

POLLUTING BURIGANGA

# File case against 30 washing plants

High Court directs DoE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the Department of Environment (DoE) to lodge a case against 30 washing plants in Keraniganj area within 30 days, for polluting the water of river Buriganga in the area.

The 30 factories in question are -- Ahmed Hossain, Amena, Sun Moon, Eden, Bismillah, Lotus, Global, Rubel, Anushka, Sotota, Chanchal, Abdur Rob, Dhaka, Ajan, New Sahara, Dohar, Relative, New Nasha, Unique, Mow, Setu, Quality, Joena, Kalam, Water Colour, Par Joar, GM, Cumilla, Achhia and Lily water plants.

During hearing a writ petition, the HC ordered the authorities concerned of the government to stop dumping waste into Buriganga.

The authorities concerned and local representatives have been directed to monitor the situation so that no one can dump waste into Buriganga and to take appropriate legal action if any individual or organisation pollutes its water and environment.

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Motiuir Rahman's came to Chattogram from Satkhira some 20 years ago, and tried out a lot of professions, before finding his true calling. One day five years ago, he stumbled upon a local song about betel leaves, that struck such a chord with him that he assumed this flashy get-up and hit the street with his carnivalesque betel leaf business. This photo was taken from the port city's Patenga area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# UNDOCUMENTED IN BAHRAIN 30,000 workers get regularised

JAMIL MAHMUD

An estimated 30,000 undocumented Bangladeshi migrant workers became regularised in Bahrain under an amnesty programme of the Gulf country's government that ended on December 31 last year.

Under the programme declared on April 2 last year, most Bangladeshi workers availed "flexi permit" from Bahrain government's Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) to get work opportunity there, said an official at the Bangladesh embassy in Manama.

However, a small number of the workers returned home after being regularised without paying a fine, he said.

Unlike other Arab countries, migrant workers' situation in Bahrain is comparatively better, considering the authorities allow foreign workers to live and work without any local sponsorship. In contrast, local sponsorship is mandatory under the existing "kafala system" to avail job in countries like Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

In Bahrain, to avail such work permit without local sponsor, a foreign worker has to get "flexi permit" after being registered with the LMRA.

Sheikh Mohammed Tauhidul Islam, labour welfare counsellor at the Bangladesh embassy in Manama, said a worker who obtains the permit has to pay a monthly fee of 30 Bahraini Dinar or about Tk 6,700 to the authorities.

Besides, the worker needs to pay a small amount of annual fee to maintain the legal status, he said via a WhatsApp call yesterday.

The amnesty was declared for all undocumented foreign workers living in the Gulf country, he added.

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DHAKA-MAWA-BHANGA EXPRESSWAY

# Roads ministry forms committee to set toll

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The roads, transport, and bridges ministry yesterday formed a 16-member committee to finalise the toll for Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway after Roads and Highways Department (RHD) has placed a proposal in this regard.

As per the RHD's proposal, a private car and bus have to pay Tk 278 and Tk 999 respectively for using the first expressway in the country, excluding the toll he or she has to pay for Padma Bridge, now under construction.

Led by Abu Sayed Sheikh, an additional secretary of Road Transport and Highway Division, the 16-member committee was asked to submit its report within 25 working days, Fahmida Haque Khan, deputy secretary (toll and axle) of the division, said.

The committee will have representatives of transport associations, finance ministry, RHD, Consumer Association of Bangladesh

VEHICLE TYPE	PROPOSED RATE
Trailer	2,775
Heavy truck	2,220
Medium truck	1,110
Large bus	999
Mini truck	833
Mini bus	555
Microbus/ Pickup/4WD	444
Sedan Car	277
Motorcycle	56

and several other agencies, said Fahmida, who will serve as the member secretary of the committee.

Before the committee's formation, Sabuj Uddin Khan, additional chief engineer (Dhaka zone) of RHD, placed the toll proposal before the stakeholders meeting

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# Condolences pour in for Ayesha Khanam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condolence kept pouring in for the second consecutive day yesterday at the demise of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad president and freedom fighter Ayesha Khanam.

Expressing deep shock and grief at her death, different social and non-government organisations recalled her dedication for the rights of deprived, oppressed and disenfranchised women.

A guardian of the women's movement in Bangladesh, Ayesha Khanam breathed her last early Saturday.

In a condolence message, MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said, "Freedom Fighter Ayesha Khanam dedicated her life to ensure gender equality and the social, political and economic empowerment of women. She was a role model for many of us working to ensure women's rights."

A brave compatriot like the late Ayesha Khanam will be truly missed, who was at the forefront of all progressive movements in Bangladesh, MJF observed.

"We pray for the eternal salvation of the departed soul and offer our condolences to the bereaved family," reads the MJF press release.

As a member of Shamajik Protirodh Committee led by Ayesha Khanam, MJF has been a longstanding partner of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad to protest and resist all kinds of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

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# Air link with all countries to continue

Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Civil Aviation Md Mahub Ali yesterday said air communication with all countries will continue in compliance with health regulations, as no decision was taken yet to suspend air communication with any country.

The junior minister said this while talking to reporters after inaugurating a rooftop restaurant at the Parjatan Bhaban, the headquarters of the Bangladesh Tourism Corporation, in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Replying to another

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ROAD CRASHES

# 464 died, 513 injured in last month: report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 464 people were killed and 513 were injured in 402 road accidents throughout the country in December last year, according to a report by Road Safety Foundation.

According to the Road Safety Foundation, 124 accidents (30.84 percent) occurred on highways; 129 (32.08 percent) occurred on regional roads; and 104 (25.87 percent) incidents occurred on local roads, said a press release yesterday.

