

Three hurt as gas cylinder explodes in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least three workers were injured after a gas cylinder exploded at a marine workshop in the port city EPZ area yesterday.

Their identities could not be known when this report was filed around 11:45pm. The injured workers were on the way to Chattogram Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Deputy Assistant Director Purna Chandra of Chattogram Fire Service and Civil Defence Headquarters told The Daily Star that a gas cylinder exploded inside the workshop in Saltgola area of the EPZ around 11:30pm while they were working there.

OC Mir Nurul Huda of EPZ Police Station said their team was sent to visit the spot immediately.

Red carpet but no cinema as Gaza film festival forced outdoors

AFP, Gaza City

In the Palestinian enclave of Gaza, without a cinema for 30 years, a few hundred people walk the red carpet to a rare film screening – held on the street.

The opening of the Red Carpet Human Rights Film Festival on Wednesday evening had been expected to take place inside the Amer Cinema, which has been abandoned for three decades.

But it was moved at the last minute in unclear circumstances, with a screen erected in the street outside the cinema, a grey building with the letters peeling off.

The festival's executive director, Muntaser al-Sabaa, said organisers had been told by the cinema's owners that they could no longer use it as a venue.

How convicts

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Responding to a question, he said different agencies interrogated Rakibul Islam alias Regan, who was in the dock and wore the cap there, but he gave puzzling replies.

"Regan told us that he threw it [cap with IS emblem] out of the prison van on their way back to jail from the court. But he could not say where ...," he added.

On Tuesday, Regan claimed before a Dhaka court that he got the cap with IS emblem from an unknown person on the court premises. Another death-row convict Jahangir Hossain alias Rajib Gandhi was also seen wearing a similar cap.

On the other hand, a report submitted by the jail authorities mentioned that the convicts had no scope for getting caps in the prison.

Regan, Rajib, and five other militants were handed death penalty for their involvement in the 2016 Gulshan café attack that left 22 people, including 17 foreigners, dead.

Buet suspends

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in ragging in Suhrawardy and Ahsan Ullah halls.

It also suspended 21 other students from the two dormitories on different terms and warned four others.

On this day

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Hili. Pakistan army compelled to retreat.

By the evening, Akhaura and Shamsnagar in Sylhet officially came under the allied force's control.

The runway of the Dhaka airport completely destroyed by the allied air force's bombing.

The 9th division of Pakistan army starts to flee from the break of dawn. A part of the division had to cross Madhumati River as allied force base was on Jashore-Dhaka highway. Another faction escaped via Kushtia. They try to destroy all the bridges as they escape.

Soviet Union (USSR) for the second time places veto against US's ceasefire proposal of Indo-Pak war in the United Nations Security Council's meeting. A Soviet spokesperson says that the USSR has deep concern about the war in the subcontinent and it is related to USSR's security interest.

Some 11 members of the Security Council vote the US. Poland supports the USSR while France and Britain refrain from supporting either side.

Military Advisor to the Governor of East Pakistan Rao Farman Ali says that Pakistan is ready to fight defensive war against India. "I believe, our force can hold East Pakistan in the present situation," he says.

Lieutenant Niazi orders his force to move out from Jhenidah and to protect Dhaka. He also orders them to assemble near the bank of Meghna.

That was however impossible as allied force took control of Dhaka-Jashore highway. A faction of the allied force continues their advance towards Khulna and another team headed towards Kushtia.



Students take part in a protest against Colombian President Ivan Duque at the Bolivar square in Bogota, on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Draft articles of impeachment against Trump

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by Republican lawmakers called the Democratic-led impeachment inquiry rushed and flawed.

Articles of impeachment represent formal charges against Trump and would originate in the Judiciary Committee before going to the full House. If the Democratic-led House passes articles of impeachment as expected, that would lead to a trial in the Senate on whether to convict Trump of those charges and remove him from office. Republicans control the Senate and have shown little support for Trump's removal.

White House spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said on Twitter that Pelosi and other Democrats "should be ashamed," adding that Trump "has done nothing but lead our country - resulting in a booming economy, more jobs & a stronger military, to name just a few of his major accomplishments. We look forward to a fair trial in the Senate."

