



Education Minister Dr Dipu Moni inaugurates a sanitary napkin vending machine at Dhaka University campus yesterday. Ducs in association with ACI Group initiated the service.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

‘Solve Nurul-Tamohar killings immediately’

Family, well-wishers demand to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent personalities and family members of Nurul Islam, a noted politician who along with his son Tamohar were killed in a fire incident in 2008, demanded that the mystery of their deaths be solved immediately.

Expressing frustration and concerns over the delay in investigation, they urged law enforcement agencies to take the matter seriously and bring people who were responsible for a such “political killing” to book.

They placed the demands at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Nurul Islam Smriti Parishad organised the event on the occasion of the 11th death

anniversary of Nurul and Tamohar.

On December 3, 2008, Nurul Islam, the then president of Ganotantri Party -- an ally of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance -- suffered severe burn injuries while he and his 35-year-old son Tamohar were sleeping at their residence in the city's Lalmatia.

Tamohar was burned alive, while Nurul succumbed to his injuries the next day.

There are several speculations about the fire -- like electric short circuit and fridge compressor explosion -- generated from various investigations at the time, but none were proven.

Speaking at the press conference yesterday, poet Ruby Rahman, widow of

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Two held over Mirpur double murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police suspect the murders of a woman and a teenager in the city's Mirpur on Tuesday happened following altercation over money -- centring prostitution.

Detective branch (DB) of police arrested two youths -- Moazzem (22) and Yousuf (23) -- from Sadarghat area yesterday evening in this connection. The arrestees were transport workers and frequented the house, said Shahadat Hossain, additional deputy commissioner (Pallabi) of DB.

“On Tuesday, the duo went to the flat, and engaged in an argument with the woman over money. At one point, when the woman threatened them with serious consequences if they don't pay up, the duo first strangled the teenage girl and then killed the woman,” the police official added.

Quoting locals, the official said there had always been frequent visitors to the flat.

On Tuesday, Rahima alias Shahida Begum (65) and Sumi (15) were found dead in the flat in Mirpur-2 area.

Autopsy reports suggest they were strangled to death, said Dr AKM Moinuddin, lecturer of Forensic Medicine

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Unplanned dev projects ravaging rivers: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indiscriminate implementation of projects in the name of development have proved counterproductive, as those have spelt lethal blows to the very existence of the country's rivers over the decades, said top officials and conservationists at a seminar yesterday.

“Government agencies have been implementing haphazard development schemes at will on and across the rivers and canals over the decades, that have proved detrimental for rivers and canals,” said Md Alaaddin, member of the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC).

NRCC, jointly with Bangladesh Nodi Bachao Andolon, organised the seminar on “Plan and role of the relevant agencies in development of rivers” in the capital.

Government organisations like Bangladesh Water Development Board, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation, Local Government Engineering Department and Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation have been implementing development projects in an uncoordinated fashion, adversely affecting the rivers and canals, said Alaaddin.

“I call upon the Planning Commission to ensure strict evaluation of viability of river- or canal-related development projects -- and how they are going to affect the rivers and canals -- before approval,” he said.

The Planning Commission should consider the issues of navigability, pollution and grabbing of rivers and canals, and sustainability of coastal areas in the process of approving development schemes, implementation of which has grave bearing on those water bodies, he said.

“A foremost problem in the government offices is

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SM Ali's 91st birth anniversary today



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 91st birth anniversary of Syed Mohammad Ali, founder editor of The Daily Star and a luminary in journalism of Bangladesh.

SM Ali made his way up from a cub reporter to one of the country's most brilliant editors in a career spanning 44 years. He also led the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) as its chairman.

Educated in Kolkata, Dhaka and London, he was one of the few Asian journalists who stood out in regional journalism.

Ali was born in an educated family in Moulvibazar in 1928. He was the eldest son of the late

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Ducsu VP Nur's office padlocked

Former BCL men are threatening him, he claims

DU CORRESPONDENT

Muktijuddho Moncho, a platform comprising descendants of freedom fighters, yesterday padlocked Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) Vice President Nurul Haque Nur's office room at the student union building, demanding his resignation from the post of VP.

Labelling Nur corrupt, some activists of the platform, allegedly led by its spokesperson Prof AKM Jamal Uddin of DU's sociology department, locked the room at around 1pm, said witnesses.

Prior to that, they burnt an effigy of Nur centring an unverified audio clip in which a person was heard requesting another to be

a bank guarantor of a project.

Later, Muktijuddho Moncho activists pasted two posters on the room's door which read “Corrupt VP Nur has to resign, he has no place on Dhaka University campus.”

During that time, AKM Jamal Uddin said, “We are giving Nur a 48-hour ultimatum, he will have to resign from the post willingly and leave the campus by that time. Muktijuddho Moncho does not want to see him on the campus anymore. We hope that law enforcers will dig out the information of corruption after taking him in remand.”

