



Power plant filling up Meghna bank

River commission asks it to stop

MASUK HRIDOV, Brahmanbaria

The state-owned Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited (APSCL) is filling the Meghna bank with sand to construct a new unit near Sohagpur village. The sand is being extracted from the river bed.

Locals allege that the administration is sitting idle. Filling up the river bank without permission from the Department of Environment is a criminal offence, yet the company has already filled up around eight acres of the river bank and adjacent low-lying land claiming that it is their land.

Meanwhile, a team of the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) yesterday visited the spot and asked the APSCL to stop filling up the river.

"We will submit a report after verifying the land documents and talking to all related government agencies. However, river is the main priority of the NRCC. So, we will see whether they [APSCL] are hampering the flow of the river or not," said Md Shafullah, deputy chief hydrologist of the NRCC, after visiting the spot.

The move of APSCL came to the fore after one Nasir Mia, of Sohagpur village in Ashuganj, filed a complaint with the NRCC chairman.

He also complained to the deputy director of the BIWTA in Ashuganj and Bhairab river ports.

In the complaint, Nasir said the way the APSCL is filling up the river bank, it would hamper the flow of this river. If

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Sand from the Meghna being pumped to the shore via large pipes to fill up the bank to construct a new Ashuganj Power Plant unit in Brahmanbaria. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MASHUK HRIDOV

5 Rohingyas died adrift in Andaman Sea

Says Fortify Rights

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

More than five Rohingyas, who were among some 90 on a boat adrift in the Andaman Sea, have died and the rest are desperate for food and water, said Fortify Rights, quoting families who talked to the refugees.

"More than five people died today... please try to send water by any means," a Rohingya man told the regional rights body in one recording.

Fortify Rights spoke with Rohingya refugees in Malaysia, Bangladesh, and India, who made phone contacts with passengers on the boat.

A Rohingya on the boat told a family member in Bangladesh over phone that there are 90 people on board, including 65 women, who departed Bangladesh on February 11 and that the boat went adrift after engine failure. Bangladesh is home to some one million

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3 'robbers' killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three alleged Rohingya robbers were killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in Teknaf upazila's Shalbagan hill area yesterday afternoon.

Rab claimed that the deceased include leader of the gang Zakir.

The identity of the two other deceased could not be known immediately.

Rab said one of their personnel was shot during the "gunfight".

The law enforcers also recovered firearms and ammunition.

Maj Mehedi Hasan, deputy commander of Rab-15 in Cox's Bazar, said following a tip-off, a Rab team raided Shalbagan area around 4:00pm.

Sensing Rab's presence, the gang opened fire on the law enforcers, the major claimed.

The Rab team retaliated with gunfire in self defence, the officer said, adding that the exchange of fire lasted for around an hour.

At one stage, the robbers fled the scene and hid in a forest, the Rab officer added. Later, the law enforcers recovered the three bodies from the scene.

Rab recovered eight firearms and 25 bullets from the spot.

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Most parents think it's still unsafe

Finds survey of Citizen's Platform for SDGs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty-five percent of guardians interviewed do not feel safe to send their children to schools when they will be reopened, a survey of Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, said yesterday.

The schools have remained closed due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country.

The platform added that 51 percent of guardians consider that their children's schools are not capable enough of maintaining health guidelines.

It carried out the online survey between February 17 and 22, and 1,960 people were respondents of it.

Of them, 576 were guardians, 370 teachers and 1,014 a cross-section of people from across the board, said Avra Bhattacharjee, joint director of Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Avra made a presentation at a virtual discussion on "at last schools are reopening and how far we are prepared" organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.

The online survey said 67 percent of guardians were not interested to provide any kind of extra fees to schools for maintaining the cost for ensuring health safety.

It added that 68 percent of teachers opined that their schools are capable enough of maintaining the health safety guideline. About 69 percent of teachers said the government should give money to schools for meeting the cost for ensuring health safety.

On March 17 last year, the government closed all educational institutions, aiming to contain the spread of coronavirus. The government in phases extended the closure till February 28.

Moderating the discussion, Debapriya Bhattacharya, convenor of

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Review, amend DSA, stop its abuse

Say speakers at programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Digital Security Act 2018 needs to be reviewed and amended with more clarity, and abuse of this act to stifle journalists and others should be stopped, speakers at a programme in the capital said yesterday.

