

Stay alert about rumours

Home minister urges all
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday urged all not to be misguided by rumours and stay alert against any evil move to spread propaganda.

"All, especially the law enforcers, should stay alert about rumours so that misinformation cannot spread through social media like Facebook. We saw such incidents in Bhola, Ramu and even Nasirnagar," he said.

The home minister was speaking at a programme at Rajarbagh Police Auditorium in the capital on the occasion of the Community Policing Day. The home minister attended the event as chief guest.

Calling on the community police to remain active in this regard, Asaduzzaman said police have to face many challenges every day but their first task is to ensure that false information is not being spread.

He also said, "We have freed the country from terrorism and militancy." "We can get rid of drugs too," he said.

No one involved with drugs will be spared, he added.

As the government has introduced the community policing system to ensure better security for all, both police and people should work together to this end, the home minister further said.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shafiqul Islam chaired the event.

"Police members will have to carry out their work showing honour and respect to people. Otherwise, they will have to quit Dhaka Metropolitan Police," said the commissioner.

Additional Inspector General of Police Mainur Rahman Chowdhury attended the programme as special guest.



Oil floats on water after it got spilled into the Karnaphuli following a collision between an oil tanker and a lighter vessel early Friday. Around 10 tonnes of oil spilled into the river due to the collision. Chattogram Port Authority is conducting a cleaning operation. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

TANKER, VESSEL COLLISION ON KARNAPHULI

90pc spilled oil cleaned up: CPA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) is cleaning up spilled oil from Karnaphuli river, following a collision between an oil tanker and a lighter vessel on early Friday.

The oil tanker "Desh-1", which carried fuel for power stations, developed a leak following a collision with "City-38" at Dolphin Jetty-3 of the river, said Omar Faruque, secretary of CPA. Around 10 tonnes of oil spilled in the river due to the incident, he added.

Four CPA ships -- Bay Cleaner 1, 2 and Kandari 10, 11 -- along with two boats removed around 90 percent oil from the river till yesterday, said Omar Faruque. "We will complete the work by today," he added.

CPA detained masters of both the vessels and seized the watercrafts.

Demurrage will be realised from owners of both the ships for the damage done to the environment, said the official.

According to experts, spilled oil creates a longtime impact on the biodiversity as its degradation process is very slow.

A large portion of oil remains in the water for long and affects the biodiversity.

It has a bad impact not only on phytoplankton and zooplankton but also on birds hovering over.

Oil also blocks the sunlight from entering into the water, they added.

It also reduces dissolved oxygen in water and ultimately fisheries get affected.

4 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed in road accidents across three districts in the last two days, our correspondents and agencies report.

A man was killed after a battery-run auto-rickshaw hit him while he was crossing a road at Bandar upazila of Narayanganj. He died while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Nazrul Islam, 50, from Sonakanda area of the upazila. He used to drive an auto-rickshaw, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station.

According to the family, the officer said, Nazrul Islam was crossing the road in Dori Sonakandaz area on Friday afternoon.

At that time a battery-run auto-rickshaw hit him from behind, seriously injuring him.

Later, locals rescued Nazrul Islam and admitted him to the Upazila Health Complex. He was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital when his condition worsened at night.

"After the accident, the battery-run auto-rickshaw driver fled. We are trying to arrest him," said the OC.

In Tangail, a police constable was killed

after an unidentified vehicle ran over his motorbike at Kalihati upazila yesterday

The deceased is Ariful Islam, 40, a constable of Special Branch (SB) of police in Dhaka and son of Abdul Latif of Ullapara upazila in Sirajganj district.

Mosharaf Hossain, officer-in-charge of Bangabandhu Bridge East Police Station, said Ariful was returning to his workplace in Dhaka from his Sirajganj house on his motorbike.

An unidentified vehicle crushed his motorcycle under its wheels on Bangabandhu Bridge (east) connecting road in Salla area around 10am, leaving him dead on the spot.

Being informed, police recovered the body and sent it to Tangail General Hospital morgue for an autopsy, he added.

Meanwhile, two motorcyclists were killed in front of a refueling station on Jhenidah-Magura road on Friday night.

The deceased were identified as Hasanuzzaman and his nephew Rashedul Islam of Chutlia village in Sadar upazila.

Saidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Magura Police Station, said a truck hit the motorcycle head-on, killing Hasanuzzaman on the spot. Locals took Rashedul to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead, the OC added.

Police seized the truck and filed a case.

Hope for endangered gharials

Zoo authorities working on successful captive breeding

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Jamuna, the female gharial in Rajshahi Zoo, laid eggs after two years of a pioneering attempt for captive breeding of the freshwater reptile that is listed as "critically endangered" on the IUCN Red List.

Unfortunately, the eggs were rotten underwater following an overflow in the gharials' enclosure at the Shaheed AHM Qamaruzzaman Central Park and Zoo, experts said.

Lack of experience and required infrastructure for captive breeding of the reptile in the enclosure was also blamed for the damaged eggs, they added.

In the second week of July, the zoo authorities recovered two eggs for the first time after those were found floating in the water, said Dr Farhad Uddin, veterinary surgeon of the zoo.

The same way, they found two more rotten eggs in the second week of October, Dr Farhad, also in-charge of the zoo, said.

The whole experience was a first for the zoo authorities.



PHOTO: STAR

"We did not know when they laid the eggs. We discovered them only after the rotten eggs were seen floating on water," Dr Farhad said.

"It is big news for us that they (gharials) began laying eggs," said Sarowar Alam, a wildlife biologist of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

"We've decided to take effective measures for proper protection of the

eggs and their successful hatching in the next season," Alam who authored an international research paper on gharials, said.