He said they would submit a memorandum to the vice chancellor demanding Nur's resignation.

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Suhrawardy's anniversary of death today

BSS, Dhaka

The 56th death anniversary of one of the greatest leaders of undivided India Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy will be observed in the country today.

The unparalleled leader of all-Indian politics, who had dedicated his entire life to ensure the welfare of people by upholding democracy, died at a Beirut hotel in Lebanon on this day in 1963.

Suhrawardy was a Bangalee politician and statesman in the first half of the 20th century. He served as the premier of Bengal in British India and was the fifth prime minister of Pakistan.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid rich tributes to the memory of Suhrawardy on the occasion.

In separate messages, the president and the prime minister prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul of Suhrawardy.

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Uber, Pathao, Shohoz get BRTA certificate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three major ridesharing service providing companies -- Uber Bangladesh, Pathao and Shohoz -- have received enlistment certificates from Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to operate their service in the country.

Pathao got the certificate on Tuesday, while Uber and Shohoz got it yesterday, said Lokman Hossain Mollah, director (engineering) of BRTA. “We gave them approval earlier subject to submission of documents of at least 100 vehicles -- a mandatory clause. As they were able to do so, they received their enlistment certificates,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

With the three, nine companies have received the certificate so far. The six other companies are: Pickme Limited, Computer Network System Limited, Obhai Solution Ltd, Chaldal Ltd, Akash Technology Ltd and Segesta Ltd.

Three other companies -- Ezzyr Technologies Ltd, Badi Limited and Akij Online Ltd -- got approval but could not print enlistment certificates as they are yet to submit necessary documents of at least 100 vehicles, a BRTA official said.

According to latest documents shared by four major companies with BRTA, 22,000 vehicles are running under Pathao; 32,475 under Shohoz; 20,637 under Uber and 27,271 under Obhai.

As per guideline, apart from the companies, each vehicle owner has to be enlisted with BRTA to operate under ridesharing services.

A BRTA official said currently they are giving “vehicle enlistment certificate” of 100 vehicles along with the “company enlistment certificate”. They will gradually provide certificates to other vehicles upon receiving applications online.

BRTA started registering ridesharing service providers on July 1, around 18 months after formulation of guidelines to regulate the growing sector.

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From fake flowers and fruits to looking glasses and shiny discs -- Jahangir Hossain has decorated this rickshaw to his heart's content. He comes to Dhaka from Narayanganj every morning to earn a living. A well decorated rickshaw attracts more passengers, helping him take home around Tk 700 every day, said Jahangir. The photo was taken recently in Dhanmondi.

‘It's nothing serious’

Quader says about commerce minister's ‘resignation remark’

UNB, Dhaka

There is nothing serious in Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi's resignation remark, which he made amid criticisms over price of onion, said Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday.

“This is not a matter of resignation. He may have made the comment as he's in charge of the ministry,” Quader said while talking to reporters at the secretariat.

In a views-exchange meeting in the capital on Tuesday, Tipu Munshi reportedly said if his resignation brings down the price of onion, he would do so in a second.

“The cabinet is not entrusted with the responsibility of evaluating performance of a minister and it has no right to take any decision in this regard. It's the jurisdiction of the prime minister, and it'll be her decision who'll be in the cabinet. I don't want to make any comments,” Quader said.

Replying to a question about the price hike of essentials, Quader said there is no reason to deny the fact that the market is now a bit unstable, and the government is trying to bring it under control.

No trade licence fee for pharmacies operated by women: DNCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) will not collect any trade licence fee from pharmacies that are entirely run by women, declared DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam yesterday at a dialogue session with teenagers.

He also said authorities are constructing new playgrounds and parks for all ages and groups so everyone can enjoy their time at open spaces whenever they want to.

DNCC in association with Unicef Bangladesh arranged the session, which was held at DNCC office in Gulshan 2, with an aim to listen to the problems of adolescents living in the city.

During the session, students of different ages talked about their problems regarding education, health and safety.

Regarding pharmacy and hospital facilities, Morium Akhter Meghla, a high school student, said, “We, the adolescents, have various health related problems. But we can't talk about them at every pharmacy and hospital as most of them are operated by men.”

Therefore, for adolescent girls, it would be better to have more women pharmacists and doctors, she told the mayor.

In response to her, the mayor stated, “DNCC will not take any trade licence fees from those pharmacies which will have all women staff.”

Meanwhile, different issues regarding playgrounds were raised. The teenagers claimed that there is a crisis of playgrounds, and drug abusers

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Pedestrians traverse around and under logs that are precariously supporting an unstable building wall. This whole situation is a result of authorities digging up the road for sewage line work. This photo was taken on Tuesday near Dainik Bangla intersection.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN