

**WEATHER FORECAST**

**YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES**

<b>DHAKA</b> H 29.6 L 15.6	<b>MYMENSINGH</b> H 25.5 L 14.3	<b>CHATTOGRAM</b> H 29.5 L 18.5	<b>SYLHET</b> H 28.8 L 14.0	<b>RAJSHAHI</b> H 29.2 L 13.0	<b>RANGPUR</b> H 26.0 L 13.4	<b>KHULNA</b> H 31.5 L 15.0	<b>BARISHAL</b> H 30.5 L 16.6	<b>COX'S BAZAR</b> H 28.5 L 20.2
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Rain/thunder showers with temporary gusty wind may occur at one or two places in Rangpur, Mymensingh & Sylhet divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today. UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:57pm and rises tomorrow at 6:29am.



# Legal action against establishments storing 29 hazardous chemicals

## Says DSCC mayor

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sayeed Khokon yesterday said they will take legal action and cancel licences of establishments that will be found storing 29 most hazardous chemicals at shops and warehouses.

The DSCC mayor also said they will seal off the offending factories, warehouses and shops.

He was visiting chemical factories in Mitford area in Dhaka's Babubazar yesterday noon, according to a press release.

Khokon said they have spoken to businessmen and reached an agreement on 29 identified chemicals that are most hazardous. These chemicals can cause fire to break out, he added.

The chemicals include ethyl alcohol, 2-Ethylhexanol, Isopropyl alcohol, methyl ethyl ketone (MEK), Methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK), Thinner B and Diacetone alcohol.

"We will take legal action against traders who store these chemicals," said the mayor.

He said they will assist businesses that do not store these hazardous chemicals in getting their licences renewed.

"Don't keep excessive amount of chemicals in your shops. Rather, keep chemicals in distant warehouses," he said.

In yesterday's drive, DSCC renewed licences of establishments.

Earlier this month, DSCC declared the drive at chemical warehouses and factories in Old Dhaka.

According to Bangladesh Environment Conservation Rules 1997, no industry -- using hazardous chemicals or goods -- can operate in and around a residential area.

More than eight years after the devastating fire in Nimtoli that killed 123 people, chemical warehouses -- considered prime fire hazards -- are still being run in Old Dhaka, due to lack of proper action by the authorities concerned.

According to locals, some 1,000 chemical warehouses, factories and outlets are still being run in the over-populated residential areas, although DSCC has stopped providing new licences as well as renewal of old ones since last year.

The chemical warehouses and stores are mostly located in Mitford, Armanitola, Kayettuli, Agamasi Lane, Islambagh, Bangshal, Shaheednagar, Chawkbazar, Imanganj and Babubazar areas.

According to a survey of Fire Service and Civil Defence conducted at the end of 2017, a total of 360 factories and stores of chemicals were found in the areas under wards 24 and 35 of DSCC. However, the real number would be more than that, said locals.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



**With a child on her lap, a woman sits beside her belongings following an eviction drive of the National Housing Authority at a slum in Dhaka's Bhasantek area yesterday. During the drive, nearly 10-acre of government land was recovered by dismantling around 2,000 shanties, home to about 10,000 people. Many said they were relocating to relatives' homes, left. Amid uncertainty, a tired youth falls asleep, right.**

# Offerings from Daily Star Books

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Ekushey book fair yesterday saw an impressive turnout at Bangla Academy and Suhrawardy Udyan premises ahead of February 21, International Mother Language Day.

Among the record number of 499 publishers participating this year, Daily Star Books -- the books wing of the daily -- has published four new books at the fair this year, according to sources.

