



Long rows of buses parked at the Kadamtali Bus Terminal in Sylhet, as transport workers observe a dawn-to-dusk transport strike. Passengers were seen waiting helplessly at the terminal to find a ride to their destination, *inset*, as the demonstrators blocked other vehicles plying the streets.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

TRANSPORT WORKERS' DAYLONG STRIKE

A miserable day for commuters in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

People of Sylhet passed a day of grave suffering due to the division-wide transportation strike yesterday. Sylhet divisional unit of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation (BRTWF) observed the strike for twelve hours, starting at 6am. During the strike hours, no public transport left their terminals in all four districts of the division causing serious suffering for commuters. While visiting Humayun Rashid Chattar, Kadamtali, Tilagarh and several other areas in Sylhet city, this correspondent found that transport workers were also blocking the way of private vehicles. As Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination was scheduled for humanities and commerce examinees, they faced serious trouble as transport workers blocked the way of vehicles carrying examinees. Antara Fariha, an examinee from Madan Mohon College in Sylhet, said, "My exam centre is at MC College in Tilagarh. Because

of the transport strike, I started from home three hours before the exam and finding transport was a huge trouble." Meanwhile, people gathered at Sylhet Railway Station from early morning to board the outbound trains. All trains left the station overcrowded. Selim Ahmed Folik, president of Sylhet divisional unit BRTWF, said, "The transport workers peacefully observed the strike and if the authority does not meet our demands, more strikes will be called after Eid-ul-Fitr." Transport workers called the strike with a seven-point demand including lifting murder charge of a bus driver and helper who allegedly pushed off a university student and ran him over at Dhaka-Sylhet highway's Sherpur area in Moulvibazar on March 23. The bus driver Jewel Ahmed and his helper Masuk Ali were detained in connection with the murder. Later, they confessed the crime before a court. The transport workers, however, SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

BATTILING MALNUTRITION

FAO joins hands with Bangladeshi lawmakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) yesterday formed an alliance with the members of parliament (MPs) to work together in combating malnutrition and climate change. As part of the coalition, the UN organisation will exchange its knowledge and experience -- regarding sustainable food and agricultural production -- with the lawmakers to help the country achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, said a press release. The announcement was made at a workshop titled "Food and nutrition security" jointly organised by FAO and Jatiya Sangsad at a hotel in Dhaka. In recent years, FAO has started to engage with parliamentarians and NGOs of different countries to double the efforts in fighting hunger and malnutrition. As part of that, FAO has already forged such alliances with the parliamentarians of Japan and the Philippines. Bangladesh is the first country in South Asia with which it has formed the coalition, said the release. More than half of the world's malnourished children live in Asia and SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Death sentence to 561 trees

Rajshahi jail authorities clearing up space for training academy

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Prison authorities in Rajshahi have been felling at least 561 trees, many of those a hundred years old, at a planted forest on its land behind Rajshahi Central Jail at Sipaipara area in the city, reportedly to build a training facility. Ornithologists and environmentalists say felling of the huge number of trees would leave an indelible impact on the environment and varieties of birds including parakeets, storks and herons that nested on the trees over the years. Officials of Rajshahi Central Jail have ordered a contractor to chop down the trees, mostly Koroi, Mahogany, Debdaru and tamarind, as soon as possible to make room for constructing the country's first prisons training academy. Over 50 labourers have already sawed down most of the trees, this correspondent saw while visiting the spot yesterday. Labourers said they started the work five days ago. Contractor Md Sumon said he purchased the 561 trees, put on auction by the jail authorities, for Tk 19 lakh. "Felling of such a huge number of old trees will certainly leave an impact on the environment," said Md Ashrafuzzaman, divisional director of Department of Environment (DoE), when contacted. He said there is no law making it mandatory for any government agency to take approval from DoE regarding felling of trees on their own land, adding that a district committee where DoE is a member makes the approval. He, however, said since it is a matter of a large number of trees,

permission should have been sought from DoE before going forward with it.

number of ministries were pursuing it. "We allowed it considering the development initiative."

is not believable that they didn't find any place other than the forest for establishing the academy. They



A worker chops down a branch of a tree at the planted forest.

PHOTO: STAR

Prison authorities have decided to establish the country's first ever prisons training academy in Rajshahi, said Altab Hossain, deputy inspector general of prisons in Rajshahi division. As there was a planted forest on the land, jail authorities took opinion from the forest department and the concerned district committee for protecting the environment, he said. When contacted, divisional forest officer Ahmed Niamur Rahman said they gave the permission as a

"It will be an irreparable loss. A thousand newly planted trees cannot compensate for felling of just one hundred-year-old tree," ornithologist Onu Tareq said. He said the site was one of the few places of the city where people loved spending their leisure. Three kinds of parakeets -- red-breasted, rose-ringed, and plum-headed, as well as Asian open-bill stork and black-crowned night heron nested in the trees. He also said the explanation of prison authorities is a lame one. "It

are doing it for money from the sale of the trees." A number of environmental activists, under the banner of "Citizens of Rajshahi", protested the decision in a human chain at the site yesterday afternoon. Meanwhile in a late development, Jailer Habibur Rahman of Rajshahi Central Jail told The Daily Star around 9pm last night that the contractor has been asked to temporarily halt tree-felling, until authorities discuss the matter with protesters.

