

66 FF heirs get Indian scholarships in Rangpur

BSS, Rangpur

The Assistant High Commission (HC) of India stationed at Rajshahi, distributed cheques of Tk 15.84 lakh as scholarships of the Indian government to 66 heirs of freedom fighters at a ceremony yesterday.

The ceremony, organised by the Assistant High Commission of India, in association with District Muktiyoddha Command, was held in Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) auditorium in the city.

Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Ministry Tipu Munshi, MP, attended as the chief guest, with Assistant High Commissioner of India, stationed at Rajshahi, Abhijit Chattopadhyay in the chair.

Assistant Defense Adviser to Indian High Commission in Bangladesh Squadron Leader Rajat Hans, Deputy Commissioner Rahat Anwar, Additional Police Super Abdullah Al Faruk, District Muktiyoddha Commander Mosaddek Hossain Bablu, and RCCI President Abul Kashem attended as special guests.

The chief guest distributed scholarship cheques among the 66 degree level students, also heirs of the freedom fighters, with Tk 24,000 each, from all eight districts in the division.

While addressing the ceremony, the speakers said the people of Bangladesh would always remember the assistance and contribution extended by India during the 1971 Liberation War.

They called upon the scholarship recipients to properly utilise the money in continuing their studies. "The language, culture, education, and literature are common between Bangladesh and India and these similarities have been playing a vital role in contributing to the progress and advancement of both the friendly nations," Tipu Munshi said.



A girl sniffs glue on the footpath near Balaka Bhaban in the capital's airport area recently, for a quick high. Getting high used to be the bad habit of the rich, but life has brought tailored variety to the street kids of cities as well. Somebody got to pay attention as they are the children of the nation too.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AUST teacher suspended over 'sexual harassment'

UNB, Dhaka

A teacher of the Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST) has been suspended following allegations of sexual harassment of two female students of the university.

The university authorities took the decision at an emergency meeting yesterday amid students' demonstrations demanding suspension of the teacher.

Campus sources said the students of the university staged demonstrations in front of the campus for suspending an associate professor of the Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering (EEE), around 11:00am for sexually harassing two female students of the university.

Earlier, two complaints were lodged with the head of the Department of EEE in this regard.

Later, the chairman of department informed the matter to Vice-Chancellor Prof MM Shafiullah of the university.

The meeting also decided to investigate the allegations and take further action against the teacher after getting the probe report.

CPA plan to build jetty at Sadarghat opposed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Given the historical value of Sadarghat in the port city and dependence of thousands of people on it for their daily livelihoods, the city's residents accompanied by boatmen of the Karnaphuli River yesterday urged the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) not to set up any jetty for lighter vessels there through destroying the ghat.

The urge came up from a rally and a human chain jointly organised by Karnaphuli Nodi Sampan Majhi Kalyan Samiti Federation and Chattagram Ancholik Sangskriti Academy (Casa) at Sadarghat area of the river.

"...Sadarghat is our local, social and national heritage. Many verses and songs were written and composed centring the Karnaphuli River and the

ghat. None gave CPA authority to abolish this ghat," Karnaphuli researcher Md Idris Ali told the rally attended by hundreds of residents and boatmen.

"Influential quarters are grabbing acres of lands on the river's both banks. CPA can construct the jetty there through reclaiming those lands," said Sohel Md Fakruddin, president of Chhatragram Itihas Charcha Kendra.

Casa Chairman Aliur Rahman said the city history was intertwined with the ghat, adding, "We cannot understand why the CPA is attempting to destroy it..."

"The Sadarghat route through the river saves both time and money of thousands of commuters. Should the ghat be bunged up, commuters, boatmen and labourers will suffer terribly,"

said SM Pear Ali, president of Sampan Majhi Kolayan Samity Federation.

Robayet Ferdous, a HSC student of Islamia College, said it took only 10 to 15 minutes to come to the college from his Char Patharghata residence situated on the southern bank of the Karnaphuli.

"It will take over an hour to reach the college if the ghat is stopped," added the student.

It is worth mentioning that after conquering Chittagong port from Portuguese pirates in 1666, Nawab Shaista Khan founded the Sadarghat river-port at the Karnaphuli River channel to turn the city into a modern one.

Chanel i Chittagong Bureau Chief Chowdhury Farid spoke, among others, at the programme.

Sylhet Int'l Trade Fair big disappointment

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

On Thursday night, Abu Ahmed Showkat Ali, a local businessman, went to the month-long International Trade Fair with his wife and two sons in Sylhet Sadar upazila playground in Eidgah area.

His sons wanted to buy toys, but his wife, household products. She was adamant, so the sons compromised.

