

Govt to collect personal antiquities

UNB, Dhaka

The government is going to launch a campaign for motivating people to deposit to it the antiquities either owned personally or collected by individuals.

The government will also provide incentives if anyone deposits ancient objects from one's personal collection.

This was disclosed at the 20th meeting of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs Ministry, held at the Jatiya Sangsad with its chairman Simeen Hussain (Rimi) in the chair yesterday.

The parliamentary watchdog recommended the Cultural Affairs Ministry to take an initiative for bringing Rajshahi Varendra Museum under its jurisdiction through negotiations with the Education Ministry for the sake of proper preservation of the country's oldest museum.

Committee members Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor and Pankaj Nath attended the meeting.



People queue up with water containers in front of a pump near Basabo Balurmah in the capital to collect fresh drinking water. Local residents say the water supplied by Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority to Basabo, Kadamtola, and Ahembdagh areas was dirty and not drinkable. While many of the residents buy drinking water, the rest have to depend on the supply of this water pump. With the start of Ramadan, this everyday ordeal gets more wearisome for the local people. The photos were taken Saturday.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

NO END TO BLOODSPILL ON ROADS

Accidents take five lives

CITY DESK

Five people including two members of a family and a freedom fighter were killed and three others injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday and on Saturday.

In Bogra, a man and his son were killed and two people injured as a Noagaon-bound CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them collided head-on with a goods-laden tractor on Bogra-Noagaon road at Boshipur Shantahar bypass in Adamdighi upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased are Ajit Chandra Boshak, 48, and his son Mithun Chandra Boshak, 20, of Shurjata village under Dupchanchia upazila in the district.

Police said Ajit died on the spot while Mithun died at Noagaon Sadar Hospital. The identities of the injured could not be known immediately, said police.

Police said the auto-rickshaw was seized and the driver of the tractor fled the scene.

In Gopalganj Sadar, two people including

a freedom fighter were killed and another person was injured as a bus hit a butterfly-run rickshaw-van carrying them on Gopalganj-Takerhat road in Malanga area on Saturday.

The deceased are Murtoja Mollah, 67, a freedom fighter of Nijra union and Asud Mina, 23, the van puller, of the area.

Police sent the bodies to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

In Faridpur, a helper of a mango-laden pickup-van was killed as the vehicle fell into a ditch beside Dhaka-Barishal highway in Koydubi-Sodoedi area of Bhangra municipality yesterday.

The deceased is Aslam Bappari, 26, of Ghotokchar area in Madaripur.

Police said the incident occurred after the pickup-van driver lost his control over it and hit a roadside tree.

Locals rushed the driver and helper to Bhangra Upazila Health Complex where a doctor declared Aslam dead, said Office-in-Charge of Bhangra Highway Police Station Azajul Islam.



Obituary
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syed Hamidul Husian, son of late Dr Syed Siddiq, died in a city hospital due to severe respiratory attack on Saturday. He was at 69.

Syed Hamidul left behind his wife, a son and a daughter and a host of relatives and well wishers.

His Qulkhani will be held after Asr prayer tomorrow at his residence, House 21, Road 16, Block B in the capital's Banani area, said a press release.

Bangladesh needs to make careful choices

Says political analyst Prof Ali Riaz highlighting country's geopolitical, geostrategic importance

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh's geopolitical and geostrategic importance has grown bringing an "opportune moment" for the country but it must be "very careful" in making its choices, says an international political analyst.

Dr Ali Riaz, professor of the Department of Politics and Government at the Illinois State University, USA, said the efforts to include Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative of Japan, the OBOR (One Belt One Road) of China and the Naya Disha policy of India point to the fact that Bangladesh's geopolitical and geostrategic importance has grown.

"Both the geographical location and the economic growth of the country in the past two decades are to be credited for the attention it is now receiving," he told the news agency.

It is equally important to keep in mind that the centre of global economic activities is shifting to Asia, said Prof Riaz, adding that Bangladesh should not let the opportune moment go by.

Explaining why Bangladesh must be "very careful" in making its choices, he said none of these initiatives are devoid of the strategic objectives of these countries.

"It's not only a matter of balancing among these three but also necessary to consider the future trajectories," said the political analyst.

He thinks the long-term interests of the country should dictate the nature, scope and degree of engagements; decisions based on immediate political gains or ad-hoc measures will be immensely harmful.

"These issues warrant public discussions and involvement of all political forces, citizens and the members of the civil society. Unfortunately, currently environment for such conversation is



Prof Ali Riaz

absent in the country; decisions are taken without transparency and accountability," Prof Riaz observed.

Bangladesh sits at the heart of a geostrategic polity, bordered with India to its west and separated states of the former's northeast, Myanmar to the south-east, laying access to Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries and China, and separated from Nepal and Bhutan by the chicken's neck corridor (Siliguri Corridor), with the Bay of Bengal in the South, connecting a vast majority of the world's nations and population.

