



Power plant filling up Meghna bank

River commission asks it to stop

MASUK HRIDOV, Brahmanbaria

The state-owned company -- Ashuganj Power Station -- is filling sand the Meghna river bank to construct a new unit of the power plant in 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 authorities have already filled up around eight acres of river bank and adjacent low land claiming that it is their own land.

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 to the NRCC. So, we will see whether they [APSCL] are hampering the flow of the river or not," said Md Shafiqullah, deputy chief hydrologist of NRCC, after visiting the spot.

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

He also complained to the deputy director of 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.

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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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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 should be stopped against journalists and others, 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 clauses 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 clauses 25 and 31 of the DSA are particular barriers for the free press," said SoMaSHTe director (program) Mir Shahidul Alam.

Journalists need to be united, and journalists' associations need to be more united to defend their rights, he recommended.

"Unjustified pressure from the ruling party, lawmakers and public representatives, law enforcement agencies, businessmen and other professionals, unfavourable laws and ownership of the media are the major obstacles of publishing news in media," said

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Most parents think it's still unsafe

Finds survey of Citizen's Platform for SDGs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty-five percent guardians 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 remain closed due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country.

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

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 cross sections 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 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 teachers opined that their schools are capable enough of maintaining the health safety guideline. About 69 percent teachers said the government should give money to schools for maintaining 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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AL JAZEERA'S REPORT

Court bins sedition case against 4

Says plaintiff not authorised to file such case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the plaintiff to take back the sedition case filed against four people, including Swedish-Bangladeshi journalist and Netra News Editor-in-Chief Tasneem Khalil and Hungary-based entrepreneur Zulkarnain Saer Khan alias Sami, over the recent Al Jazeera report titled All the Prime Minister's Men.

The two other accused are: British journalist David Bergman and Mostefa Souag, acting director general of Al Jazeera Media Network.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam passed the order as Moshiur Malek,

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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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Muzakkir's father files murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Four days after Noakhali was rocked by violence that left a journalist dead, a murder case was filed yesterday.

Journalist Borhan Uddin Muzakkir's father Nurul Huda Master filed the case with Companyganj Police Station accusing unnamed people, said police.

The deceased's elder brother Mawlana Noor Uddin said there was CCTV footage and if the law enforcers scrutinised them, they would be able to identify the killers.

He claimed that the mobile phone and camera, which Muzakkir was using during the violence, had been recovered.

Companyganj Police Station's officer-in-charge (OC) Mir Zahidul Haque Rony said, "We have already started working on tracing the killers."

None had been arrested as of 5:00pm yesterday.

With this, three cases have been filed in connection with the deadly

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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.

