

PHOTO OF THE DAY

TITU DAS



Demanding cancellation of the newly released Razakars' list and punishment for conspirators who included freedom fighters in it, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal Member Secretary Manisha Chakraborty burned a copy of the list yesterday. Her father, freedom fighter Tapan Kumar Chakraborty, accompanied her at the rally on Barishal city's Sadar road.

Not India's internal issue anymore: Saki

Ganosamhati protests Citizenship (Amendment) Act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ganosamhati Andolon's Chief Coordinator Zonayed Saki yesterday said the amended citizenship legislation of India, slammed for being "anti-Muslim", will put the country's secular identity at risk and "the poison of communalism" will spread to other parts of the world.

"When your neighbour's house is on fire, it's no longer an internal issue... that fire can burn you too," he said while speaking at a rally organised by his party in front of Jatiya Press Club.

"It's high time we open a new door in this region through a united effort -- irrespective of caste, creed and religion," he said.

Among others, Ganosamhati Andolon's Executive Coordinator Abul Hasan Rubel, political council members Firoz Ahmed and Taslima Akhter also spoke.

The Indian government has been facing severe criticism since the amended citizenship bill was passed.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Students of Pledge Harbor International School present a performance about the struggles across the nine months of Liberation War, in celebration of Victory Day. The show concluded with two dance performances titled "Durgomogiri Kantar Moru" and "Amra Korbo Joy".

Evaly celebrates 1st anniversary

CITY DESK

Evaly, an e-commerce based marketplace, celebrated Victory Day as well as its first anniversary with a slogan "Victory is ours, let's move forward!", says a press release.

The celebration was held at the International Convention City Bashundhara in the capital. Participants at the programme included 3,000 customers, thousands of sellers, prominent people from different fields and media professionals.

At the beginning of the event, a documentary was presented highlighting Evaly's last one year's activities. CEO of the company, Mohammad Rassel, then spoke.

Hero, TVS, Walton and Esquire Electronics sponsored the event. Uddom was the event partner.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Martyred tea workers' families given ownership of land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Tarapur Tea Garden in Sylhet witnessed mass killings by Pakistani occupation army on April 18, 1971, during which 39 tea worker families were affected.

After 48 long years, the families are finally getting ownership of the land they have lived on for generations. Tea workers have been deprived of the right to own land for over a century, and this initiative of handing over land ownership to them is a milestone, said Faruque Mahmud Chowdhury, president of rights organisation Sushasoner Jonno Nagorik's Sylhet chapter.

On Victory Day, three families of martyred tea workers received papers finalising their land ownership. On April 18 this year, 20 families got the papers.

The tea garden, now an endowed property, is looked after by Pankaj Kumar Gupta, who lost five family members in 1971.

Pankaj handed over the documents to the martyrs' descendants. "My father, uncle, and brothers were killed before my eyes. My life was spared as I was a child. These workers' families are like me; I can feel their pain," he said.

"Other martyrs' families will get land ownership soon, as I believe they deserve this honour for the sacrifice they had to make for the country," added Pankaj.

Rickshaw-puller kills roommate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'gunj

A rickshaw-puller killed a fellow worker -- hitting him in the head with a brick -- following a row in Narayanganj's Fatullah area early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Suruj Miah (57) from Mymensingh.

Police arrested the accused rickshaw-puller Abdul Gani (56), also from Mymensingh, said Mizanur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Fatullah Model Police Station.

Inspector Mizanur said that five rickshaw-pullers were staying in a single room at Khilmarket area. Around 5am yesterday, Abdul Gani locked into an altercation with Suruj Miah over sleeping in the bed, he said.

Abdul hit Suruj with a brick -- leaving him critically injured.

Others sharing the room took Suruj to Narayanganj General Hospital. He was later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

"Doctors at DMCH declared Suruj dead yesterday noon," said the inspector. Police have arrested the accused.

Govt doesn't care about the underprivileged

Says Sultana Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted rights activist Sultana Kamal yesterday urged the government to enact the proposed Anti-discrimination Act immediately to ensure equal rights for all citizens and end discrimination towards marginalised communities like Dalit.

She claimed that the government is keeping it pending, as they do not care about those people anymore.

Sultana, chairperson of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), made the remarks at a press conference held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

National Advocacy Platform, in association with Centre for Social Activism and HEKS/EPER, organised the event to launch a report on the rights situation of Dalits and ethnic minority groups living in the plain lands.

Citing the report findings, Sultana, also convener of the Advocacy Platform, said the rights situation of these communities has been worsening gradually, as violence against them is frequent nowadays.

Most of the violent incidents they face centre land. Considering the current situation, formulation of a separate land commission for the ethnic groups and enactment of the anti-discrimination act have become absolutely necessary, she added.

The rights activist also alleged that the government could easily pass acts that tend to "snatch people's rights", but the acts that are necessary for the well-being of the masses remain pending for approval for years.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Dr Nazmul Hoque no more

CITY DESK

Dr Nazmul Hoque, a scientist, passed away at his residence in Dhaka on December 10 at the age of 75, says a press release.

Former chairman of Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation (SPARRSO), Dr Nazmul was buried at Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) Dargah graveyard in Sylhet.

