

SATKANIA STAMPEDE
More time sought to submit report
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

The committee formed to investigate the killing of nine women in a stampede at Gatiyadanga village in Satkania of Chittagong on May 14 was unable to submit the probe report yesterday.

It sought seven more days. Chittagong DC Mohammad Ilias Hossain formed the five-member committee on May 15.

Nine women were killed and around 25 injured in the stampede as over 30,000 people gathered to collect iftar essentials provided by Kabir Steel Rolling Mills (KSRM).

A committee member told The Daily Star that some company officials were abroad at present, which was why they sought more time.

Meanwhile, Md Shahjahan, managing director of KSRM, the only named accused in the case filed over the incident, could not be arrested yet.



A deep drain is dug on the Mohammadpur end of the capital's Satmasjid Road -- right through high-voltage power lines of a sub-station of Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC), exposing the wire lines as part of the construction. The photo was taken yesterday.

Teesta water sharing deal still lingers
BNP blames govt
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has failed to make any progress on the Teesta water-sharing deal over the last eight years, BNP leader Ruhul Ahmed Rizvi alleged yesterday.

"... Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina could not bring a bucket of water from India despite very friendly ties," BNP senior joint secretary general Rizvi Ahmed said.

He was addressing a press conference at BNP's Nayapalton central office in Dhaka.

Over the years, the government has unilaterally provided India everything, but failed to realise fair share of water for the people of Bangladesh, the BNP senior joint secretary said.

The BNP leader said, "It's one-sided love with India. This is very difficult as it only takes many things and gives nothing in return."

Pointing at Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India, Rizvi alleged that the Teesta water-sharing issue is not in the agenda of discussion to be held during the prime minister's tour.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina left for Kolkata to attend the convocation ceremony of Visva Bharati University as the guest of honour.

She will also receive a degree of Doctor of Literature at Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol.

Earlier on Wednesday, at a press conference Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali indicated that there is no progress over Teesta water-sharing deal yet.

Street food
FROM PAGE 5
 Contacted, SN Nazer Hossain, vice president of Consumers Association of Bangladesh, said although food safety inspectors are appointed under the DoH, their existence is practically invisible.

"We do not see them conduct any drives against the sale of unsafe foods and drinks," he said.

M Mujibul Haque, director of the health department, Chittagong, said, "Our food safety inspectors regularly conduct drives in different areas and realise fines from the vendors."

"But it is true that we cannot control it as they return after a few days. Our drives against unsafe street food will continue," he added.

NATIONAL BUDGET
20pc funds demanded for education sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A children's organisation yesterday demanded an allocation of 20 percent funds for education sector in the national budget to ensure education for all children in the country.

Aside from recruiting competent teachers, they also urged the government to ensure multimedia classrooms, libraries and laboratories -- including science and computer ones -- at schools for the improvement of quality of education.

The demands were made by National Children's Task Force (NCTF) at a press conference in the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

At the programme NCTF disclosed a set of demands based on discussions it held with around 4,800 children in 64 districts.

The demands include ensuring special access -- including wheelchair ramps and wheelchair accessible toilets -- for differently abled students at educational institutes, midday meals at schools where children from destitute families attend and internet safety for all children.

In several global forums including the Dakar Declaration, Bangladesh had committed six percent of its GDP or a minimum of 20 percent allocation in its national budget for the education sector.

The children present at yesterday's programme stressed the need for establishing more schools and hospitals in haor and char areas and ensuring adequate teachers and in-house physicians at schools.

NCTF President Safayet Zamil said, "We want to see a reflection of children's voice in the upcoming national budget."

Faria Mehjabin, president of NCTF (Dhaka unit), and Ferdous Naem, deputy speaker of Child Parliament, a wing of NCTF, were also present at the press conference among others.

Former
FROM PAGE 3
 Sheikh Touhidul Islam, 17, was found dead inside the ATM booth of Eastern Bank Limited near Dhaka Cantonment Post Office on May 21.

Later his father filed a case accusing unknown persons.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Rassel from Sonadanga upazila of Khulna on May 22 for his alleged involvement in the killing.

Rassel told Rab that he became angry with the victim over a trifling matter and decided to "teach him a good lesson".

He said there was an altercation between them during July last year centering on a boat race in Bagerhat where Towhidul assaulted him. In line with it, he killed the victim.

Hindu family living
FROM PAGE 3
 they had filed a general diary (GD) in connection with death threats with Baniachang Police Station on December 7 last year but investigation into the incidents has not been completed yet.

"My family and fellow villagers are living in danger at the moment," said Sushanta, also an organiser of Genocide Bangladesh.

Following a writ petition, the High Court on May 14 directed the superintendent of police (SP) of Habiganj to dispose of an application submitted for providing security to the Hindu villagers of Sunaru.

The SP has been asked to comply with the order within one month on receipt of the order. Sushanta submitted the application to the SP's office on April 19.