Of them, 147 were killed in 138 motorcycle accidents, the press release said.

Meanwhile, a total of 17 people died in five waterway accidents, while another 19 died and four were injured in railway accidents.

According to the report, most of the accidents took place in Dhaka division. A total of 138 people died in 117 road crashes in the region.

The report was prepared by aggregating information from seven daily newspapers, five online portals and several electronic media outlets.

Unfit vehicles, reckless driving, unskilled drivers and violation of traffic rules are among the reasons behind the accidents, the report said.

GRAFT CASE

# Mir Nasir gets SC bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday granted bail to BNP leader and former state minister for civil aviation Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin in a corruption case in which he was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment.

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain granted the bail on the ground of ongoing Covid-19 situation, following a bail petition filed by Mir Nasir.

Lawyers M Asaduzzaman and Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal appeared for Nasir while Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan

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# Youth held in Dhaka for blackmailing Indian girl

He used to disseminate child pornography online, says CTTC

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Around seven months back, an Indian girl from Kanpur met a Bangladeshi youth through a dating app.

They eventually became good friends and shared their messenger IDs. As their relationship became stronger, he even managed to convince the girl to share her personal photos and videos with him.

After a while, they had a fallout. The youth then started blackmailing her and threatened to leak those contents on social media unless she gives him 2.50 lakh rupees.

He asked her to deposit the money in a Bangladeshi private bank account at its Dakkhinkhan branch in the capital.

Distressed, she contacted the Cyber Terrorism Investigation Team of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) of Bangladesh through their Facebook messenger. She explained her situation and provided her social media ID to the cyber cops.

With that, the cyber police managed to get the youth's mobile number. Tracking it, police arrested the youth -- KM Mirazul Azam (28) -- from his residence on Atish Dipankar Road in Mugda area on December 29.

Law enforcers also seized a mobile phone of Mirazul, a private university student, and found that he used various social media IDs to disseminate child pornography.

"The accused used to contact, collect, store and supply pornographic

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NOAKHALI GANG-RAPE

# HC grants bail to accused UP member

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted bail to a union parishad member in a case filed for gang-rape and torture of a woman in Noakhali's Begumganj in September last year.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order following a bail petition filed by the accused -- Moazzam Hossain alias 'Sohag Member'.

Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi vehemently opposed the bail petition during its virtual hearing.

Moazzem's lawyer Md Oziullah told The Daily Star that the HC granted bail to his client as he has been in Noakhali jail for three months although the maximum punishment for his alleged offence -- of negligence in discharging responsibility as a public representative -- is six months' imprisonment.



Grilles installed on the median of Chowhatta-Zindabazaar road, as well footpaths recovered from hawkers' encroachment, have brightened up the area. With human-pulled vehicles banned on the road since January 1, authorities are hopeful all of this brings a sense of relief to residents.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

# Towards a jam-free Sylhet

SCC removes hawkers, non-motorised vehicles from some roads; 1,070 vendors moved to market

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

After an immensely stressful year for people everywhere, Sylhet City Corporation's resolution for the new year is simple -- make life simpler for its citizens.

As the city is growing fast, the city corporation had initiated a project to expand road-width, along with plans to construct new footpaths some years ago, but traffic congestion and hawkers occupying footpaths kept setting it back.

To avert the situation this year, SCC, in association with Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP), has planned to make its major roads hawker-free, as well as prohibiting non-motorised vehicles in

some congested roads.

Mayor Ariful Haque Choudhury said, "It's been years since we're trying to keep the city roads free from hawkers and traffic congestion. Finally, with the help of SMP, we're being able to do so."

Md Nisharul Islam, commissioner of SMP, added, "The presence of hawkers in Sylhet's streets create great suffering for citizens. We will ensure that they do not get to sit on these roads anymore. As the SCC has ordered rickshaws off some city roads, we'll help them enforce this decision too."

The roads include -- Chowhatta to Taltala via Zindabazar and Bandarbarzar, Kean Bridge and its adjacent area,

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One wouldn't know a city corporation designated waste disposal spot is right around the corner while passing by Mirpur-1 Shah Ali Dia Bari road, where indiscriminate waste disposal has left the road cramped and in a grotesque state. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

**স্কলার্স স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজ**  
(ইংরেজি মাধ্যমে দেশীয় শিক্ষা)  
[তথ্য ইংলিশ ভাষানে পাঠদানকারী বাংলাদেশের প্রথম শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান]  
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**২০২১ শিক্ষাবর্ষে PG - IX শ্রেণিতে ভর্তি চলছে**

**English Medium এর ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদেরও ভর্তির সুবর্ণ সুযোগ**

**ছাত্রীদের জন্য আলাদা ক্যাম্পাস**

**সফলতার ২০ বছর!**

যোগাযোগ:  
বাড়ি নং-৭১, সড়ক নং ৭/এ, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা-১২০৯  
০২-৫৫০০০০৪৫, ০১৭৮৭৩৩৩৯৯, ০১৭১৪০৫৭৫৬৬  
০১৭১৪৪৬৬৬৬৬, ০১৭১৪৪৬৬৬৬৬, ০১৮৭৪০০০৬৬৬৬  
অফিস সময়: সপ্তাহের বাতিঘর প্রতিদিন সকাল ৮টা থেকে বিকাল ৫টা পর্যন্ত

রিজিষ্টার্ড জেনারেল মো: আব্দুল হান্নান (অব) অধ্যক্ষ, স্কলার্স স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজ  
সাবেক অধ্যক্ষ, ঢাকা ট্রেডিং সেন্টার মডেল কলেজ