Society for Media and Suitable Human-communication Techniques (SoMaSHTE) recommended immediate amendment of the act, especially sections 25 and 31, at a programme at The Daily Star Centre.

"DSA prevents journalists from reporting on many issues. Self-censorship is common among journalists and sections 25 and 31 of the DSA are particular barriers for the free press," said SoMaSHTE director (programme) Mir Shahidul Alam.

Journalists need to be united, and journalists'

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Nasa releases first audio from Mars



AFP, Washington

The US space agency Nasa on Monday released the first audio from Mars, a faint crackling recording of a gust of wind captured by the Perseverance rover.

Nasa also released the first video of last week's landing of the rover, which is on a mission to search for signs of past life on the Red Planet.

A microphone did not work during the rover's descent to the surface, but it was able to capture audio once it landed on Mars.

Nasa engineers played a 60-second recording. "What you hear there 10 seconds in is an actual wind gust on the surface of Mars picked up by the microphone and sent back to us here on Earth,"

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DU dorms opening on May 17

Says VC after academic council meet

STAR REPORT

Amid ongoing agitation by students, Dhaka University authorities yesterday decided not to hold any exams or reopen student dormitories before May 17.

In accordance with the recent decision by the education ministry, Dhaka University (DU)

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 24

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:20 12:45 4:30 6:03 7:30
JAMAAT 5:55 1:15 4:45 6:07 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

G7 CONDEMNATIONS, SANCTIONS Myanmar junta under renewed pressure

Anti-coup protesters gather again; Malaysia deports 1,086 Myanmar nationals



AGENCIES

Myanmar's military leaders came under renewed pressure yesterday as the world's wealthiest nations condemned the junta for responding to anti-coup demonstrators "with violence", a rebuke coming on the heels of tightened sanctions from Washington and Brussels.

Authorities have gradually ratcheted up their use of force against a massive and largely peaceful civil disobedience

campaign demanding the return of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Three anti-coup protesters have been killed in demonstrations so far, while a man patrolling his Yangon neighbourhood against night arrests was also shot dead on the weekend.

"Use of live ammunition against unarmed people is unacceptable," the foreign ministers of the G7 group of rich democracies -- comprising Canada, France,

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Over 1,000 Bangladeshis died in Qatar in 10 years

The Guardian investigation finds

STAR REPORT

At least 1,018 Bangladeshi migrant workers have died in Qatar between 2010 and November 2020, reveals an investigative report of The Guardian yesterday.

They are among more than 6,500 migrant workers from South Asia -- India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka -- who have died in the Middle Eastern country.

Of the dead, 2,711 are Indians, 1,641 Nepalese, 824 Pakistanis, and 557 Sri Lankans.

The Guardian says the total death toll is significantly higher, as these figures do not include deaths of workers from a number of countries, including the Philippines and Kenya, that send a significant number of workers to the oil-rich country.

Qatar is home to

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Tanjina Ashraf Khan Mou participates in World Health and Wellness Congress

From Bangladesh for the first time a Mental Health Professional, Tanjina Ashraf Khan Mou has been conferred with the prestigious award of "The Global Healthcare Champions" endorsed by World Federation of Healthcare Leaders. The Global Healthcare Champions award glorifies the accomplishments made by those who work selflessly with the motive of providing happiness in our lives and making a difference to the society.

Tanjina Ashraf Khan Mou has been the driving force behind her successful enterprise 'Mentcouch International'. Her contribution has been recognized in the sector and she has been honoured as a "Mental Healthcare Achiever in Covid Time" for raising the bar with her dynamic spirit and innovative outlook. She developed intensive, ambitious business strategies and continuously made various mental health services accessible to local and global community in order to help during such unprecedented times.

The event took place in Taj Lands End, Mumbai, recently where various healthcare leaders and jury were present from all across the world.

World has come to know and see the other side of Bangladesh in terms of its presence in the field of Mental Health through her. This time only for her Bangladeshi flag has taken place in this global platform concerning the very important topic of Mental Health. Bangladesh is proud of Tanjina Ashraf Khan Mou. She is the daughter of Mr. Kamrul Ashraf Khan Poton former Member of Parliament, Narsingdi-2.