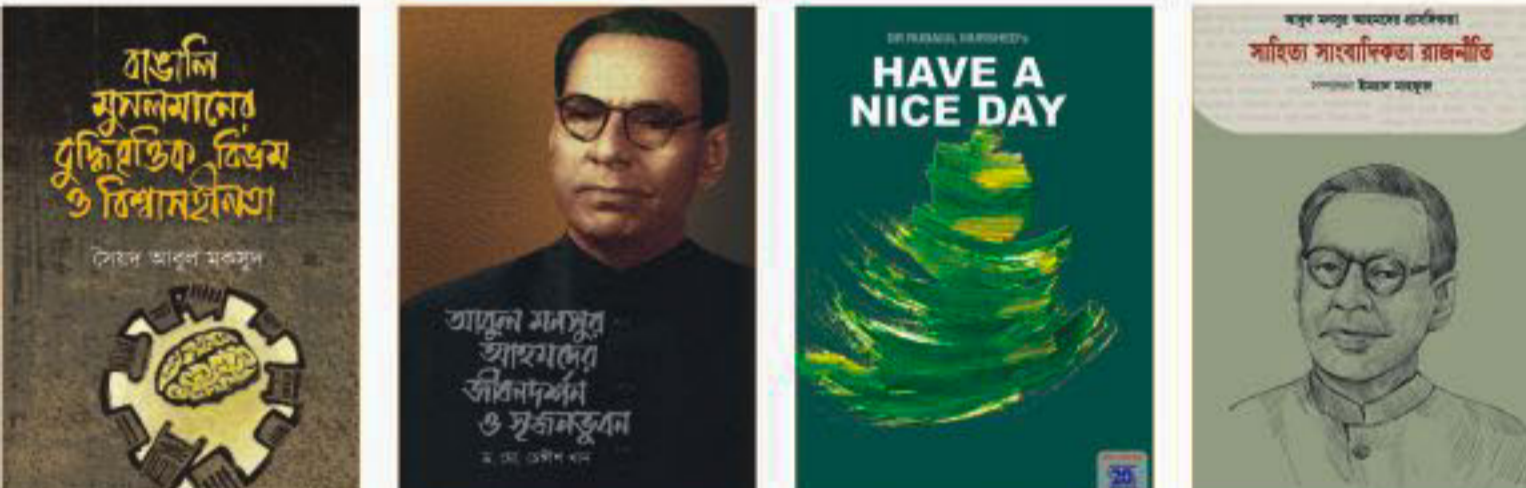
"We wish to introduce Bangla literature to English readers the world over through excellent translations and provide a solid platform for promising Bangladeshi authors writing in English," said poet Emran Mahfuz, coordinator of Daily Star Books.

A good number of visitors were seen busy browsing and buying books at Daily Star Books' stall (stall 254-55), at the eastern edge of the pond in Suhrawardy Udyan.

"I love to read history and biographies, and I think this stall has a good collection," said Mamunur Rashid, a master's student of Dhaka University's History department.

He bought a book, titled "Abul Mansur Ahmad-er Jibon Darshan o Srijon Bhubon", by Dr Md Genghis Khan.

According to the website (<http://books.thedailystar.net/>) of the publication, the book contains various aspects of writing and philosophy of the prominent Bangladeshi writer, politician, journalist and lawyer Abul Mansur Ahmad (1898-1979).



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# DUCSU POLLS Aspirants start collecting nomination forms

**DU CORRESPONDENT**

As many as 34 candidates collected nomination papers yesterday to contest the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) and hall union polls, slated for March 11. Nomination papers are available at 18 Dhaka University dormitories.

Five forms were collected by Islami Shashontantra Chhatra Andolon; independent candidates collected rest of the forms, according to hall sources.

Five students collected nomination papers from Muhsin Hall, two from Salimullah Muslim Hall, seven from Ziaur Rahman Hall, five from Shaheed Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall, five from Surja Sen Hall, two from Jashimuddin Hall, two from Shamshunnahar Hall and one each from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall, Amar Ekushey Hall, Jagannath Hall, Rokeya Hall, Bijoy Ekattor Hall and Sufia Kamal Hall.

None collected nomination papers from Kuwait Maitree Hall, Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall, Fazul Haq Hall, Sir AF Rahman Hall and Shahidullah Hall.

Jatiyatbadi Chhatra Dal, Bangladesh Chhatra League, and Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote did not collect nomination forms on the first day.

Chhatra Dal Central General Secretary Akramul Hasan said they are yet to collect nomination papers as they will wait till the last moment to realise their polling-point demand, including setting up seven centres outside dormitories.

Chhatra League did not collect

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# Business leaders seek vote for Atiqul

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Mayoral candidate of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) by-polls Atiqul Islam yesterday said he will introduce a "Digital Nagar App" so that residents can lodge complaints on issues like garbage cleaning, waterlogging and lights installation.

Responsible officials will ensure service within 48 hours, he said while addressing a group of businessmen at RAOWA Club in Dhaka.

"I will try to establish good governance... and [DNCC] officials will have to be accountable to the city dwellers in delivering services," he said.