President calls on doctors to reduce fees

UNB, Dhaka

President Abdul Hamid yesterday urged specialist physicians to serve patients more sincerely and take an initiative to reduce their consultation fees as these are beyond common people's capacity. "You [doctors] are engaged in a profession which is highly respectable as well as important," said the president. He was addressing as chief guest the Seventh Biennial Conference of Bangladesh Community Ophthalmology Society at Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden hotel. Mentioning that new technologies are emerging in medical science every day, Abdul Hamid urged physicians to be acquainted with the latest technologies and treatment techniques. He also said physicians should remain careful so that patients are not deprived of necessary services in the name of unnecessary medical tests. "The contributions of general people towards your position are not negligible as your expense of medical education came from people's tax money. So, I think it's your moral responsibility and duty to provide medical care to them," said the president. Describing medical service as people's basic need, he said, "The government is making every effort to meet this demand. All necessary steps have been taken to ensure healthcare services at the grassroots level by creating physical infrastructure, appointing doctors and nurses and collecting advanced equipment." "But, it's a matter of regret that doctors and nurses start lobbying for transfer if they're posted outside district headquarters, even outside Dhaka or divisional cities which deprives people at upazila and union levels of getting the desired medical services," said Abdul Hamid. Stressing the need for creating awareness about eye diseases, the president said if awareness could be raised among people about primary eye care, it will be possible to reduce many eye diseases. Health Minister Zahid Maleque and former president of All India Ophthalmological Society Dr Debashish Bhattacharya spoke at the programme while President of Ophthalmological Society of Bangladesh (OSB) Dr Prof Md Sharfuddin Ahmed presided over the event. Prominent ophthalmologist Prof Dr Deen Mohammad Noorul Huq delivered welcome speech and OSB Secretary General Dr Inmur Rahman Choudhury was also present. Six physicians were given awards for their outstanding services while seven were awarded with 'Special Honourary Award' at the programme.

Media Forum gets joint stock companies' registration

CITY DESK

Bangladesh Media Forum (BMF) -- a platform for advertisers, agencies and media channels -- has recently been registered by Joint Stock Companies and Firms, said a press release. "The forum will continue to operate its activities as an independent, non-profit and progressive media research and implementation platform. I convey my gratitude to all the advisors, founding members, supporters and well-wishers for their cooperation, and I expect to work towards a great future for the media industry in Bangladesh," said BMF President Md Morshed Alam. The founding committee members include Md Quamrul Hassan, business director of ACI Limited; Syed Ashik Rahman, chief operating officer of RTV, and Aman Ashraf Faiz, managing director of Gazi TV. The members occupy different positions at BMF. BMF took various steps to promote appropriate practices in commercial media management, educate and enhance capabilities of media industry professionals.

COCAINE HAUL CASE

Charges framed against 10 persons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday framed charges against 10 persons in connection with the sensational cocaine haul case filed with Bandar Police Station in 2015. Judge Akbar Hossain Mridha framed the charges against them including Nur Mohammed, chairman of Khan Jahan Ali Group, and fixed May 19 for recording witnesses testimonies, said Public Prosecutor Fakhruddin Chowdhury. Rab pressed charges on April 3, 2017, implicating Nur, his brother Mostaq and eight others in the case filed in this connection. On June 6, 2015, Directorate of Customs Intelligence and Investigation (CIID) sealed a container carrying 2,140 kilogrammes of liquid cocaine in 107 drums -- that arrived in Chittagong Port via Singapore on May 13, 2015, from Montevideo, Uruguay after being imported from Bolivia. The container was imported by Khan Jahan Ali Limited, said investigators. Later on June 27, 2015, following a laboratory test in Dhaka, existence of cocaine was found in a drum carrying number 96 out of a total 107. The following day, Sub-Inspector Osman Gani of Bandar Police Station lodged the case and detectives of Chittagong Metropolitan Police started investigation. Nur Mohammed was arrested on January 15, 2016. Subsequently, Nur secured ad-interim bail from the High Court, which was later stayed by the Supreme Court on June 20, 2016, following a government petition against the HC order. On October 8, 2017, following a petition from Khan Jahan Ali Group, the HC stayed the trial of the case. However, following another petition by the government challenging the High Court order, the apex court on October 31, 2017 ordered the lower courts to resume the trial process and also asked Nur Mohammad to surrender before the lower court in three weeks. Investigators have also found link of Bangladeshi-origin UK citizens Bakul and Fazlur in the drug smuggling.



Prayers for Mahfuz Ullah at Jatiya Press Club tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A doa mahfil for senior journalist Mahfuz Ullah will be held at the capital's Jatiya Press Club after the Asr prayers tomorrow. The family members of Mahfuz requested his colleagues, friends and well-wishers to take part in the programme to pray for the salvation and eternal peace of the departed soul, said a press release. Mahfuz, also an author of more than 50 books, breathed his last at a hospital in Thailand on April 27 after suffering from various heart and kidney diseases for a long time. He was 69. The author is familiar with editing the biographies of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman and its Chairperson Khaleida Zia, and books on the 1969 Mass Uprising, insurgency in India's Assam, and post-independent Bangladesh.

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e-Tender Notice
No: 01/2018-19

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of under mentioned works.

SL.No.	Tender ID No	Procurement Items	Tender Method	Publishing Date & Time	Last Selling date & time	Closing & Opening Date and Time
01	304283	Supply and installation of Desktop Computer	OTM	25-04-2019, 14:00	12-05-2019, 20:46	14-05-2019, 16:00 & 16.30
02	311972	Supply and Installation of Laptop, Scanner, Laser Printers and Duplex Laser Printers.	OTM	28-04-2019, 14:00	12-05-2019, 11:40	14-05-2019, 11.40 & 12.00
03	312855	Supply and Installations of Wi-Fi Adapter, Router, OLT ,Onu, Access Switch ,AP, UPS, Online, UPS, Power Meter and Networking Tools.	OTM	28-04-2019, 21:00	12-05-2019, 21.00	14-05-2019,14.00 & 15.00

This is an online Tender. where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk. (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

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