He was also a faculty member of Momenshahi Cadet College (presently Mirzapur Cadet College) during 1968-80.

He left behind his wife, four sons and a host of relatives, students and well-wishers to mourn his death.

All are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

REPLACING HARDINGE BRIDGE

Railways minister seeks Japan's help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan yesterday sought assistance from Japan to build a new bridge to replace the century-old Hardinge Bridge in Pabna.

The minister made the request when the Japanese High Commissioner in Dhaka Ito Naoki met him at Sujan's office in the capital's Railway Bhaban.

"It is a very old structure, and we have to change it. We discussed several major structures with which Japan can assist, and then the minister mentioned Hardinge Bridge," Railways Secretary Mofazzel Hossain told The Daily Star last night.

The two also discussed the proposed Bangabandhu Rail Bridge over Jamuna River, Multi-modal Transport Hub centring Kamalapur Railway Station and Metro Rail projects, he said.

Japan is funding the under-construction Mass Rapid Transit-6 -- popularly known as metro rail -- and is expected to invest in the Bangabandhu Rail Bridge and Kamalapur Multi-modal Transport Hub.

The Hardinge Bridge, which has already recorded 100 years of use and counting, is one of many structures built by the British during their rule. The bridge shares a significant history of Bangladesh, and specifically, of Pabna.



To avoid traffic jam, using wrong side of the road is a common occurrence in Dhaka. Such violation of traffic rules can cause fatal accident. This photo of cars going against traffic flow on the flyover in Shantinagar area was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Father, son lose lives on road

Three killed, nine injured in other accidents

STAR REPORT

A man and his son lost their lives in a road accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar yesterday, reports our Savar correspondent.

Police said the accident happened around 11:20am in Banktown while Alauddin Mia and his 50-year-old son Kayum Mia were returning to their residence from Savar Bazar Bus Stand on a motorcycle. However, they could not say how the accident occurred.

Kayum was riding the bike with Alauddin as his pillion, said Abdullahi Baki, officer-in-charge of Savar Highway Police Station.

"Any vehicle might have hit the motorcycle from behind, or the bike hit the railing of a nearby bridge," he said.

Our Narayanganj correspondent reports, a truck and a car collided in Sawghat of Ruppang yesterday, killing two people.

The deceased were identified as car driver Ripon Mia, helper of the truck driver and Rifat Mia.

OC Mozaffar Hossain of Kanchpur Highway Police Station said the collision took place while the car was speeding away after hitting a rickshaw. The rickshaw-puller and a passenger of the car were injured, said the OC.

Our Tangail correspondent adds, a man was killed and seven were injured in a head-on collision between a microbus and a truck at the east end of Bangabandhu bridge yesterday.

Rafiqul Islam, a passenger of the microbus from Sirajganj's Ullapara, died instantly, said police.

The Dhaka-bound microbus from Sirajganj was trying to overtake another vehicle, resulting in the accident, Bangabandhu Bridge East Police Station OC Kazi Iyubur Rahman quoted witnesses as saying.

The seven injured -- the microbus driver and its other passengers -- were admitted to Tangail General Hospital.

BIMAN EMBEZZLEMENT CASE

2 officials granted bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to two officials of Biman Bangladesh Airlines in a case filed over embezzling more than Tk 118 crore through misuse of power.

The accused are: Mohammad Ali Ahsan, former general manager (cargo), and Iftekhar Hossain Chowdhury, former manager (export) of cargo department.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after their lawyer Syed Rezaur Rahman moved a petition seeking bail for his clients in the case.

The order came after a four-day long hearing. The bail will be valid till January 7, the next scheduled date of the case, said the judge in his order.

During yesterday's hearing, Rezaur Rahman told the court that his clients were not involved in the incident, as the two went on retirement in 2016 and 2017, before the embezzlement happened.

Meanwhile, Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir opposed the defence pleas saying that the two officials could not avoid responsibility as other accused persons were under their supervision.

FOREIGNERS WITHOUT WORK PERMIT

HC wants to know how many currently in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday wanted to know how many foreign nationals are working and running businesses in Bangladesh without valid work permits, how many are holding proper work permits and how much tax they have paid to Bangladesh government.

In response to a writ petition, the court ordered Bangladesh Investment Development Authorities (Bida), NGO Affairs Bureau and Bangladesh Export Processing Zone (Bepza) to submit separate reports to the HC in 60 days.

It also issued a rule asking authorities concerned why their inaction in enforcing requirement of work permit for foreign nationals should not be declared illegal.

The court asked the respondents to show cause why their inaction to take legal steps against illegal foreign workers should not

be declared illegal.

Executive chairman of Bida, secretaries to the ministries of home and finance, chairman of National Board of Revenue, executive chairman of Bepza, and director general of NGO Affairs Bureau were made respondents to the rule, petitioner's lawyer Barrister Aneek R Haque told The Daily Star.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the order and rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Md Monjur Nahid seeking necessary order to ensure that no foreign nationals work in Bangladesh without work permit.

He submitted the writ petition on December 12 based on a report published by The Daily Star on October 10 under a headline "Huge tax lost for illegal foreign employees: Bida."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1