

BANGLA BOOKS IN BRAILLE

A glimmer of light and hope

DIPAN NANDY

Twelve-year-old Namira has never seen light in her entire life. Nor has she seen colours, alphabets or the faces of her loved ones. However, her seemingly devoid-of-light life is still brighter than ever, for she has the power of books written in braille.

On the 16th day of the Boi Mela, Namira was spotted inside the stall of "Sporsho Braille Publication". Sporsho started its journey 14 years ago, aiming to make books available for visually impaired readers.

A book launching programme was organised at Bangla Academy's information centre, for the eight braille books published by Sporsho. The event was joined by writer and educationist Muhammad Zafar Iqbal. "I am reluctant to call them blind. They can do things that we can't. If we give them what they deserve, they will surpass us," he said.

Researcher Mofidul Haque said, "It's a great initiative, for it allows visually impaired readers the joy of reading."

"We only hope that other publishers will step in with similar initiatives and publish at least one book in braille. That will create more reading opportunities for visually impaired readers," said Nazia Jabin, founder of Sporsho.



On the 16th day of the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday, 12-year-old Namira was spotted inside the stall of "Sporsho Braille Publication". Namira has never seen light in her entire life, but her seemingly devoid-of-light life is still brighter than ever, for she has the power of books written in braille.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Four killed in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Brahmanbaria

Four passengers died yesterday when a covered van collided head-on with a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Brahmanbaria's Bijoynagar upazila.

The deceased are Mursheda Begum (50), Dudu Mia (60), Md Farid, and Hosne Ara Begum, confirmed OC Shahjalal Alam of Khantihata Highway Police Station.

A Sylhet-bound covered van collided head-on with the auto-rickshaw around 6:45am, leaving two people dead. The injured were rushed to a nearby hospital. Two of them died on the way.

Both vehicles were seized. However, drivers managed to flee, he added.

A playground for every ward

Says Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they will set up at least one playground in every ward of DSCC.

The mayor shared this while speaking at a press conference regarding the second "Dhaka Mayor Cup Inter-Ward Sports Competition 2022".

The tournament will be inaugurated on March 5 at Bir Shrestha Shahid Shipahi Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur, said organisers.

Will strict measures work this time?

Authorities decide to ramp up drives against illegal, unfit vehicles

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With the number of road crashes on the rise, authorities have decided to take a tough stance against unfit and illegal vehicles across the country, aiming to improve the situation.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) will write to district, civil and police administrations to intensify drives against unfit vehicles, and illegally operated three-wheelers like Nasimon and Karimon.

Authorities will also be directed to evict markets set up occupying parts of highways, as such establishments often cause congestion and road crashes.

All these decisions were taken at a stakeholder meeting BRTA convened yesterday at its headquarters in the capital.

However, authorities had taken similar decisions and conducted drives after major accidents, but those initiatives lost momentum after just a few days. As a result, such vehicles return to the roads again.

BRTA arranged the meeting with transport leaders, experts and police personnel, following recent major accidents. According to a police report, the number of accidents and fatalities rose by 30 percent last year, compared to 2020.

ACTION AGAINST DEFAULT VEHICLES Action against vehicles without updated documents was one of the major agendas of yesterday's meeting.

BRTA data shows that at least 5.08 lakh registered vehicles, which are eligible for fitness tests, did not renew their documents till January this year.

The meeting's working paper mentioned that six members of a family in Cox's Bazar were killed in a recent road accident, and it was later found that the offending vehicle had no updated papers.

The Daily Star had found that the pickup



DECISIONS | THE SCENARIO

Intensify drives against unfit vehicles, illegal three-wheelers

Evict markets set up occupying parts of highways

Involve district-level units of road safety, regional transport committees

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that killed the six brothers on February 8 had no updated papers for the last three years, but was being driven all this time.

Like the pickup, many vehicles are being driven with no updated fitness, tax token and route permit across the country, reads the document.

Although BRTA's mobile courts and police carry out regular drives, operation of such vehicles could not be stopped fully, it reads.

BRTA spokesperson Mahub-e-Rabbani said the meeting decided to intensify drives against "default" vehicles and will increase monitoring in this regard.

Abul Kalam, a leader of Dhaka Road Transport Owners Association, who took part in the meeting, said BRTA will write to DCs and SPs to take action against "default" vehicles.

ACTION AGAINST THREE-WHEELERS Action against illegal three-wheelers, including Nasimon and Karimon, was another important agenda.

The meeting document mentioned that these vehicles are not mechanically safe, and their slow speed increases risks of accidents on highways, roads meant for speedy vehicles. In recent times, such vehicles were involved in several road accidents, killing most of their passengers.

Rabbani, also director (road safety) of BRTA, said they will ask authorities concerned to take strong measures to stop their operation on highways.

The meeting also decided to involve the district-level units of road safety committee and regional transport committee in this regard, another participant of the meeting said.

Moving forward following ideals of Bangabandhu

Says prime minister



PHOTO: PID

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her commitment to improving the living standard of people through socioeconomic development of the country.

"I am working for achieving a goal... I have to implement the ideals with which my father had made the country independent. That is my promise. In this position, I would say that I have to do it," she said while presiding over a meeting of National Economic Council (NEC) held at the NEC conference room. She joined the meeting virtually from Gono Bhaban.

Referring to the development of Bangladesh in the last 13 years, Hasina said Bangladesh has already attained the status of a developing country, graduating from LDC.

"We will move forward as a developing country and become a developed one in the future."

Recalling the contribution of Bangabandhu in rebuilding the war-ravaged Bangladesh, Hasina said following the footsteps of the Father of the Nation, the government has taken massive development plans and is implementing those.

'No to war, peace in Ukraine'

Bangladeshis, Ukrainians stage anti-war demo



PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshis who live in Ukraine but are currently stuck in Bangladesh due to the Russian invasion of the country, staged a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding an end to the war.

Several Ukrainian nationals also took part in the demo.

They were seen gathering in front of the press club with posters that read "No to War -- Peace in Ukraine".

Gausul Islam Shahin, one of the protestors, said, "My family members are now in a dangerous situation in Ukraine. This is very concerning. We want peace; we don't want war."

#MyGoal campaign winners awarded

An initiative of UNDP, Star to raise awareness about SDGs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Not only Faatiha Aayat is a writer, she is also a child rights activist and climate campaigner.

The US-based Bangladeshi recently recommended a 100 billion dollar fund from the developed nations -- to spend on Bangladesh's sustainable adaptation to climate change -- as an impacted country of climate change.

She made the recommendations in an essay she wrote as part of a competition titled, "My goal for a better future".

Faatiha won the first prize in the competition, jointly organised by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and The Daily Star to raise awareness on SDGs.

And she is only nine years old.

Yesterday, she was awarded in a ceremony at the capital's IDB Bhaban, UNDP's country office, along with two other awardees.

On behalf of her, her grandparents Mir Md Alamgir and Rashida Begum received the crest and Tk 6,000 as a token honorarium.

The other two awardees were -- Md Saiful Islam and Tanjila Ahmed. A total of 648 youths of different professions, with different personal goals, participated in the campaign.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of essay competition on SDG awareness, jointly organised by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and The Daily Star, were awarded at the capital's IDB Bhaban yesterday. A total of 648 youths of different professions, with different personal goals, participated in the campaign. From them, three were awarded.

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAR 3

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30
Jamaat	5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION