



The Daily Star

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

SECOND EDITION



REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XXIX No. 274

KARTIK 8, 1426 BS

SAFAR 24, 1441 HJRI

20 PAGES PLUS SHOUT PRICE: Tk 12.00

Players call off strike

BCB agrees to nine of the cricketers' original 11 demands

SAKEB SUBHAN and MAZHAR UDDIN

The impasse between the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and top cricketers was resolved when the BCB agreed to nine of the original 11 demands during a meeting between the two parties in Mirpur late last night.

With the conflict resolved, the national cricketers will start the training camp for next month's tour of India from tomorrow. The fitness and conditioning portion of the camp for the tour was supposed to be held yesterday and today but the cricketers, still on strike, did not show up to the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. There will also be a delay to the third round of the National Cricket League (NCL), which was supposed to get underway today at four venues across the country but will instead start from Saturday.

The two demands not met were the first one asking for the resignation of the Cricketers Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) committee and the demand to allow players more than two No-Objection-Certificates (NOCs) to play in foreign leagues. The first was denied because according to BCB President Nazmul Hassan "there is nothing the BCB can do about it" as CWAB is supposed to be separate from the board. He said the NOCs would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The players, during a press conference earlier yesterday evening when a spokesperson spoke on their behalf, had added two more demands to the list. They were a revenue sharing model through which the cricketers would get a negotiated amount of the board's revenue and that similar provisions to the 13-point demand be made for women cricketers where "commercially and practically feasible" with the aim of "attaining gender parity as early as possible".

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No fuel for unfit vehicles

HC orders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned to take necessary steps so that vehicles without valid fitness documents cannot get fuel from any filling station.

It also ordered the law enforcers to strictly monitor filling stations across the country so that they do not supply fuel to those vehicles.

The HC bench of Justice MD Nazrul Islam Talukdar and Justice KM Hafizul Alam also fixed January 10 for passing further order on the issue.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star that the HC directives would be executed as soon as the authority concerned receives a copy of the order.

He hoped that the copy of the order would reach today.

Earlier in the day, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) submitted a report before the HC, saying that only

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Another AL front chief removed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Swachhasebak League President Molla Abu Kawser has been relieved of the post, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

The message was conveyed to Kawser, he said while talking to reporters after an extended meeting of Dhaka North City AL in Dhanmondi.

Swachhasebak League is the volunteers' wing of the AL.

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US ON BANGLADESH

Healthier, wealthier but freedoms shrink

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US has lauded Bangladesh for its socio-economic development and sheltering nearly one million Rohingyas, but remains concerned about the country's state of political freedoms and trajectory of democracy.

"As a secular, developing country that prides itself on tolerance and diversity with a female head of state, Bangladesh serves as an example for many Muslim-majority countries around the world," said Alice G Wells, US acting assistant secretary at the Bureau of South and Central Asia.

She made the statement at a hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific on Tuesday. Independent experts also took part in the hearing on human rights in South Asia chaired by Congressman Brad Sherman.

Wells said with more than seven percent GDP growth over the last decade, Bangladesh has grown healthier and wealthier, and is on course to graduate from the Least Developing Country status by 2024.

"However, we remain concerned about political freedoms in Bangladesh and the direction of the country's democratic trajectory," she said.

The US, along with several of its likeminded partners, found that the

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Ex-students still occupying seats at DU dorms

Allege house tutors at view-exchange meeting with VC

DHRUBO NAHIYAN CHOWDHURY

A huge number of students, who had graduated from Dhaka University years ago, are still staying at its Ziaur Rahman Hall illegally, a house tutor of the dormitory said at a meeting with top university officials yesterday.

All first-year students, who have been allotted seats at the hall, can be provided with accommodation if these illegal occupants are driven out, a meeting source quoted the tutor, ATM Shamsuzzoha, as saying.

"Even students of 2008-09 academic session are staying at the dormitory.

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39 bodies found in Essex lorry

Say UK police; driver arrested; major murder probe launched

AFP, Grays

Britain launched a major murder investigation after 39 bodies were found in a truck from Bulgaria yesterday, as police tried to establish where the victims were originally from.

All victims were pronounced dead at the scene in an industrial park in Grays, east of London, triggering revulsion among politicians and once again putting the spotlight on the shadowy people trafficking business.

The local Essex Police force, who are working with immigration officials, said their priority was to try to identify the victims, thought at this stage to be 38 adults and one teenager.

The truck driver, a 25-year-old man from Northern Ireland, has been arrested on suspicion of murder.

"This is a tragic incident where a large number of people have lost their lives," Essex Police chief superintendent Andrew Mariner said in a statement.

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Bhola tense as ultimatum ends today

Security beefed up; Oikya parishad to resume protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The situation in Bhola town has become even more tense as the 72-hour ultimatum given by a religious platform to meet their six-point demand ends this noon.

Leaders of the platform, Sharbadaliya Muslim Oikya Parishad, said the Muslims in Bhola were aggrieved as not a single demand of theirs was met till last night.

A large number of law enforcers from Border

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SALMA BEGUM
A COURAGEOUS HEART STRONGER THAN STEEL

Salma Begum* may look like any other girl, but in her heart she is different. Through sheer force of will, she tried to stand on her own two feet after becoming a widow at an early age. During her time of need, BSRM Foundation Training Center extended a helping hand. Learning several handwork skills from the foundation, Salma has now become self-dependent. With her earnings, she has raised a brick-built house and sent her son to school. She has inspired many women to gather their courage and dream of a better future.

From Salma Begum and countless women just like her, we have learned one thing – that there is no steel stronger than their unwavering willpower. BSRM is grateful to stand beside such unstoppable women of steel.

BSRM
building a safer nation

* Her real name and image have not been used in order to protect her personal identity.

To watch Salma's story, scan the QR Code