They went inside a stall, and to her utmost surprise, most of the products, though the stall boasted of selling foreign goods, were locally made and could be easily found at the outside stores. And to top it all off, the prices were hiked up.

"The fair is nothing but a way of snatching our money," said a disappointed Showkat.

This was a common picture at the trade fair, which started on March 25, arranged by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SMCCI).

Around 220 stalls participated with different types of products, though most of them were readily available in malls, and makeshift shops, as the organisers did not take any quality measurement policy, visitors complained.

No local products were promoted nor any significant foreign products were showcased; still the fair was titled as "International", they added.

"An international fair should be organised to showcase our products to the global market and vice-versa, which will encourage a quality competition among the vendors,"

said Faruk Mahmud Chowdhury, president of the Sylhet chapter of Sujon.

Shafiq Alam Chowdhury, convener of the fair organising committee, and director of SMCCI, said, "We don't have any specific space to host a real 'International' level trade fair. We have requested the authorities concerned for a designated spot already. Also we couldn't declare any fixed roster for several hindrances like the recent HC stay order on the venue due to an ownership dispute."

"Foreign participants have their demands too. They require a minimum four-month advance notification," he said, adding, "We had also invited local manufacturers and traders."

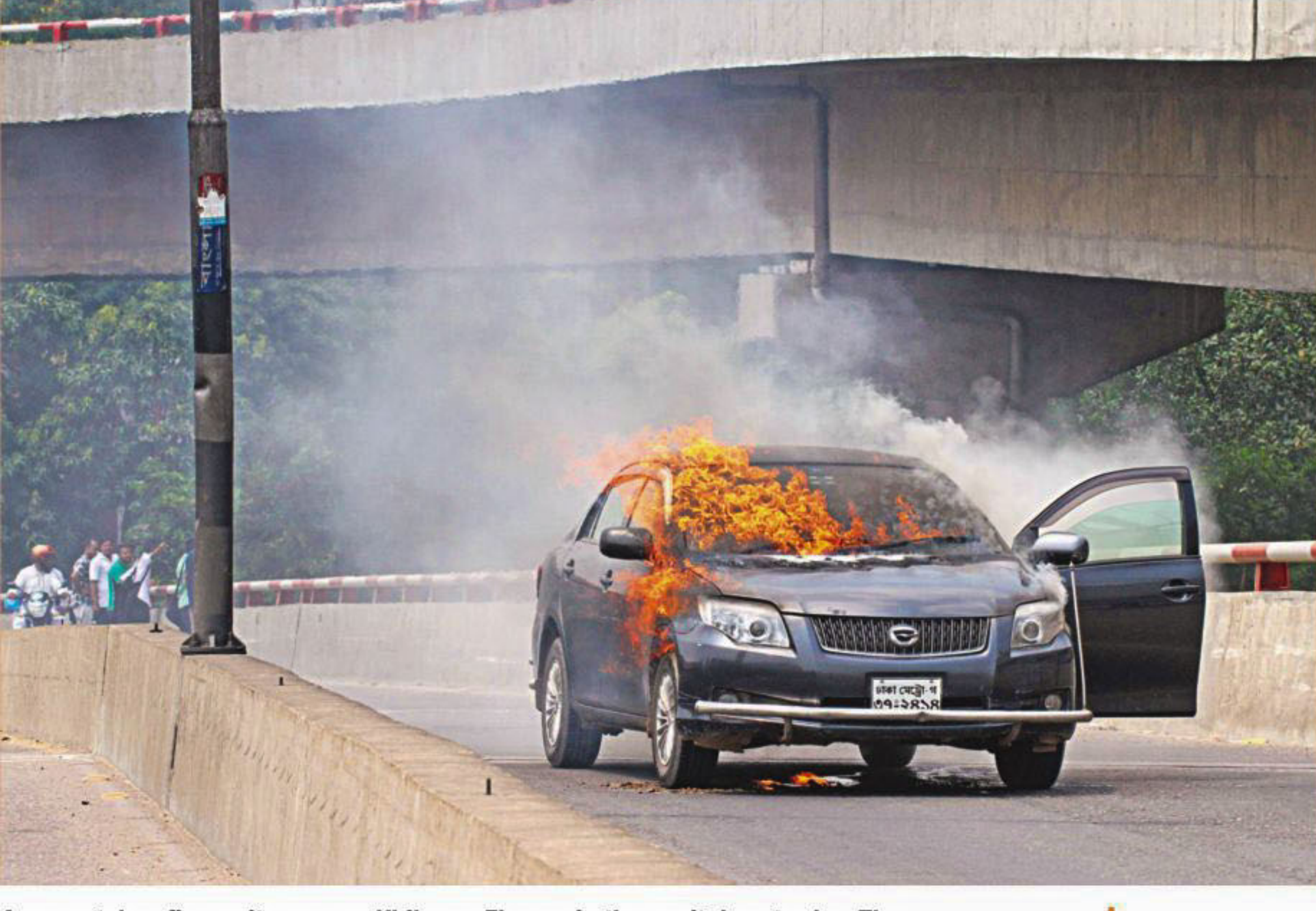
"...but the rents of the stalls are way high," emphasised Faruk, adding, "The SMCCI should be more flexible."

