami League upazila unit, was shot and burnt to death in his car in Feni town's Academy area on May 20, 2014.

Protect Sundarbans from profit seekers

The world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans, can not be protected if the profit seekers can enter into it in the name of Rampal power plant project, said educationist Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed. He made the remark yesterday at a seminar with the slogan, "We don't want power plant destroying the Sundarbans; we want electricity, and also the Sundarbans," organised by Bangladesh Nagorik Samaj at Dhaka University. Environmentalists and eminent educationists demanded that the government should abandon the 1,320MW coal-fired power plant, 14 kilometres upstream of the Sundarbans, a world heritage site declared by Unesco. "The main aim of this power plant is profit; they are not focused on India-Bangladesh friendship. It's the government's responsibility to protect the Sundarbans from those who are greedy for profit," said Prof Abu Sayeed. Columnist Sayed Abul Maksud said, "It's not a political issue; rather it's about our existence. We have to protect the mangrove forest at any cost." Environmentalist Prof Abul Bashar said, "Genetic resources, which are preserved in the Sundarbans are needed everywhere, so the international organisations also protested the project."

Equality based state to achieve dev

Speakers tell The Daily Star, UNFPA roundtable

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar
All should work in unison to establish a society and state based on equality, without which a developed country cannot be achieved, speakers told a roundtable in a Cox's Bazar hotel yesterday. In this regard, noted women's rights leader and lawmaker Khorshed Ara Haque, addressing as the chief guest, pledged to speak out in parliament so as to bring necessary amendments to existing laws preventing violence against women. The Daily Star and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organised the roundtable, "International Women's Day 2016, Planet 50:50 by 2030: Step it up for Gender Equality and against Gender Based Violence". Stopping violence against women first requires a change in attitudes said

Saimum Rahman Tahsin, a student of Cox's Bazar Government High School, accusing law enforcement agencies of not discharging duties properly to prevent such violence. Women have to unite and be conscious in order to establish their rights while stopping child marriages at the grassroots can reduce the violence to some extent, said Naima Akter, studying in class X at Cox's Bazar Government Girls High School. Another student, Akima Mostain Jimmy, from Cox's Bazar Govt College said the laws were there to prevent the violence, those were just not being implemented properly. His peer, Shibli, said parents' attitude towards the girl child needs to change too. Chaity Das, who studied in class XI of the college, said cyber crimes were a major cause of the increase in violence

against women, urging the government to establish a separate agency to contain the crime. Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, former managing editor of The Daily Star and former pro-vice chancellor of Brac University, moderated the programme. UNFPA Project Technical Officer Romana Parveen and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR Gender Adviser Romena Akter presented the concept paper. Cox's Bazar's Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Anupam Saha, Additional District Superintendent of Police Md Ferdous Ali Chowdhury, the district Women Assistance Centre Manager Rafia Akhter, National Women Lawyers' Association Senior Law Officer Sajjatunnessa Lipi and representatives of different professions also spoke.



Participants at a roundtable on "Planet 50:50 by 2030: Step it up for Gender Equality and against Gender Based Violence" jointly organised by The Daily Star and United Nations Population Fund, at a hotel in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

All urged to join Independence Day march to help build war museum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Liberation War Museum has invited all to register to join the Independence Day march on Saturday, organised to raise fund for building the permanent structure of the museum at the capital's Agargaon. The pre-registration to the 36km march from the Central Shaheed Minar to the National Memorial in Savar, can be done through Facebook at Facebook.com/walkamileforlwm or going to the Segun Bagicha premise of the LWM. People can also register on March 26 at the following venues at the given time: Central Shaheed Minar from 5:00am to 6:00am, Dhanmondi 32 from 7:00am to 8:00am, Asad Gate from 7:15am to 8:15am, Shyamoli SOS Shishu Palli from 8:30am to 9:30am, Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial from 9:00am to 10:00am, Khagain campus of Brac University from 1:00pm to 2:00pm, and Bishmail Bus Stop on Dhaka Aricha Highway from 4:30pm to 5:30pm. Anyone can take part by paying Tk 1,000 as a donation. Everyone will not be required to walk the entire distance, but all participants will get a certificate from the museum for participation. For more information on the event call 01982100148.