Responding to a question, Prof Riaz said Bangladesh's participation in the OBOR, to date, appears to be "enthusiastic but cautious".

The reason, according to him, is not difficult to ascertain. "Political rather than economic consideration is causing some hesitations from the part of Bangladesh."

Prof Riaz claimed that the close relationship between Bangladesh and India, particularly the present Bangladesh government, has put them on a slow path.

He also said Chinese efforts to embrace various countries of South Asia, including Bangladesh, is not viewed by Indian policymakers very kindly as they see it as a challenge to Indian influence.

The analyst explained further saying while undoubtedly Bangladesh will benefit from the connectivity the OBOR will offer, it should emphasise other aspects of Bangladesh-China economic relationships.

"For example, the trade gap. There's a need to act urgently and robustly on the trade gap between these two countries."

Prof Riaz recalled that the request for duty-free access to Chinese market has not been responded yet. "These should be a part of the negotiations."

Capt Bashar's anniversary of martyrdom today

CITY DESK

Today is the martyrdom anniversary of Captain RAM Khairul Bashar, ASC. On this day in 1971, Captain Bashar, former



officer commanding of Station Supply Depot (SSD), Chittagong Cantonment was bayoneted to death by a crack force of Pakistan army led by one Major Sarfaraz at a torture cell at Dhaka Cantonment.

According to a press statement, Pakistanis proposed him to become a state witness against Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who was then facing treason charge at a Pakistani jail in the then West Pakistan. As he straightaway rejected the Pakistani proposal, the crack force tortured him for two months before killing him on May 29, 1971.

In March, 1971, the forces of Baluch Regiment attacked the SSD led by Bengali Captain Bashar to capture it from his command. But Captain Bashar and his soldiers successfully repulsed the attack and drove them out from the SSD area, the statement added. It said he



A large crowd scrambles at the door of a packed bus at Farmgate of the capital yesterday, after the end of office hours and just before iftar. The same scenario has been reported every Ramadan for the last several years but people feel helpless and held hostage to the situation because no remedial steps are seen.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Appeal for help

CITY DESK

Rubel Kar, a former student of political science of Chittagong University, has been suffering from chronic kidney failure.

Son of Shontosh Kar of Rangamati Sadar upazila, Rubel is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital in India's Chennai.

For this, he needs Tk 30 lakh, which her family cannot afford. In addition, this mother is also diagnosed with cancer.

Therefore, his family seeks aid from solvent people or institutions.

Aid can be sent to AC: 4720, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Kawkhali Branch, or Bonkim Kumar Dutt, AC: 20131200003498, Southeast Bank Ltd (Chowdhurihat branch).

Int'l Day for UN Peacekeepers

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their highest standard of professionalism, devotion and bravery since their first engagement to UN Peacekeeping Operations in 1988.

Terming Bangladesh one of the largest troop contributing nations in UN Peacekeeping missions, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the Bangladeshi peacekeepers have been working relentlessly to establish peace and harmony in various conflicting areas.

"On behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, I assure our continued support to the United Nations for protection and promotion of world peace," she said.

Different programmes have been taken in observance of the day, a spokesperson of Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) told the news agency yesterday.

The day's programmes will begin through holding "Peace Keepers Run" at 7:00am from in front of Old Airport Mosque to South Plaza of Sangsad Bhavan.

In the afternoon, a reception will be organised at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre to honour the close relatives of the deceased and injured Bangladeshi peacekeepers. President Abdul Hamid is expected to attend the function.

The BTV and BTB World will air the programme live.

Child house help tortured

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Musleh later took the family back to Romana's house where he negotiated with Romana and told her to pay Tk 4,000 to the family as compensation.

Being asked, the family also gave thumbprints on a paper agreeing that they would not go for any legal action in future, said the father.

When contacted over the phone, Musleh admitted that the girl had some fresh bruises and he arranged the negotiation.

Refuting the allegation of beating the girl, Dr Romana said she informed the family

that she would take legal action against her for stealing the money.

Sub-inspector Nurul Islam of Panchlaish Police Station said he asked the girl's parents to file a written complaint with the police and admit her to CMCH. But they did not do so.

This correspondent visited the girl at her parents' home yesterday. She could neither walk properly nor sit. The illiterate parents, having seven daughters, said they did not lodge any complaints with the police fearing that Dr Romana would harass them with as she has the paper with their thumbprints.



A recklessly-driven vehicle toppled some pillars along the edge of the Airport Road footpath opposite Radisson hotel in the capital. Although they were set up to ensure pedestrians' safety as well as enhancing the beauty of the footpath, casualties could not be prevented due to reckless driving. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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