At the event, leaders from Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association and Bangladesh Textile Mills Association sought vote in favour of Atiqul.

FBCCI President Shafiqul Islam Mohiuddin called on businessmen to go to polling centres to vote for Atiqul, if needed by skipping their prior engagements.

If elected, Atiqul will be the man who delivers, he said. Many might stay home thinking that he has no strong opposition, but it might not be the case. "Please go to polling centres to cast your vote," Mohiuddin added.

Leaders of BGMEA, BKMEA and BTMA also spoke.



**DNCC mayoral candidate Atiqul Islam along with business leaders at the event yesterday.**

PHOTO: STAR

# Seven staff members of Dhaka DC office jailed

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

Seven staff members of Dhaka deputy commissioner's office, including two additional land acquisition officers, were sent to jail by a Dhaka court yesterday in connection with seven graft cases.

The accused are: additional land acquisition officers Mojibur Rahman and Paramananda Pal; Kanungo (a land official) Chowdhury Golam Mortuja; surveyors Md Wasim Khan, Md Afzal Hossain, Mojibul Haque and Kabir Hossain.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh rejected their bail petitions and sent them to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj after the seven men surrendered before the court.

Earlier, they secured four weeks' interim bail from the High Court.

The cases were filed in November last year by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) accusing the seven men of misappropriating Tk five crore by submitting forged documents.

# Confiscate copies of 'Bangladesh Bank-er Itihas'

**HC directs govt**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The High Court yesterday directed the government to immediately confiscate all copies of a book titled "Bangladesh Bank-er Itihas" (history of Bangladesh Bank) from the market, as some of its contents contain distorted history.

The bench of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam and Justice Mohammad Ali passed the order and summoned Shuvangkar Saha, editor of the book and executive director of Bangladesh Bank, on March 12 to explain why distorting the history should not be declared illegal.

Earlier, Dr Kazi Ertaza Hasan, chairperson of Bangladesh Human Rights Development Commission, filed a writ petition challenging some of the contents of the book published by the central bank in 2017.

The petition argued that publishing pictures of then Pakistan's president Ayub Khan and East Pakistan's provincial governor Abdul Monem Khan in the book demeaned Bangladesh's independence and the

# Strict security measures on Int'l Mother Language Day

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

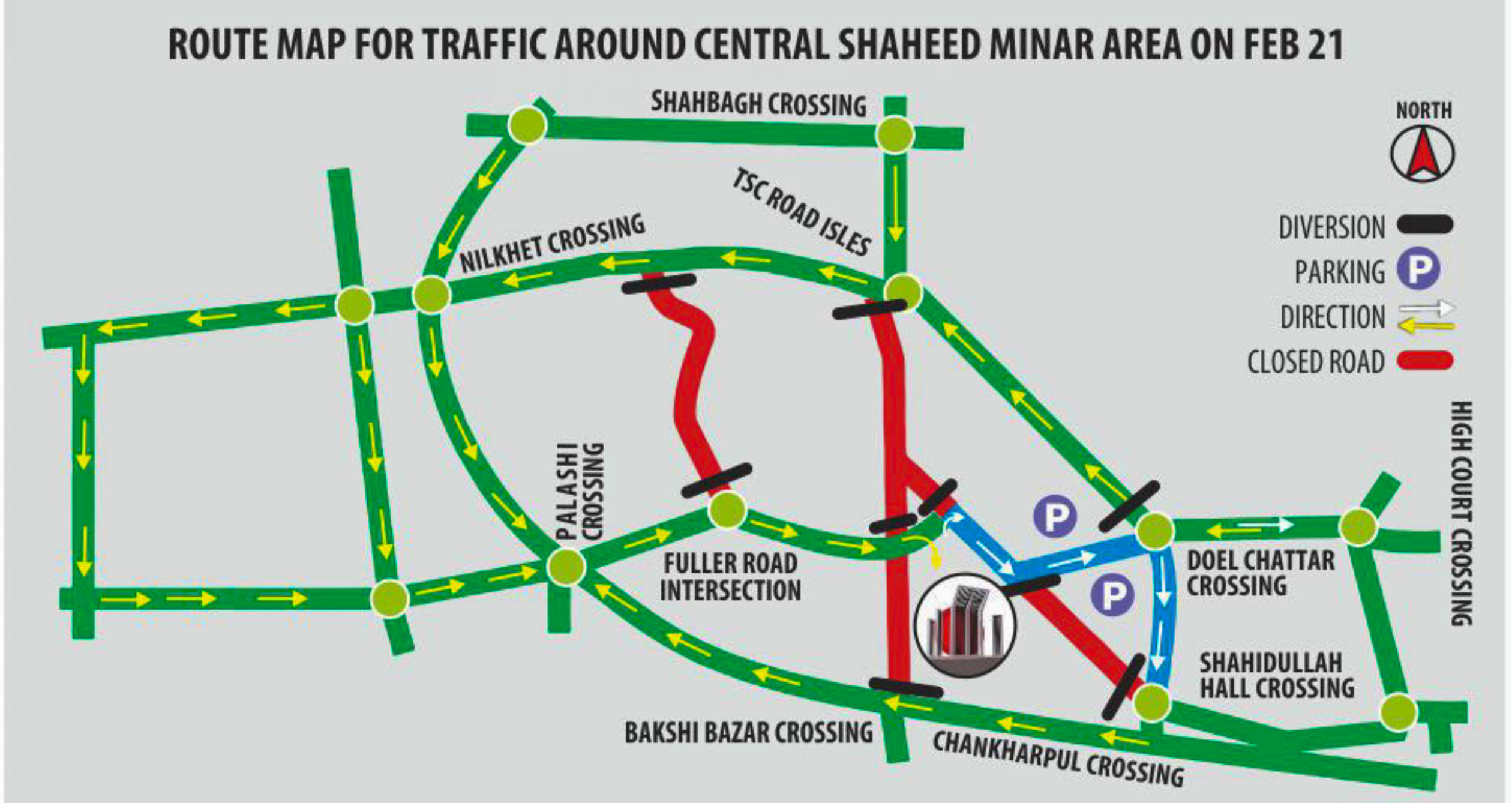
Law enforcement agencies have undertaken stringent security measures to ensure peaceful observance of International Mother Language Day in the capital and elsewhere tomorrow.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police will deploy 16,000 personnel in the capital while Rab will engage its members in Dhaka and other places on the day to ensure security.

