

First Briton crosses Bangla Channel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A journalist became the first British citizen to cross the 16-kilometre Bangla Channel, stretching from Teknaf to Saint Martin's Island in Bangladesh.

Becky Horsbrugh, who is also a swimming instructor, started swimming at 9:20am yesterday. It took her four hours and 45 minutes to cross the channel.

"I'm very happy to have completed it," she told journalists and locals after touching the finish mark.

The Associated Press (AP) journalist swam the channel to raise funds for the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB).

"So very proud to say I'm the first Brit to swim the Bangla Channel!" she wrote in her Facebook wall.

"The wind picked up overnight and the water was choppy. The first hour seemed to take forever. The waves kept bashing against me and I could feel jellyfish stings," she wrote, adding that the biggest relief was when she first caught sight of the island.

"My back started to hurt... There were jellyfish everywhere but finally I could see the outline of people on the beach," said Becky, thanking all those who helped her to make it.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Becky Horsbrugh

Satrasa-Karwan Bazar Road now 'Mayor Annisul Huq Road'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has named the road between Satrasa and Karwan Bazar as "Mayor Annisul Huq Road".

The DNCC authorities took the decision at its 21st meeting on December 11 last year, says a press release yesterday.

After assuming office on May 6, 2015, it was a big challenge for the then mayor Annisul to free the road from decades-old illegal occupation and parking.

Several hundred transport workers went berserk and fought pitched battles with law enforcers during an eviction drive there.

But, Annisul fought with courage and at a public rally on December 10, 2015 formally declared the Tejgaon road connecting Satrasa and Karwan Bazar free from illegal occupation.

The act was highly appreciated by the city

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Disorderly parking of all sorts of vehicles with people walking right in the middle of the road is bringing traffic to a standstill underneath the Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover near Moghbazar intersection. However, members of traffic police and Ansar, inset, are confiscating only rickshaws on the other side of the intersection. The photos were taken around 11:00am yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Give back to society

Shirin Sharmin urges graduates at IUB convocation

STAR REPORT

Education and knowledge a person earns throughout her or his life should be used for the wellbeing of human society, said Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday.

She was addressing as the convocation speaker the 19th convocation of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) on its Bashundhara campus in Dhaka, says a press release.

Calling upon the students, she said, "We all have just one life; so, make it meaningful and focus only on what you desire to succeed and spread all your successes for the wellbeing of the underprivileged people."

In order to obtain a peaceful, prosperous and terrorism-free world, all have to join hands. Bangladesh can be a role model in this regard, she said.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid presided over the ceremony and conferred degrees on graduates on behalf of

President Abdul Hamid, also chancellor of the university.

In his speech, Nahid said, "Leading private universities like IUB are truly making significant contributions towards achieving government's higher education goals."

These universities require more structured support from the government to make the real difference, said Nahid.

He urged the graduating students to be change-makers.

Addressing as a special guest, Prof Abdul Mannan, chairman of the University Grants Commission, assured IUB of providing all essential support from his institution in the days to come.

Abdul Hai Sarker, chairman of Education, Science, Technology and Cultural Development Trust (ESTCDT), highlighted that IUB trust will continue efforts to ensure quality higher education.

Rashed Chowdhury, chairman, board of trustees of IUB, said, "Education and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A floating crane sets the second span atop a set of piers of the Padma Bridge yesterday. With the second superstructure installed, 300 metres of the much-awaited bridge is now visible. The bridge is scheduled to be completed by December this year.

PHOTO: STAR

Duta sees students' 'misconduct'

Forms human chain in protest

DU CORRESPONDENT

A section of Dhaka University (DU) teachers yesterday formed a human chain on the campus protesting what they said students' "misbehaviour" and "attack on university teachers" during January 23 demonstration.

Teachers of different departments took part in the human chain held under the banner of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) at the base of Aparajeyo Bangla.

Some teachers claimed that the media did not publish the news of "assaulting" the vice chancellor and other teachers and "vandalising university properties".

They expressed grave concern over the January 23 incident where demonstrators besieged the VC office and kept him confined demanding punishment for Bangladesh Chhatra League activists over attacking them during their demonstration on January 15. Both of the agitation programmes were foiled by BCL activists.

Duta Treasurer Prof Momtaz Uddin alleged that the teachers were harassed by the protestors but the media did not publish it properly.

Duta President Maksud Kamal said, "Leaders and activists of different political parties participated in the demonstration. It was part of a conspiracy."

He alleged that a vested quarter is trying to destabilise the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

We won't be suppressed

Say DU students; Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote's nationwide strike today

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Dhaka University (DU) students yesterday formed a human chain on the campus, protesting the January 23 attack on demonstrators by the Bangladesh Chhatra League activists and demanded punishment for the BCL men.

Around 100 students took part in the human chain held under the banner of "Students against repression" at the base of Raju memorial sculpture around 1:30pm.

"They [BCL] thought we would lose our courage after the attack. But we're still on the street and will continue our protest until the authorities meet our demand," said Abu Raihan Khan, a student of mass communication and journalism department.

"The authorities are bound to listen to our logical demands as the university runs on public money. They cannot suppress us using Chhatra League," he added.

After the human chain, the students also brought out a procession. The students will observe a nationwide strike today called by Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote.

Meanwhile, Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote, an alliance of left-leaning student organisations, brought out a procession on the campus yesterday, demanding punishment for the BCL

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DEMAND FOR NATIONALISATION

Community health workers Private primary teachers stay put

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Community health care providers continued their agitation programme for the second day yesterday, demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

Several thousand health care providers, who work at the grassroots level health facilities, staged a sit-in in front of Jatiya Press Club since morning.

"We'll continue... until our demands are met," said Suman Matbar, vice president of Bangladesh Community Health Care Providers. He said they would go for a hunger strike from February 1 if their demands are not met before that.

The Community Clinic Project, which began its operations in 1998, has nearly 14,000 community health care providers (CHCP) in the equal number of community clinics.

The operations of the project were closed

during the BNP-Jamaat regime in 2001-2008. It restarted in 2009, when the Awami League-led government came to power, under the project, "Revitalisation of Community Healthcare Initiative in Bangladesh".

"The government has not brought our jobs under the revenue budget despite its decision in 2013. As a result, our salary remained the same, in total Tk 16,700 a month. We had no increments or any other facilities," Suman Matbar told this correspondent.

The CHCPs, who have been trained by the government, therefore, are frustrated and leaving jobs. "Authorities have repeatedly assured us of brining our jobs under the revenue budget, but to no avail..." Suman said, demanding intervention of the prime minister.

Contacted, Dr Abul Kalam Azad, director general at the Directorate General of Health Services, said they held a meeting with the

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The indefinite hunger strike of the primary teachers of non-government schools demanding nationalisation of their institutions rolled into second day yesterday.

Although 148 teachers fell ill since they began their movement on January 21, they vowed to continue the strike until their demand is met.

"Five of our teachers fell sick today [yesterday]. More than 40 teachers have been hospitalised so far, but no one from the government came to meet us," said Mohammad Firoz Uddin, one of the leaders of the agitating teachers.

Yesterday, some teachers were seen sitting in front of Jatiya Press Club while some others lying on polythene sheets and cardboards.

Mahbuba Begum, headteacher of Gandamari Aftabuddin Mia Non-government Primary School in Patuakhali, said, "Since joining in 2006, I have been teaching students with devotion, but without any pay. It is so unfortunate."

She said they want the government to consider their

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

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