



The eighth span (superstructure) of the under-construction Padma bridge was installed at Jajira point of Shariatpur yesterday, making about 1,200 metres of the 6.15-kilometre megastructure visible. The latest 150-metre span was placed on pillars 35 and 36.

Buried at last

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Thirty-one fetuses, recovered from a dumpster of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) in Barishal on Monday, were buried at a city graveyard after autopsies yesterday. On Monday, conservancy workers of Barishal City Corporation (BCC) recovered those while cleaning the dumpster behind the hospital building around 9pm. The incident drew widespread criticism. The hospital authorities suspended Josna Begum, in-charge of nursing staff, for negligence in duties, said Dr Md Bakir Hossen, director of SBMCH. "She knew that the fetuses were kept in jars inside a storeroom. She could have informed the hospital cleaners not to throw those away while cleaning the place," he added. He said they sent a letter to the director general of the Directorate General of Health Services with a recommendation to suspend Dr Khurshid Jahan, head of gynaecology and obstetrics department. Being the department head, she also cannot escape her responsibility, he added.

Contacted, Dr Jahan said she told the in-charge of nursing staff to clean the storeroom of the department as they were planning to use the space for students. "I joined here in July last year and did not know those fetuses were kept there in jars," she claimed. "Those were at least 20 to 25 years old and not used anymore as we use mannequins for examination and other learning purposes," she said. Regarding the letter sent to the health services, she said she would explain her situation clearly once she receives it. The director also said the fetuses were old and not being used anymore. The hospital authorities formed a three-member probe committee, which will submit a report within three working days, he added. Barishal Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mosharaf Hossain said a general diary was filed with Kotwali Police Station. One of the BCC cleaners also filed an unnatural death case with the police station. The burial was organised by Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam.

Woman confesses to killing husband

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested a woman in Bogura yesterday in connection with the killing of her husband in Chattogram on February 16. When Mosammat Asha Akter, 23, was produced before Chattogram Metropolitan Magistrate Abu Salem Md Noman, she confessed to killing her husband, Md Shamim, said police. The court sent her to jail. Police recovered the throat-slit body of Shamim, a cook by profession, from a house in the port city's Pahartali area. A case was filed with Pahartali Police Station. Additional Commissioner (administration and finance) Kusum Dewan of Chattogram Metropolitan Police yesterday said Asha and Shamim got married a year ago after being acquainted through Facebook. Shamim hid the fact that he was already married with children, she said. "After finding out about it, Asha, who hails from Bogura, planned to take revenge." During primary interrogation, Asha told police that she killed Shamim as she felt betrayed, said Sub-inspector (SI) Arbon Barua of Pahartali Police Station. Often times Shamim used to take money from Asha, which might have also compelled her to carry out the plan, the SI added. "She admitted that she killed Shamim alone and then fled to Bogura," he said, adding that police arrested her from her workplace.

Bangladesh prioritises human rights above all: planning minister

UNB, Dhaka

Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday said Bangladesh has always given top priority to equal rights of its citizens. Mannan was speaking at a national dialogue session titled "UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights", organised by National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and supported by UNDP, at a city hotel. The dialogue brought together thinkers, NGO workers and human rights activists from home and abroad to discuss the current situation of human rights preservation in different industries across the globe. "As Bangladesh is rapidly advancing towards industrialisation, the number of workers is also growing. We are all for preserving their rights regarding workplace," the minister said. "We will take steps acknowledging the reality of our country and we are still

on track in preserving rights of the labourers," he added. NHRC Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque complemented government actions to maintain rights of the working class. He also emphasised following the UN guiding principles (UNGP) in cases that are still hazardous for workers in several industries, especially the readymade garments sector. "We want the state to take the lead in this regard. We will continue to support the government in all situations," he added. Livio Sarandrea, team leader of Business and Human Rights in Asia, Asia Pacific Regional hub of UNDP, gave insights about UNGP. "Violating people's rights for profit leaves a negative impact," he said. He also lauded government's efforts, saying Bangladesh is an example of good publicity of industries despite the aftermath of Rana Plaza tragedy.

Livio also mentioned that in order to implement the UNGP in workplaces across the country, a cohesive plan is necessary in collaboration with all stakeholders. Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Commerce Tapon Kanti Ghosh said rapid industrialisation has taken off recently in the country. "After the Rana Plaza collapse, the issues and violation of labour rights have become more visible," he added. Sayeed Ahmed, additional secretary to the Ministry of Labour, concurred. He said the government has taken necessary steps, including legal and administrative reform, after Rana Plaza incident. "United Nations Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights" is a set of 31 principles to implement UN framework "Protect, Respect and Remedy", which connect the issue of human rights with transnational corporations and other business enterprises.

Combined military exercise of the 3 forces tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-day combined military exercise of Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force will begin near Kutubdia, Chattogram tomorrow, said an Inter Service Public Relations press release. During the exercise, locals of Fateh Para, Kalam Para, Bangakata, Akbar Ali Para, Chander Para and Char Dhurang areas have been urged to avoid the area and take precaution while roaming around, said the release issued yesterday. Water vessels near Kutubdia have also been asked to take similar precaution, it added. Chiefs and other high officials of the three forces along with the principal staff officer of the Armed Forces Division will observe the final exercise. It will focus on the pragmatic aspect of the forces' combined war capability, communication, and strategic planning. The exercise will be held under supervision of the Armed Forces Division, the release said.