IUCN declared gharials a critically endangered species in Bangladesh in 2015.

They reported there are 200 of the reptiles around the world while Bangladesh has seen five to 10 juvenile gharials at seven points of Padma, Jamuna and Mahananda rivers every year.

In 2016, IUCN, jointly with the Department of Forest, conducted a study on gharials of Bangladesh with funds from the World Bank.

The study revealed that there are at least 11 captive gharials in the country and six of them are female.

Breeding of the captive reptiles was not happening as males and females were living separately, the study found.

Four male gharials were in Dhaka Zoo while four females were in Rangpur, one male in Bangabandhu Safari Park and two females in Rajshahi. SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Braving rain, aspirants, under a sea of umbrellas, appear at the admission test of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Sylhet yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Teenage rape victim pregnant in Dhamrai

UP member held arbitration and collected Tk 1.80 lakh from rapist, victim's family claims

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, Savar

A 13-year-old girl was raped by a neighbour with the assistance of his wife in Dhaka's Dhamrai upazila. After the teenage victim became pregnant, local arbiters -- led by a Union Parishad member of Chowhat -- arranged an arbitration and collected Tk 1.80 lakh from the rapist for compensation. However, victim's family members claim that the money was shared among the arbiters.

Victim's family members narrated the incident to the officials of Dhamrai Police Station and filed a case on Friday.

After the case was filed, police arrested Rujala Begum, wife of alleged rapist Moksed Ali, 50, for being an accomplice.

According to the case statement, on July 30 this year, Ujala Begum called the victim to her home to watch TV. While the victim was in the house, Moksed Ali raped her. After the incident, the victim was threatened with death; the couple warned her against disclosing the matter to anyone. After that, the girl was raped multiple times by Moksed.

The victim narrated the incident to her family members after she realised that she was pregnant.

When word got out, Faruk Hossen, a member of Chowhat Union Parishad in Dhamrai, and his associates Alamin, Darbar Ali, Chan Mia, Jasim, a local journalist and five-six unknown people arranged arbitration at the victim's house on October 21. During arbitration, they fined the

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Dalits demand social safety net

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Dalit communities face social discrimination in our country. They are being deprived of adequate national services. But these people make up one percent of the total manpower of the country, contributing to the national income.

Speakers said this at a citizens' dialogue on strengthening capacity of national stakeholders and promoting the rights of Dalits. Non-government organisation Dhruvo held the citizens' dialogue with help from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) yesterday at Purbanchal dialogue center of Khulna city.

Speakers also said that most of the government's safety net projects are at the village level, although the poorest 37 percent of Dalit population live in suburb areas of cities. At the grassroots level, the participation of Dalits is also very limited. Most of them do not know about this great initiative of the government to alleviate poverty. People in the community demanded to bring Dalit people under the social security net.

According to the dialogue, the number of Dalits in the country are 1.6 million while their education rate is only 5 to 6 percent. Around 95 percent children of

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Teacher shortage hits Cumilla pry schools

UNB, Cumilla

Academic activities at nearly 300 government primary schools in Cumilla are being hampered due to the shortage of headteachers and teachers.

There are 2,107 such schools in the district that have posts of 12,708 teachers, according to the district education office.

Sources said 295 of these schools in 17 upazilas do not have regular headteachers while the posts of 1,208 assistant teachers are vacant.

Ten posts of headteachers are vacant in Adarsha Sadar upazila; seven each in Laksham and Chandina; 22 each in Debidwar, Daudkandi and Chouddagram; 27 in Muradnagar; 11 in Brahmanpara; six in Barura; 37 in Burichang; 21 in Homna; 40 in Nangalkot; 12 in Meghna; 20 in Monoharganj; 17 in Titas; nine in Sadar Dakkhin, and five in Lalmai.

Sixty-one posts of assistant teachers have remained vacant in Adarsha Sadar upazila. The number is 45 in Laksham; 40 in Debidwar; 124 in Muradnagar; 144 in Daudkandi; 114 in Chouddagram;

58 in Brahmanpara; 77 in Barura; 14 in Burichang; 70 in Chandina; 42 in Homna; 157 in Nangalkot; 24 in Meghna; 98 in Monoharganj; 89 in Titas; 11 in Sadar Dakkhin, and 40 in Lalmai.

Imtiaz Uddin, headteacher of Nangalkot Bannagar Government Primary School, said the shortage of teachers was seriously hampering educational activities. "Only two assistant teachers have to deal with 137 students," he said.

Nizam Uddin Majumdar, general secretary of Nangalkot Upazila Government Primary School Teachers' Association, said Bagra, Bannagar and AKM Himat Ali primary schools are suffering due to teacher crisis.

"These schools are continuing their educational activities with only two teachers," he said.

Contacted, District Education Officer Abdul Mannan assured that steps are being taken to solve the problem. "We'll send a list of senior teachers to the higher authorities for promoting them to the post of headteacher," he said. "A recruitment test for assistant teachers was held and the viva voce examination is underway," Mannan added.

25th death anniversary of Rokeya Begum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the 25th death anniversary of Rokeya Begum, mother of Hasan Jahid Tusher, a deputy press secretary to the prime minister, says a press release.

On this occasion, doa mahfil and Quran recitation have been organised at the her village home in Sreerampur under Magura Sadar upazila. Food will also be distributed among the destitute.

Tusher sought prayers from all for his mother.

Rokeya, wife of late Miah Md Abdur Razzaque (a former agricultural official), died in 1994 -- leaving four sons, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn her death.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



WINTER IS ALMOST HERE! A chilly morning coated in a blanket of fog over Turag river greeted locals yesterday.