He said Ataur's men, equipped with weapons, attacked the house of his brother Sumanta Dasgupta on March 28 this year. The family filed a GD with Habiganj Sadar Police Station over the incident on March 30.

Sushanta also alleged that Ataur's men attacked a friend's house at Enatabad area in Habiganj town on April 1 and tried to kill him as he was there at the motor.

Two days later, miscreants on motorbikes attacked Sunaru village and injured several Hindu villagers.

They could not go to hospital for treatment out of fear, he said. Among others, Sushanta's brother Sumanta attended the press conference.

Advance Eid train ticket
FROM PAGE 3
 the existing fleet to cope with the excessive rush of passengers from June 13. The trains are Dewanganj Special, Chandpur Special-1, Chandpur Special-2, Rajshahi Special, and Parbatipur Special.

Besides, the railway authorities will also operate Solakia Special-1 trains on Bhairab-Kishoreganj-Bhairab and Solakia Special-2 on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj-Mymensingh routes on the Eid day.

Some 184 additional coaches will be included with the existing 1,221 coaches and 20 additional locomotives will be added with the existing 209 locomotives during the Eid rush, the minister said.

Railway caters to some 2.6 lakh passenger everyday and, it has taken steps to provide service to 2.75 lakh passengers on the occasions of Eid, the minister said.

Adequate security measures will be taken to avoid "black marketing" (scalping) of tickets and subversive activities, the minister said. Mobile courts will be operated as additional measures.

Operation of Maitree Express, which runs on Dhaka-Kolkata route, will remain suspended on June 15 to 18 due to Eid.

Weekly holidays for all intercity trains have been cancelled for five days starting June 11. Leave for railway officials have been cancelled for six days from June 10, he said, hoping to maintain schedule.

Railway ministry Secretary Mofazzel Hossain and BR Director General Amzad Hossain were present at the briefing.

Allocate funds
FROM PAGE 5
 country's food security depends on the sector, a minimum of 20 percent of the national budget should be allocated for agriculture sector, Mujibul said.

The national budget in 2017-18 was increased about 30 percent in comparison with that in 2016-17. But allocation for agriculture in 2017-18 was reduced by 0.81 percent.

Mohammad Shahabuddin, secretary of Coastal Farmers' Association, urged the government to reform its present system of paddy collection.

Abdul Majid, secretary of Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labour Federation, and Samsuzzaman Khokon, chief of Gram Unnayan Sangstha, also spoke among others.

Killings of drug
FROM PAGE 3
 [against him] if his guilt can be proved through evidence," he said.

Replying to a question, he said Awami League supports the drive, but not "crossfire".

In response to BNP's criticism over the crackdown on narcotics, Quader said, "BNP is being bothered by the fact that people of the country are supporting the government on this."

He added that many people affiliated with BNP are also involved with drug trade. They will not be spared, Obaidul said.

119 VEHICLES PENALISED

In total, four mobile courts of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) yesterday penalised owners of 119 vehicles for plying those on Dhaka and Gazipur streets violating traffic rules.

Two mobile courts conducted drives on Manik Mia Avenue while one each at Jatrabari and Gazipur Chowrasta with the presence of police.

The mobile courts also realised Tk 2.38 lakh in fines, according to a press release.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader visited Manik Mia Avenue spot and distributed leaflets to raise awareness about road safety.

Among the vehicles, four were dumped while documents of seven other vehicles were seized as their drivers failed to pay the fine. Three drivers were given jail sentences for different terms for reckless driving.

The drive against such unfit vehicles and rule violators will continue to ease the traffic jam in the capital, BRTA said.

Iftar for people from all walks
FROM PAGE 3
 and sherbet. People, who come to the mosque and break their fast, sit in queues on the first floor; volunteers hand out the iftar. The iftar items are prepared by the mosque's cook.

"I came to Farmgate for some work and it took some time, so I decided to stay at the mosque to say my prayers and break my fast as well," said Usman, a resident of Rampura, on Wednesday.

Humayun, a security guard of Brac Bank's Farmgate ATM booth, said that as he is working, he comes to the mosque for iftar because it is nearby.

Rejaul, Alamin and Mohammad Selim Islam -- three day labourers doing construction work at a nearby building -- said they come to the mosque for iftar for the same reason.

"I come to the mosque before iftar every day to distribute food to over 550 people as a volunteer," said Tauhid Bin Ahmed, a resident of Tejturi Bazar.

The iftar is free, door is open to all, and people from all walks of life come here to break their fast every day, said a member of the committee.

HC to hear bail pleas Sunday
FROM PAGE 3
 Khaleda's lawyer Advocate Khandker Mahbub Hossain however cited precedents where HC granted bail to the accused even if a trial remained pending with the lower court.

Earlier on Wednesday, Advocate Khandker Mahbub prayed to the HC to grant bail to the former premier considering her old age, illness and social status.

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