BNP blames EC for UP violence, killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP yesterday blamed the Election Commission for the killings and violence during the Union Parishad election's first phase on Tuesday, demanding that the chief election commissioner (CEC) and his deputies resign on accepting that they failed to do their duty. BNP Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed claimed that at least 22 people were killed including three candidates, in firings by police, Rapid Action Battalion and Border Guard Bangladesh, ruling party cadres' attacks and pre and post-polls violence from the schedules announcement to March 22. "Had the Election Commission (EC) taken proper steps using its power, the lives would not have been lost," he told a press briefing at the party's central office in the capital. "The Election Commission has turned into an aimless derailed institution. The killing of a huge number of people, violence and maiming of many others does not rattle their conscience as they are only concerned about protecting their jobs," he said. Rizvi said the CEC claimed before the polls that the EC was not getting cooperation desired from the administration and police would be held responsible if violence occurred. "The same person again said the election was fair."

Damaged Banani house inspected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Parliamentary standing committee on power, energy and mineral resources ministry along with two separate probe committees went yesterday to the site of gas leakage and the Banani building, which caught fire recently. The committee visited different points of the building and the site to observe various technical aspects and spoke to many persons, including the building owner. "We have observed different technical matters, there is more to investigate and after that we will submit our report," said HM Ali Ashraf, director of operation of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd. Shamsul Alam, owner of the building, said they informed everything about the incident and demanded compensation for the damage of their building. The six-storey apartment building at Dhaka's Banani was damaged in a fire that residents suspect was caused by a leaking Titas gas line.

Resilience S Asians' survival instinct

FROM PAGE 3
shocks such as deaths or illnesses of earning members. Prabhu was talking to The Daily Star at the fifth Frugal Innovation Forum, organised by Brac in Savar from March 23-24 with the theme, "Scaling Resilience". The Daily Star is the engagement partner of the forum. Citing the example of microfinance institutions in Bangladesh, Prabhu talked about his book, "Jugaad Innovations", stating how businesses in developing countries are making do with their small resources and coming up with ideas to make development of their communities more inclusive. "In the west, companies invest heavily in research and development and when they develop their prod-

uct, they charge a high price which their consumer can afford," he said. But in emerging economies as in the South Asian region, consumers cannot afford expensive products. So companies need to keep a smaller profit margin and scale up their businesses to remain sustainable, he said. Charishma Chotalia, regional director of Programs, South Asia, VOTO Mobile, however, emphasised on flexibility and the need for getting feedback from customers regularly and updating services or products accordingly. Chotalia was speaking at a session on opportunities coming out of scaling up resilience. VOTO Mobile is a Ghana-based tech startup and social enterprise that offers services to businesses,

governments and NGOs to share information with their customers and gather feedback through interactive SMS or voice calls in local languages. Tom Nettleton, first secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, also noted the importance of in-depth knowledge of the culture where a business or even a development partner works. "Without that, innovations might fail," he said recalling discussions from a previous session of the day where journalists spoke of how relief products sent by donors often were not useful for disaster-hit people. Journalists and social media activists at the session spoke about the role of media in building up resilience. Sessions on lessons learned from

recent disasters, including Rana Plaza, resilience among youth, emerging social entrepreneurs, role of technology and business in building up resilient societies were held on the last day. The forum ended with a session with Brac founder and Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed speaking on building resilience across communities, moderated by Prabhu. Highlighting Bangladesh's growth over the last few decades, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed said the life expectancy at birth in Bangladesh was higher than that in Pakistan and India although both the neighbours have a higher per capita income. He said yet Bangladesh had a long way to go in terms of ensuring gender equality and meeting the growing demand of urbanisation.

Demolish

FROM PAGE 3
petition to the HC seeking its further directive on the authorities to set up the museum after the structures are demolished. Prof Muntassir had filed the writ petition with the HC in February 2012 saying that a vested group has reportedly occupied the land of the Shaheed Minar for a mazar, centring the grave, and was planning to construct a high-rise building which may damage the sanctity of the memorial. The HC then ordered the authorities to demolish the structures, but they did not fully implement the directive, Manzill added.

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