The three law professors chosen by the Democrats made clear during Wednesday's hearing that they believed Trump's actions constituted

impeachable offenses including abuse of power, bribery, obstruction of Congress and obstruction of justice.

The House Intelligence Committee this week submitted findings from its inquiry into Trump's push for Kiev to launch an investigation related to former US Vice President Joe Biden, a top contender for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination. Trump also asked Ukraine to look into the discredited theory promoted by the president and his allies that Ukraine, not Russia, meddled in the 2016 US election.

Democrats have accused Trump of abusing his power by withholding \$391 million in security aid to Ukraine - a US ally facing Russian aggression - to pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to announce the investigations.

"Our democracy is what is at stake. The president leaves us no choice but to act because he is trying to corrupt, once again, the election for his own benefit. The president has engaged in abuse of power, undermining our national security and jeopardizing the integrity of our elections," Pelosi said.

Trump has denied any wrongdoing and called the impeachment investigation a hoax.

The House may vote by year's end on the formal impeachment charges, but Democrats, who control the chamber, say no decision has been made at this point on the specific charges. Those could include abuse of power, bribery, obstruction of Congress and obstruction of justice.

Judiciary panel Democrats on Wednesday said they may look beyond Trump's relations with Ukraine to include Trump's earlier alleged efforts to impede former US Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into his 2016 campaign's relations with Russia, but they stopped short of saying that could trigger a separate charge.

IMPEACHMENT HISTORY
No president has ever been removed from office through impeachment, though Republican Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 after the House began the impeachment process in the Watergate corruption scandal. Two other presidents were impeached by the House but acquitted by the Senate.

The last impeachment effort in the

United States came in 1998 when a Republican-led House passed articles of impeachment against Democratic President Bill Clinton - charges arising from a sexual relationship he had with a White House intern. The Senate then acquitted Clinton in 1999, leaving him in office.

The other president who was impeached was Andrew Johnson, impeached by the House in 1868 - three years after the end of the US Civil War - but left in office by the Senate.

Trump's fellow Republicans in both chambers have stood by him, and have accused Democrats of seeking to overturn the 2016 election.

Republican Representative Andy Biggs, who sits on the House Judiciary panel, told Fox News earlier yesterday: "What we are seeing is a rush - rush - to impeachment."

Republicans in the Senate have given no signs they would break with the president now.

Ahead of Pelosi's statement, Trump urged House Democrats to move quickly if they were going to impeach him so that the Senate could take up the issue.

Metro Line-6 to link Kamalapur

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with 17 stations.

MAN Siddique, also a former secretary of Road Transport and Highways Division, said people coming from outside Dhaka face difficulties getting vehicles at Kamalapur Railway Station.

"Considering this, the prime minister instructed us to extend the route up to Kamalapur ...," he said.

He said the existing street from Motijheel to Kamalapur was not viable for the metro rail lines. So, they selected an alignment where most of the land is owned by Bangladesh Railway and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation.

He added that as per the new acquire policy, owners of the 31 pieces of land would be given three-time higher price than the existing price of

the land and they would get prices of their buildings at current market rate. They would get some other benefits too, he added.

Replying to a query, the DMTCL MD said as per the plan, the work of MRT Line-6 would be completed by December 2021, around three years before the stipulated time, resulting in the reduction of construction cost.

"We are hopeful that we will be able to complete the extension work with the money we can save by implementing the project before the stipulated time."

He, however, could not say when the construction of the extension work would start.

Asked whether Bangladesh Railway had any reservation over the use of its land,

MAN Siddique said Kamalapur Station is an "iconic structure", and the BR wanted that the station of metro rail to be built at a place that does not obstruct the view of the structure.

"We want to deal with this issue with a holistic approach, not from a single MRT Line-6 perspective," he said, adding that apart from the MRT Line-6 station, underground stations of MRT Line-1, -2 and -4 would also be built linking Kamalapur Railway Station.

Transport expert Prof Mizanur Rahman also welcomed the initiative, saying that more people would be benefited by the step.

