



"Law enforcers have taken a position against the people."
BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR

Strikers paralyse waterways

People suffer, businesses hurt; workers postpone strike for 45 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

River communications across the country came to a near halt yesterday as water transport workers went on a nationwide strike that caused huge public sufferings and hampered business activities.

Operation of all types of passenger and cargo vessels remained suspended from 12:01am yesterday. Loading and unloading of goods at two seaports and major river ports were severely disrupted, dealing a blow to traders.

People of southern districts suffered immensely as only a few launches operated from the capital's Sadarghat and other major terminals in Narayanganj, Chandpur, Barisal and Khulna.

Bangladesh Water Transport Workers Federation (BWTWF) called the strike to press home their 11-point demand, including full implementation of the pay scale of 2016, stopping extortion and robbery in river transport, and providing appointment letters, identity cards and service books to transport workers.

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Barishal terminal wears a deserted look as launches remain off the routes after water transport workers enforced a countrywide work stoppage yesterday to press for their 11-point demand. Inset, passengers wait in vain for launches at Sadarghat terminal in the capital.

PHOTO:
TITU DAS/
PALASH KHAN



Shab-e-Barat on April 21

STAR REPORT

Shab-e-Barat, the holy night of fortune and forgiveness, will be observed on the night of April 21 as the moon of Sha'ban month was not sighted in Bangladesh sky on April 6.

The decision was taken at a meeting of National Moon Sighting Committee held at the Islamic Foundation's Baitul Mukarram office this afternoon, with State Minister for Religious Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in the chair, said a press release.

The members of 11-member sub-committee, formed with many Islamic scholars on April 13 to resolve the confusion over the date of the holy night, were also present at the meeting, the press release said.

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Clear risky hills

Chattogram admin orders private, public hill owners; given a month; families demand rehabilitation

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, *Chattogram*

Owners of 17 hills prone to landslides were given a month-long deadline, ending on May 15, to remove 835 families and empty the hills.

The hill management committee gave the ultimatum at a meeting yesterday, apparently in a move to prevent casualties during the upcoming monsoon.

The committee, led by Chattogram divisional commissioner, in the meeting held at the Circuit House, decided that if the families were not removed from the hills within the deadline, utility services including power, gas and water to those homes would be disconnected.

According to a survey by the Chattogram district administration, more than 5,000 people are living in the hills, under the threat of landslides.

Among the 17 hills under danger, 10 of them belong to private business owners and have 531 families living in them, while 304 families live on the other seven that are owned by various government organisations, the survey found.

The government organisations that own the seven hills include Chattogram City Corporation, National Housing Authority, Bangladesh Railways, Chattogram Wasa, Forest Department as well as the Roads and Highway Department.

An announcement for relocation will also soon be made through loudspeakers for the locals and residents of the hills, the meeting decided.

Besides that, leaflets would also be distributed, circulars would be

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No surprise in Tigers' WC squad

SPORTS REPORTER

It is a sweet headache at times when you cannot pick all the players who are performing, and now is such a time for the Bangladesh national selectors. Minhajul Abedin and Habibul Bashar named a 15-man squad for the 2019 World Cup, but unfortunately quite a few performers in the ongoing Dhaka Premier League had to miss out.

It was not like any other day at the home of cricket in Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, where the atmosphere was pretty tense as a huge number of journalists gathered to attend Bangladesh's ICC World Cup squad announcement, scheduled for 12:30pm yesterday.

Although apart from

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Timely admin steps could've saved Nusrat

Finds NHRC probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The brutal killing of Nusrat Jahan Rafi could have been avoided had the local administration and the madrasa governing body taken necessary steps in time, National Human Rights Commission said in its probe report yesterday.

Revealing the negligence of different authorities concerned, the report also recommended bringing all those responsible to justice within the shortest possible time.

NHRC Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque presented the report at a press conference at the commission's headquarters in the capital.

"Nusrat, in a letter, pledged to fight until death to ensure punishment of Siraj Ud Dowlah. If all the culprits get due punishment, Nusrat's soul will rest in peace," he said.

AL-Mahmud Faizul Kabir, director (complaints and inquiry) of NHRC, and M Rabiu Islam, its deputy director, prepared the report upon interviewing Nusrat's family members, friends, madrasa authorities, police administration and others during a spot visit on April 12.

The probe found that the managing committee of

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3 girls 'raped' in 3 districts

STAR REPORT

Three girls have allegedly been raped in Cumilla, Moulvibazar and Rajshahi since Monday.

In Cumilla's Burchang upazila, a fourth-grader was allegedly raped by a truck driver on Monday afternoon.

The accused Shah Alam, 40, lured the girl with money and took her to a graveyard in the upazila's Indraboti area and raped her, said police.

Hearing her scream, locals rescued the girl and held the accused. Later, Shah Alam was handed over to police.

Anwarul Haque, officer-in-charge of Burchang Police Station, said the girl was sent to Cumilla Medical College for medical tests.

The victim's father filed a case with the police station. The accused was sent to jail after placing him before a court.

Meanwhile in Moulvibazar, a 17-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by six youths in the district's Kulaura upazila on Monday night.

According to the victim, Sukkur Ali, 30, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, asked her to visit a Pahela Baishakh on Kulaura

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CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIP

