



Three children carefully balance themselves as they hang fish to dry, at Diamond Ghata area on the south bank of Karnaphuli river. Aged between seven and 12, the children help out their mothers at Shutki Palli, getting fish ready for drying and transporting them in buckets.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

RAJSHAHI AL COUNCIL Leaders chosen through selection to avert discontent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League selected leaders for Rajshahi district in the party unit's triennial council yesterday without holding an election, to avert intra-party dispute.

After the council ended at Rajshahi Shilpakala Academy auditorium, many of the 360 councillors who were prepared for an election expressed their dissatisfaction. They, however, said they would accept the central committee's decision for the party's greater interest.

AL Presidium Member Mohammad Nasim announced former lawmakers Meraj Uddin Mollah and Kazi Abdul Wadud Dara as the president and general secretary of the district unit.

"The main strength of our party is the unity in the grassroots," Nasim said, calling upon all to stand by the new leaders.

AL Joint Secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Organising Secretary Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam were present during the announcement.

Before the selection, Nasim sought proposals for candidacy for the two posts, party insiders said.

Three leaders -- Meraj Uddin Mollah, Raihanul Haque and Md Asaduzzaman -- proposed their names for the president post while six sought the post of general secretary. Other than Dara, the six include lawmaker Ayeen Uddin, Layeb Uddin Lablu, Abida Anjum Mita, AKM Asaduzzaman and Alfor Rahman.

The central leaders then asked the candidates to sit together and select one leader for each of the posts.

They could not reach any decision and told the central leaders that they would agree on a selection by the party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Then the central leaders took opinions of the councillors on whether they would agree on the selection of the leaders and the councillors raised hands to the affirmative.

Hours later, the announcement of the selection came.

"I know that I have to be happy with the selection. I have nothing else to say," Md Asaduzzaman, a contender for the president post, said.

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Bangladeshi surgeon's curriculum now on VR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To make it easier for students to learn colorectal surgery, Medical Realities -- a UK based company -- is bringing the techniques of the procedure to virtual reality (VR).

The company will base its curriculum on Dr AKM Fazlul Haque, the founder chairman of colorectal surgery in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and a global pioneer in the field.

Prof Haque is globally renowned for the successful initiation of various modern surgeries of colon and rectum including double stapling of rectum cancer, and Longo operation for haemorrhoids.

He also popularised the idea of treating haemorrhoid patients with Rubber Ring Ligation, a non-surgical procedure.

From now on, surgical students and surgeons worldwide will be able to learn Prof Haque's technique through the

simulated experience of VR videos on Medical Reality's platform.

A three-member team of the company is currently working to shoot audio-visuals for the film at Eden Multicare Hospital in Dhaka.

In a press conference at the hospital yesterday, Prof Dr AKM Fazlul Haque introduced the team to the media.

"Collaboration with Medical Realities will help me spread the knowledge to other physicians and surgeons across the globe," said Prof Haque.

The film will be available on the company's website (www.medicalrealities.com) within the next three-four weeks, said its Chief Executive Matt Leatherbarrow. The content can be accessed through paid online registrations.

The film will be released following authorisation from Royal College of Surgeons in London, added Leatherbarrow.

Sexual harasser caught red-handed at CU

CU CORRESPONDENT

A sexual harasser was caught red-handed while molesting a female student of Chittagong University in Hathazari area yesterday.

The incident happened on a public bus when the harasser, Md Manik Mia, molested the student who boarded the bus from Muradpur.

The young woman challenged the harasser and caught Manik with help from her classmates. Manik was handed over to CU Police Outpost.

Police have taken him into custody, Abul Kashem, in-charge of CU Police Outpost, said.

Speeding bus on wrong side kills freedom fighter in Pirojpur

Road accidents take four more lives elsewhere

STAR REPORT

Yesterday saw five deaths from road accidents across three districts, report our correspondents.

Three people including a freedom fighter were killed when a bus hit an auto-rickshaw from the wrong side of the road at Musullibari in Mathbaria upazila of Pirojpur yesterday.

After the collision, the bus dragged the auto-rickshaw for 20 yards and pushed it into a roadside pond, leaving driver Md Belayet Hossain (40) dead and all four passengers injured, our Pirojpur correspondent reported, quoting locals.

Of the injured, freedom fighter Abu Jafar Howlader (65) and another unidentified passenger were taken to

Mathbaria Upazila Health Complex in critical condition where doctors declared them dead.

The driver and his helper managed to flee the scene.

"We are trying to arrest the driver," said Md Masuduzzaman, OC of Mathbaria Police Station, adding that a case will be filed. Police have seized the vehicle.

In Bagerhat, police sub-inspector Md Rezaur Rahman was killed when a truck ran over his motorcycle yesterday. Rezaur was working in the Special Branch of district police.

The truck hit Rezaur's motorcycle when he was crossing the road in front of the Deputy Commissioner's Office on Khulna-Bagerhat Highway,

our Bagerhat correspondent reported quoting an eyewitness.

Police have seized the truck. An attempt is underway to arrest the driver and helper who managed to flee the scene, said, Md Mahfuz Afzal, additional police superintendent of Bagerhat police.

District police mourned his death.

An auto-rickshaw driver was killed after hitting the railing of Jitarpur Bridge of Joypurhat-Dhamoirhat road in Joypurhat yesterday afternoon.