He said all major inter-district bus terminals and Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport have to be

connected to other metro rail lines so that people coming from outside Dhaka could avail the rail service.

Prof Mizanur, also the director of Accident Research Institute (ARI) at Buet, however, said the government should not wait for completing the extension work; it should rather open MRT Line-6 within the deadline for reducing people's suffering.

He added that the extension would not hamper the plan already been taken regarding the country's largest railway station -- Kamalapur.

The government aims to build five metro lines -- an elevated, an underground, and three elevated and underground -- in the capital and its adjacent areas by 2030 mainly to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

India set to start trial run next month

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for carrying Indian goods.

On the use of the roads, he said charges would be fixed by the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry.

Sources at the meeting said there were at least 50 types of charges and fees at the tariff schedule of the Chattogram and Mongla ports.

Shipping ministry insiders said they were considering charging Tk 1.97 to Tk 2.10 per tonne in line with a proposal of The Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiatives.

Abdus Samad said the Bangladeshi customs authorities at the ports would electronically lock Indian goods and the locks would be opened only at the Indian destinations.

The two countries had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the use of the Chattogram and Mongla ports in 2015, following years of persuasion from India. Subsequently, the countries signed an agreement last year and a standard operating procedure (SoP) during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in October this year.

According to the SoP, goods that reach Chattogram and Mongla sea ports would be carried by four road, rail, and water routes to Agartala (Tripura) via Akhaura; Dawki (Meghalaya) via Tamabil; Sutarkandi (Assam) via Sheola, and Srimantpur (Tripura) via Bibirbazar.

The SoP covers waterways, roads

and railways. It will allow the landlocked Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura states to access open sea trade routes through the Chattogram and Mongla ports.

India will also be allowed to use Nakugaon Land Port in Sherpur to transit goods as the fifth route in line with the agreement, said Abdus Samad.

The decision was taken following a proposal from Bangladesh which was placed at the meeting.

As a result of this decision, Bhutan will also be able to use transit facilities using the Chattogram and Mongla port alongside India, added Abdus Samad.

At yesterday's meeting, the Indian side said fees applicable on Indian goods moving under the agreement need to be specified in a transparent manner, so as to allow the trade to work out the costs involved in the movement and also to make necessary financial arrangements.

They said that fees and charges levied on transit movements are subject to GATT and WTO provisions.

Any charges levied on such cargo should be reasonable and meant to cover charges of transportation or administrative expenses, or to cost of services rendered.

INDIA WANTS 2 MORE TRANSHIPMENT POINTS

Yesterday, the Indian side asked for two more transshipment points in Bangladesh for transportation of goods.

The points are in Munshiganj's Mukhtarpur and Dhaka's Pangaon.

Currently, Ashuganj is being used as the only such transshipment point in Bangladesh under the River Protocol signed between the two countries in 2010. India began using the port in June 2016.

Asked, Abdus Samad said the Indian proposal would be finalised only after discussions with stakeholders and businessmen.

Officials said allowing the transshipment points might increase traffic congestions at the adjacent places in Dhaka.

They said that Ashuganj port was yet to be developed and the government has taken up a Tk 1,200 crore project to this end. India is giving Tk 300 crore of the amount.

The development work of the port would be completed next year, so India wanted the transshipment points for an interim period.

India plans to carry goods to Agartala and Sonamura of Tripura via Munshiganj's Mukhtarpur and Dhaka's Pangaon routes. Distance from Mukhtarpur to Agartala is 146km and Sonamura is 120km. Distance from Pangaon to Agartala is 136km and Sonamura is 113km.

Meanwhile, Gopal, the Indian shipping secretary, said during the discussion, Bangladesh demanded cargo ship movement be allowed in Indian waterways.

"We discussed this aspect extensively. We also feel that we will allow this subject to the Bangladesh authorities registration of those vessels under 1976 Inland Shipping Ordinance. If the Bangladesh side registers those vessels under their act which means they will certify about stability, safety, then we will also allow plying of those ships or vessels in our inland waterways," he said.

