

## 42 tonnes of polythene seized

BSS, Rangpur

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Thursday seized 42 tonnes of banned polythene bags worth Tk 1 crore in Rangpur city and arrested a man in this connection.

The arrestee, Obaidul Islam, was held in Shalbon Mistripara area. He was produced before a mobile court that sentenced him to three months' jail and fined him Tk 50,000, said a press release yesterday.

Tipped off, a team of Rab-13 conducted the raid at three warehouses owned by Obaidul and seized a huge quantity of banned polythene bags kept in several sacks.

Similar drives are on in different areas of Rangpur to stop the illegal trade, the release added.



Ganosamhati Andolon forms a human chain in front of Narayanganj Press Club yesterday, demanding justice for Chawkbazar fire victims after proper investigation and compensation.

PHOTO: STAR

## Unite for inclusive dev in Saarc region

Speakers say

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for united efforts to ensure inclusive development in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) countries.

They were speaking at a seminar on "the strategies of lending for priority finance in the Saarc region" and 1st draft presentation of the collaborative study on "Reducing the Cost of Cross-border Remittances among Saarc countries" at a hotel in the city.

Governor of Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan Dashed Penjore was present at the inaugural session as chief guest while Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Fazle Kabir was the special guest.

Executive Director of Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM) Dr Mustafa K Mujeri presented the keynote speech while BB Deputy Governor SM Moniruzzaman was in the chair. BB Executive Director Dr M Aktaruzzaman delivered the welcome address.

Dashed Penjore said Bhutan is one of the best friends of Bangladesh and the ongoing bilateral trade relation of the two countries is very healthy.

Fazle Kabir said the central bank is working to ensure inclusive development across the country and urged South Asian nations to be united for sustainable development in the region.

Senior officials of the central banks in the South Asian countries also attended the seminar.

## Global leaders

FROM PAGE 3

Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud sent separate messages to President Abdul Hamid to offer condolences on the deaths, according to a Saudi press agency.

UN Resident Coordinator in Dhaka Mia Seppo tweeted on Thursday night, "Our condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the tragic fire in Old Dhaka Wednesday. The UN in Bangladesh wishes the injured a quick recovery and recognizes the effort of the local authorities is responding to the blaze."

Ambassadors of Germany, Sweden, Norway and other countries in Dhaka, in separate tweets and messages, expressed their profound shock at the deaths.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan government also expressed deep condolences. "We express deep sympathy with the bereaved families of the victims and wish speedy recovery of those injured in the incident," said a press release of Pakistan Foreign Ministry on Thursday.

## Selection round

FROM PAGE 3

Munir also said that the competition was held in all 64 districts of the country for the first time this year.

At the regional competition in Dhaka, a total of 1,723 students from schools and colleges in six districts -- Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Munshiganj, Manikganj and Narsingdi -- took part, and 257 of them passed through the selection round. The event was held at Ideal School and College in the capital's Banasree from 9am to 3:30pm.

In Sylhet, the competition was held at Sylhet Government Women's College and about 700 students from Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar took part. Of them, 62 were selected for the final round, the organisers told The Daily Star.

In Barishal, 474 students from Barishal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola and Jhalakathi participated in the competition held at Shaheed Abdur Rab Serniabat Govt Secondary School. A total of 69 participants were selected, organisers said.

## German parliamentary

FROM PAGE 3

Relations with the States of South Asia will arrive in Dhaka on Monday for a five-day visit.

Tobias Pfleger, chairman of the group, will lead the three-member delegation. Two other lawmakers of German federal parliament are Gabriele Katzmarek and Bettina Stark-Watzinger.

They will visit Cox's Bazar and meet government officials and representatives of the Rohingya in order to get a comprehensive picture of the challenges in dealing with the refugee crisis, according to the German Embassy in Dhaka.

## Bangladesh shouldered a great responsibility

FROM PAGE 3

August 15, 1975, Liberation War heroes and those who died in the fire incident in Chawkbazar on Wednesday night.

Hasina expressed profound shock at the loss of lives in the fire. She prayed for the eternal peace of the departed souls and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

In her speech, the prime minister said country's development is visible as the AL government carried out massive works over the last 10 years. Bangladesh is now free from hunger. But the country needs to be freed from poverty further, she said.

Bangladesh would celebrate birth centenary of Bangabandhu in 2020 and golden jubilee of independence in 2021 as a poverty-free nation, she said.

In 2041, Bangladesh would emerge as a developed and prosperous nation in South Asia and proceed with a 100-year

delta plan to ensure sustainable development and prosperous future of the people.

Focusing on history of the Language Movement, Hasina said the movement for mother language began much earlier.

Sheikh Hasina also said it was Awami League which included the provision of making Bangla a state language after its win in the general election in 1956.

The AL government had declared February 21 as the Language Martyrs' Day, she added.

She said Bangladesh, as the hub of Language Movement, has shouldered a great responsibility to protect languages now on the verge of extinction.

International Mother Language Institute has been constituted for research and to give support to protect languages of different ethnicities and small groups, she said.

Hasina, the AL president, presided over the meeting while its general secretary Obaidul Quader gave welcome address.

Awami League advisory council members Amir Hossain Amu and Tofail Ahmed, presidium members Matia Chowdhury and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, noted litterateur Imdadul Haque Milon and AL joint secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak addressed the meeting, among others.

AL publicity secretary Dr Hasan Mahmud and deputy publicity secretary Aminul Islam conducted the meeting.

Awami League central committee member Akhteruzzaman, president and general secretary of Dhaka north chapter AL AKM Rahmatullah and Sadek Khan respectively, and AL central committee member Merina Khan Kabita also spoke on the occasion.

## Good times for local

FROM PAGE 3

them," said Mehedi Haque.

The publication rates their comic books using the letters "T", "M" and "E". Books rated "T" are for teenage audience while "M" for matured and "E" for everyone.

Although readers of comic books are mainly teenagers, Dhaka Comics is planning to bring out more books for adult readers in the form of graphic novels. In 2018, the house published "Pancha Romancha", a graphic novel by Qazi Anwar Hossain.

A total of 12 writers and artists work at the comic book house to produce characters. Their popular characters include Durjoy, Rishad, Rohan Rohan and CK Zaki.

Regarding challenges in the comic book industry of the country, Mehedi said there is no low-cost proper distribution channel for comic books, and paper used for the medium is very expensive.

"Our characters are ready but we need proper distribution channel and competitive pricing for paper in order to provide the readers with comic books at reasonable prices," said the cartoonist.

Aside from the Dhaka Comics, there are stalls of Unmad and Panjeree Publications Ltd where local comic books are on display.

Panjeree is offering the popular series "Basic Ali" by Sharier Khan. The Unmad stall is featuring their magazines. A graphic novel series on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, titled "Mujib", from Centre for Research and Information Publication is also available at the fair.



Barishal University teachers and students bring out a colourful procession in front of the campus yesterday, marking "Barishal University Day".

PHOTO: STAR

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