Six thousand policemen will be deployed at the Central Shaheed Minar alone, DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia told reporters while visiting the area yesterday.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will pay their homage to martyrs of the Language Movement by placing wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at one minute past midnight.

The DMP has arranged four-tier security in the area to ensure people's safety,



# Govt launches anti-tobacco campaign

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The government yesterday launched a six-week media campaign warning people of the deadly harms of smoking.

The 30-second TV spot -- "Atmajiggasa (what damage will this cigarette or bidi do?) -- will be aired about 5,000 times on Bangladesh Television and other TV channels.

Habibur Rahman Khan, additional secretary to the health services division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, read out Health Minister Zahid Malik's written speech at the ministry's conference room.

As per the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2017, tobacco consumption in Bangladesh is declining gradually. It came down from 43.3 percent in 2009 to 35.3 percent in 2017. The relative reduction rate shows that tobacco consumption has reduced by 18.5 percent in eight years.

The minister said tobacco harms environment, public health and economy at all stages of cultivation, processing and consumption. He hoped the campaign will help bring change in people's mindset.

He said smoking is a gateway to drug abuse and said youths are being driven to drugs through it.

The campaign is organised by the National Tobacco Control Cell, Non-Communicable Disease Control Programme of the Directorate General of Health Services, and Vital Strategies, an international NGO, which funded the TV spot.

Shafiqul Islam, head of programmes at Vital Strategies, urged for yearlong awareness campaigns on mass media about harms of tobacco and laws to control its use.

It will accelerate implementation of acts and reduce tendency of smoking among people. For that, it needs to be incorporated into the government's long-term plan under the health development surcharge, he said.

# Bangladesh enjoys greater press freedom than others

**Claims information minister**

**UNB, Dhaka**

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday claimed that Bangladesh has been enjoying greater press freedom than other countries around the world.

He made these remarks after holding a meeting with visiting chairpersons of press councils of India, Turkey, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan at the secretariat.

In a country like United Kingdom, the minister said, a 108-year-old newspaper was forcefully shut down following the publishing of wrong news.

Besides, many officials, including executive director of an institution like BBC resigned following the broadcast of wrong information about a member of parliament, he added.

The minister said the Bangladesh government issued licences to 44 television channels, of which 33 are already on air.

Besides, there are also 200 newspapers and 3,000 web portals operating across the country.

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