Doctor, cop

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their home, the wife filed the case with the court on September 12 this year.

Bibhas was on bail granted by the High Court. He appeared before the magistrate court yesterday and prayed for further bail which the court rejected, said the lawyer.

Meanwhile, Tariqul Islam, a traffic sergeant in Bogura, was sent to jail on December 2 in another such case.

Nahid Akhtar, judge of the judicial magistrate's court, denied the bail petition of Tariqul when he surrendered to the court, and sent him to jail.

The court officials said Tariqul demanded Tk 20 lakh as dowry form his wife Maya Akter.

The sergeant often used to beat up his wife as her family refused to pay the dowry.

Maya filed the case with the court on November 14, officials said.

Sun yields

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One puzzle concerns the corona itself which at one million degrees is many times hotter than the sun's surface at 6,000C, when it would normally be expected to cool the further from the heat source.

"So the corona finds a way to heat up. We are looking at the physical processes which allow that to happen," said Alexis Rouillard at France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and co-author of one of four reports on the probe's initial findings published in the journal Nature.

"Even with just these first orbits, we've been shocked by how different the corona is when observed up close," said Justin Kasper, a professor of climate and space sciences and engineering at the University of Michigan.

A summary by the University of Michigan noted that it had been thought that oscillations in the Sun's magnetic field might have caused the corona to heat up and were expecting to get data to confirm that.

Instead, they reported much more powerful, "rogue" magnetic waves strong enough to switch the direction of the magnetic field completely that may be the energy source for the corona.

Scientists were also surprised by what they found about the acceleration of the solar wind, the outward stream of protons, electrons and other particles emanating from the Sun.

It was known that closer in, the Sun's magnetic field pulls this wind in the same direction as its rotation, so the team expected this effect would weaken further out.

"To our great surprise, as we neared the Sun, we've already detected large rotational flows -- 10 to 20 times greater than what standard models of the Sun predict," Kasper said.

"So we are missing something fundamental about the Sun and how the solar wind escapes.

"This has huge implications. Space weather forecasting will need to account for these flows if we are going to be able to predict whether a coronal mass ejection will strike Earth, or astronauts heading to the Moon or Mars," he added.

Support centre

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is being observed on the theme "The Future is Accessible".

Hasina stressed the need for introduction of special training in the country to make the differently-abled persons self-dependent. She said her government has been working to ensure their rights.

The premier said the government would make arrangements for providing training, sport facilities, and jobs to the differently-abled persons in every upazila.

She directed the social welfare ministry to take up a project in this regard.

Hasina said soon after the country's independence in 1971, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had provided the social welfare ministry with huge land across the country, where more institutions could be set up.

She differed on a demand to turn Jatiya Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation into a directorate, saying that if it remained as a foundation, it would get donations even from private organisations.

"If the foundation is turned into a directorate, the government officers will be benefited as there will be some posts for them. But I can't say what benefits it would bring to the persons with disabilities."

Talking about autism, the PM said her daughter Saima Wazed Hossain, chairperson of Bangladesh National Advisory Committee for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, was able to create awareness about neurodevelopmental disorders and autism at home and abroad through her hard work.

Noting that there was no such awareness in the country, she said the government was trying to make people aware that autism or disability was neither a sickness nor a disease.

The premier distributed awards among successful persons with disabilities, parents, caregivers, social activists and organisations for their contributions to the society.

Presided over by Social Welfare Minister Nuruzzaman Ahmed, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Social Welfare Sharif Ahmed, President of Jatiya Protibondhi Forum Sayedul Haque and visually impaired Ferdousi Akter.

Hasina also inaugurated the newly-constructed Jatiya Protibondhi Complex, "Subarno Bhaban", on the premises of National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons.

'BSF' picks up

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they were yet to contact the BSF officials.

He said relatives of the two fishermen and other witnesses informed the local BGB camp of the alleged abduction.

The BGB official added that the zero line between the borders in the area goes through the Padma and a major part of the river there was inside India.

Bangladeshi fishermen often enter Indian territory mistakenly, while Indian fishermen do the same during fishing in the area, he said.