The deceased, Sultan Mahmud (33), hit the bridge railing after losing control of his vehicle on the way to Jitarpur village. He died on the spot, police told our Dinajpur correspondent.

Court orders to freeze bank accounts of Khalidi, bdnews

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court has ordered to freeze a number of bank accounts of bdnews24.com editor-in-chief Toufique Imrose Khalidi, and his news portal.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of senior special judges' court of Dhaka on December 1 gave the order, after Anti-Corruption Commission submitted an application to this end.

Mahmud Hossain Jahangir, public prosecutor of ACC, confirmed this to The Daily Star. ACC Deputy Director Gulshan Anwar Pradhan submitted the application, alleging Khalidi of amassing wealth beyond known sources of income.

In the application, Pradhan said Khalidi transferred huge sums of money to bank accounts in his own name and bdnews24.com. After hearing, the court ordered to freeze nine fixed deposit (FDR) accounts of bdnews24.com and 13 FDR accounts in Khalidi's name.

Awami League's Barishal city unit council held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

After seven years, the council of Barishal city unit of Awami League was held at Bangabandhu Udyan yesterday afternoon.

For city unit, AKM Zahangir was selected president while Barishal City Corporation (BCC) Mayor Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah was named general secretary.

In his speech as chief guest, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader said, "We do not need opportunists and evildoers, who eat away all development and achievements like termites."

"Awami League is the organisation of sacrifices, of dedicated workers and leaders. Drug peddlers, terrorists and corrupted people have no space in this party," he added.

Quader said, "Leadership cannot be availed through setting up billboards and banners with photos, it can be achieved only by taking a place in people's hearts."

On BNP, he said, "They failed both in movement and election, and turned into an organisation of complainers."

AL advisory board member Amir Hossain Amu inaugurated the council and district AL president Abul Hasnat Abdullah spoke as chief guest.

AL Joint General Secretary Abdur Rahman, Organising Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim, Law Secretary and Minister SM Rejaul Karim and International Affairs Secretary Dr Shammi Akhter addressed the council, while Golam Abbas Chowdhury presided over the programme.



Obaidul Quader speaks at Barishal city unit's council yesterday at Bangabandhu Udyan.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

China Harbour celebrates Volunteers' Day in Mirsarai

CITY DESK

To celebrate International Volunteers' Day, China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC) -- a state-owned Global Fortune 500 company of China -- held an event at Mogadia Union Govt Primary School in Mirsarai of Chattogram on Thursday.

Wang Zhenhong, Deputy Managing Director of CHEC Bangladesh; Md Zahangir Master, Chairman of Mogadia Union Council; and Md Nurul Gani, President of Mogadia Govt Primary School managing committee were present on the occasion, a press release said.

"Building... a strong nation is not possible without well-developed education. We (CHEC) never forget about our social commitments to the people of this country," Zhenhong said while speaking at the event.

CHEC also distributed various school supplies among the students, and gave



scholarships to a number of meritorious but financially disadvantaged students at the event.

The company also donated sports facilities to the school.

CHEC has been operating in Bangladesh for nearly 30 years. It is currently implementing nine projects in the country, including construction and protection of a 20km coastal "superdyke" and land development projects in the Mirsarai Economic Zone.

Khulna BNP demands Khaleda's release at rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Lamenting that there is no sign of democracy in the country and claiming that there is no alternative to the release of Khaleda Zia when it comes to freeing people from the current state of misery, BNP's Khulna city and district unit leaders and activists yesterday staged a protest rally.

The rally was held in front of the party office on KD Ghosh Road in the city.

Nazrul Islam Manju, central organising secretary of BNP and president of Khulna city unit, led the protest rally.

Speaking at the rally, he said that almost every essential commodity, including onion and rice, is beyond the purchasing power of the average person.

Speakers said that the ongoing corruption, in the name of development, has caused indiscriminate misery and that without the mandate of people, the present government has seized power by "casting votes at midnight".

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Chinese worker falls to death at Payra Power Plant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Chinese worker died after falling from an under-construction building at the Payra Thermal Power Plant in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali around 10:30 am yesterday.

The dead was identified as Kin Guilin (40).

Shah Moni Jiko, assistant manager of the Bangladesh-China Power Company Limited, said Kin Guilin was working on the roof of an under-construction building in the coal storage area when he fell from around 80-ft height, leaving him critically injured.

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DHAKA-ARICHA HIGHWAY 2,000 illegal structures demolished

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) conducted the second phase of their drive against illegal structures, demolishing over 2,000 structures on both sides of Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar in the last two days.

A team of RHD started the drive from Pakija area on the highway to Bishmail area yesterday around 10:30am. The evicted structures included extended parts of multistory shops, storage facilities, and factories.

Some 15 acres of government land was recovered in the drive, said Executive Magistrate Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman Faruki, who is leading the drive.

"There are at least 5,000 illegal structures from Aminbazar to Nabinagar areas," he said, "We will extend our drive to evict all illegal structures if necessary."

The drive is being conducted from Aminbazar to Nabinagar areas ahead of Victory Day on December 16, said Faruki, also estate and law officer of RHD Dhaka.

Earlier on November 24-25, the authorities evicted over 1,000 illegal structures, recovering 10 acres of government land. RHD is conducting a strict drive against illegal structures in Savar for the first time, they said.