A general stall is about Tk 40-60 thousand, premium is around Tk 1 lakh, and pavilion is over Tk 1 lakh, depending on location, said fair officials.

Tanbir Ahmed, an electronics goods importer, and a stall owner, said, "We sell products at a reasonable price, but the rent's too high. We had to charge more to gain profit."

"The facilities for the vendors and visitors are not adequate enough. Too much heat and nor'westers are hampering the continuity. The security service is weak and there are not enough toilets at the premise," he added.

"The rent has been predetermined by SMCCI. We hope, in future, we could arrange the fair more efficiently, overcoming all odds," said Safiul.



A car catches fire on its own on Khilgaon Flyover in the capital yesterday. The vehicle got burnt completely. But no one was injured.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

JU Sangskritik Jote continues asking proctor to resign

JU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar Sangskritik Jote, Progressive Students' Alliance and Anti-Imperialist Students' Union yesterday again staged demonstrations demanding Jahangirnagar University Proctor Prof Tapan Kumar Saha's resignation.

Some 50 students brought out a silent procession and met Vice-Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam. The jote claims Prof Tapan left after ordering police to baton-charge JU students blocking the Dhaka-Aricha highway on April 25, protesting the "government's failure" to arrest the killers of Comilla Victoria Government College student Sohagi Jahan Tonu. Prof Tapan denied the allegations.

CU medical centre badly needs treatment

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"Such unexpected deaths might have been avoided if necessary facilities were available," viewed a doctor of the centre, seeking anonymity.

The chief medical officer said they repeatedly informed the higher authorities about the crisis but they did not take any steps.

"We need at least Tk 25 to 30 lakh to run the medical centre smoothly," Saifulah said.

Around six months ago, the university authorities formed a committee to find out the problems and ways to develop the medical centre.

Prof Benu Kumar Dey, co-chair of CU medical centre adviser's committee, said he submitted a report with 22 recommendations including computerising the medical centre, upgrading security and availability

of better equipment.

He also admitted there was a financial crisis. The committee in its report also said mismanagement and negligence are the main reasons behind the miserable condition, said university sources.

"I have heard about this allegation. Maybe at times doctors may not look after a patient properly, but I have spoken to them extensively regarding this issue, it's not a problem anymore," said Saifulah.

CU Vice-Chancellor Prof Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury said they have talked to the University Grants Commission about the crisis.

"They have assured us of considering increasing the fund in the next budget," he told The Daily Star.

The VC also sought the government's help to upgrade the medical centre.

3 JS bodies call for preventing child marriage

BSS, Dhaka

Three subcommittees of Jatiya Sangsad under Bangladesh Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development yesterday in a views exchange meeting urged the media to play a conducive role in preventing child marriage, and ensuring mother's health and safe delivery, said a media release of the parliament.

The meeting was held under the project "Strengthening Parliament's Capacity in Integrating Population Issues into Development" in the parliament complex.

Insecurity of women

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exhumed and another autopsy done but the reason behind her death couldn't be found," said the professor, disappointed.

More importantly, he said, Tonu's parents were interrogated and her mother was asked repeatedly why they did not marry their daughter off.

"This is the reason behind the high rate of child marriage in Bangladesh. There is no security for women. Tonu was raped and murdered but she won't get justice... We are living in such a reality," he said.

The speech titled "A Historic Defeat in History" also shed light on how patriarchy is victimising women.

Choudhury said men were confined to a patriarchal mindset and till the end of that, men and women would not get emancipation.

'TOO LITTLE HISTORY IN TEXTBOOK'

Another emeritus professor of DU, Anisuzzaman, said it was sad that there was very little history in the school curriculum.

Textbooks should have more history at the secondary level; otherwise students will grow up with poor history knowledge, he told the inaugural session of the two-day programme, chaired by the National Professor Sufia Ahmed, also president of Itihas Parishad.

The Parishad honoured 22 persons and DU as an institution for contributions to promoting the study of history.

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