Calls for Jucusu polls remain unanswered

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Demands for the election to Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucusu) have not yet come to fruition as university authorities have not taken any visible initiative to hold the polls, taking no heed of the student organisations' demand. While Jucusu election is scheduled to be held on March 11, JU authorities are trying to nullify the demands of student organisations without any valid reasons, alleged student leaders. JU Vice-chancellor (VC) Prof Farzana Islam made a commitment to hold Jucusu polls after last year's registered graduate election, which was held after 18 years. Jucusu election has been held only nine times since the university's inception in 1971 and the platform has been inactive for almost 27 years. The last election was held in 1992. Left-leaning student bodies such as Chhatra Union, Chhatra Front and Jahangirnagar Sangskritik Jote have been protesting for the last few days on the campus, demanding that Jucusu polls be held immediately. JU Chhatra Union President Nazir Amin Chowdhury said, "Delaying the process just shows the authorities' negligence and lack of sincerity. We have already issued an ultimatum to the administration." "We have also collected around hundred teachers' comments on whether or not they want Jucusu election during Teachers' Association election on January 31. The majority said that they are in favour of holding the polls," he added. JU Chhatra Front general secretary (GS) Mohammad Dider alleged, "The authorities do not want Jucusu to operate. They fear that they would not be able to impose their whimsical decisions on students in the presence of an elected student body." Ashikur Rahman, president of JU Sangskritik Jote, echoed the same demand. Abdur Rahim Saikat, GS of JU unit Chhatra Dal, said they will welcome the initiative if it ensures the co-existence of all parties on campus. Jucusu polls can never be held if students' rights are not assured, he added. SM Abu Sufian Chanchal, GS of JU unit Bangladesh Chhatra League, said, "For the sake of a healthy political environment, the university authorities should hold the election immediately." Jucusu worked as a platform that bridged the gap between students and the authorities. "Due to the absence of Jucusu representatives

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Lalmonirhat road crash death toll rises to 5

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The death toll in Lalmonirhat road crash rose to five after two more people succumbed to injuries on their way to a hospital last night. The deceased are Akkel Ali, 55, his grandson Ashik Islam, 18; Mahbubul Haque, 45, Shahana Begum and Shuruj Ali. Shahana and Shuruj died on their way to Kurigram Sadar Hospital. The accident occurred around 9:30pm in Borobari Khedabag area on Rangpur-Kurigram highway when a Dhaka-bound bus rammed a three-wheeler approaching from the opposite direction, killing three passengers of the three-wheeler on the spot. Quoting witnesses and the injured, Mahfuz Alam, officer-in-charge of Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station, said the bus driver's reckless driving led to the accident. Police seized the bus but its driver and other staffers fled, he said.

ISD observes Int'l Mother Language Day

Six hundred students and staff of the International School Dhaka (ISD) on Tuesday observed the International Mother Language Day and commemorated the Language Movement. A diverse cultural programme was arranged at the auditorium to pay tributes to 27 languages -- mother tongue of students of different nationalities attending the school. Thomas Van Der Wielen, principal of ISD Primary School, said the programme is an effort to uphold the value of mother tongue among the young students.



Slogans across the walls of JU express the students' dissatisfaction with the delay in holding Jucusu and hall union polls.



PHOTO: STAR

40 brick kilns fined for damaging environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Department of Environment (DoE) in Chattogram yesterday fined 40 brick kilns, a factory and an individual TK 24,80,000 -- for polluting the environment, cutting hills and operating brick kilns without DoE clearance. Mukhtadir Hasan, assistant director of Chattogram DoE, said 38 brick kilns from Fatikchhari upazila in Chattogram were fined Tk 20,10,000 -- while two others from Chandpur and Cumilla districts were fined Tk 1,50,000 in total. DoE also fined one Sujan Barua Tk 2,00,000 for cutting hill illegally in Cox's Bazar, he said. A factory of Navana Batteries in Sitakunda upazila was fined Tk 1,20,000 for polluting the environment by releasing toxic waste.

FRIENDS OF LIBERATION WAR Paul and Ellen Connett honoured by Narayanganj City Corporation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Narayanganj City Corporation yesterday accorded reception to a British couple -- Paul Connett and Ellen Connett -- for their contribution during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. NCC Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy, Liberation War Museum trustee Mofidul Haque, former Justice Shamsuddin Chowdhury and cultural activist Rafiur Rabbi, among others, were present at the reception held at the NCC conference room. Speaking on the occasion, freedom fighter Abdul Majid introduced Paul, Ellen and said the couple along with some others came to Bangladesh with medical and relief material for freedom fighters. Ellen was arrested by the Pakistan army and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment by a court in Jashore. After a few days in jail, Ellen realised that she was pregnant. On December 10, 1971, Jashore was freed from Pakistani occupational force and she was released. After moving to New York, USA, she gave birth to a baby boy. The Connett couple named the boy Peter William Mujib. In 2013, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina conferred 60 foreign friends, including the Connett couple, with the "Friends of Liberation War Honour". Speaking at the event, Ivy said youths of the country should take inspiration from the Connett couple to fight injustice and repression.



Hawks sit on brick walls in Sylhet's South Surma area, where their habitat has been destroyed due to rapid urbanisation. Just a few years ago, the area was adorned with large trees. The photo was taken from Pairoirchawk recently.