

'ATTACK' BY LOCALS BCL faction blocks main entrance to Ctg university

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Chattogram

A faction of Bangladesh Chhatra League's Chittagong University unit yesterday locked the gate of the university and suspended the shuttle train and bus services to the campus, demanding arrest of locals who allegedly assaulted its two activists the night before.

Classes and exams of several departments were postponed as the BCL men put logs on the roads and kept the campus virtually locked for almost 10 hours since 4:00am.

The shuttle train and teachers' bus services did not resume until 5:00pm.

According to BCL sources, Pradeep

SEE PAGE 6 COL 8



A police official removing logs from the road in front of Chittagong University's main entrance yesterday afternoon. Chhatra League activists had blocked roads leading to the campus, demanding arrest of locals who allegedly beat up two of them on Tuesday night.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Ask US envoy about rights situation in his country Momen tells journos

DIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has wondered why Bangladeshi journalists don't ask the US ambassador about the human rights situation and the state of democracy in his country.

In a message sent to journalists yesterday, Momen said, "Would you please ask questions to the US ambassador why they cannot stop such extrajudicial killings in their own country?"

The message comes a day after US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas spoke on the US priorities of human rights, democracy, and media freedom.

Addressing a Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) Talk at the Jatiya Press Club on Tuesday, the envoy said the US wants to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

UNAUTHORISED HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

All will be shut down

Says health minister; errant ones to be warned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All unauthorised private hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres will be shut down, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

Besides, private healthcare organisations failing to provide quality services will be warned, he said while addressing a programme held in the capital marking the National Health and Welfare Day 2022.

He made the statement at a time when the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) closed 1,440 illegal healthcare facilities as of yesterday since the ongoing countrywide crackdown began on May 25.

"These initiatives have been taken to bring transparency in the health sector and ensure quality services," Maleque said.

The minister mentioned there were around 11,000 private hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres across the country. "A question has been raised regarding the quality of service delivered by many of them."

Civil surgeons from 64 districts, divisional health directors, upazila health and family planning officers, and officials from the DGHS and the health ministry joined the day-long event.

Presided over by Prof Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the DGHS, Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional director general (administration), and Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora, additional director general (planning and development), among

"The submission of a large number of applications is evidence of lack of monitoring. Under this circumstance, the question is how much impactful the drive will be."

others, spoke at the event.

Meanwhile, Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday said the ongoing drive against the unauthorised healthcare facilities was a good thing, but it was not enough.

The graft watchdog added that to get sustainable benefits, the government should enact a law to control and monitor the private healthcare sector and implement it fast.

"The submission of a large number of applications is evidence of lack of monitoring. Under this circumstance,

the question is how much impactful the drive will be," TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said in a press release issued yesterday.

Since the DGHS announced on May 24 that the illegal healthcare organisations would be shut down, it has been receiving a barrage of new applications for getting licences.

As of yesterday, the DGHS got 592 new applications online, its official told The Daily Star.

Iftekharuzzaman urged the authorities concerned to issue and renew licences of the organisations by maintaining proper procedures.

The TIB boss also proposed forming a high-power regulatory body to monitor the quality of the private healthcare providers and ensure good governance there.

It also urged the government to ensure that the health directorate officials are able to complete their jobs unbiased and free from political influence.

Stressing the need for conducting such drives on a regular basis, the TIB demanded that all those involved in operating the illegal healthcare facilities be brought to book. Otherwise, the initiative would not be fruitful, added the release.

Almost entire family Hoarders of every hue in it

FROM PAGE 1
place when a speeding Pangsha-bound truck collided head-on with the Rajbari-bound easy-bike and then hit the car. Three people died on the spot and six were injured."

Saraj Mia, station officer of Rajbari Fire Service and Civil Defence, said, "We rushed to the spot on information and found Masinor Bibi, Shela Begum and Nasir Mia dead. We rescued the critically injured and sent them to

Kalukhali Upazila Health Complex. There, on-duty doctors declared three others dead.

"The survivors were then sent to Faridpur Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital for treatment."

Police seized the truck but the driver had fled by then.

"We are preparing to file a case in this regard and looking for the truck driver," said OC Jewel Rana.

FROM PAGE 1
from the commerce ministry to export 3,000 tonnes of aromatic rice.

"We will keep the remaining 2,000 tonnes for the local market," he said.

The minister also said that officials found sacks of rice marked Akij Group at rented rice mills in Mohadevpur, Naogaon.

"Rice should be in sacks mentioning the name of the rented mill, not Akij," he said, citing the rules that were formulated to prevent hoarding.

Contacted, Minhaj Ahmed, chief operating officer at Akij, said the firm will abide by the government directives to keep the market stable, but declined to comment on the specific allegation.

Biswajit Saha, director of corporate and regulatory affairs of City Group, said his company buys paddy from the market and sells rice. "We do not pack the rice bought from the market."

Redhwanur Rahman, head of division and

executive director at Bashundhara Food & Beverage Industries Ltd, said his company does not have rice mills and it does not market rice.

Kamruzzaman Kamal, director of marketing at Pran RFL Group, said, "We do not hoard rice. We buy paddy from farmers gradually and sell rice in the market."

Faria Yasmin, business director at ACI Foods and Commodity Businesses, said, "We are doing ethical business in Bangladesh, following all the rules and

regulations." **CRACKDOWN ON HOARDERS**

Five teams of officials conducted raids at the capital's Hatirpool, Karwan Bazar, Mirpur 1, Babubazar and Mohamadpur yesterday, but could not find hoarders.

In Dinajpur, rice prices dropped by Tk 2 a kg amid the drive.

On Tuesday, two mobile courts fined six traders Tk 63,000 for illegal hoardings in Hakimpur and Birampur upazilas of Dinajpur.

HC stays 3 cases

FROM PAGE 12
the Supreme Court against the HC's stay orders.

Lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua appeared for Kajol.

On November 8 last year, a Dhaka tribunal framed charges against Kajol in the three cases lodged under the Digital Security Act, 2018.

Awami League lawmaker (Magura-1) Saifuzzaman Shikhor, Jubo Mahila League's central committee members Usmin Ara Belly and Sumaiya Chowdhury Bonya filed three cases with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Hazaribagh and Kamrangirchar police stations under the DSA on March 9, 10 and 11 in 2020.

Investigation Officer Mohammad Russell Mollah, also a sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of police, submitted three charge sheets in the cases to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on February 4, March 14 and April 8 last year.

Kajol was charged with circulating indecent, defamatory, objectionable,

and fake information about some ministers, lawmakers, and top Jubo Mahila League leaders on Facebook in the cases.

He went missing on March 10, 2020. The Border Guard Bangladesh found him roaming around the Benapole border area on May 3 the same year and detained him. He was sent to jail by a Jashore court the same day under section 54 of the Code of the Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Later, he was shown arrested in the three cases filed under the DSA.

The lower court denied him bail for seven months until the HC on November 24, 2020, granted him bail in one of the cases. On December 17 that year, the HC granted him bail in two other cases after Kajol's lawyer argued that probes had to be completed within 75 days of filing of the cases, and the investigators failed to do so.

The photojournalist walked out of jail on bail on December 25, 2020.

Took up challenge as my purpose

FROM PAGE 1
"Every time while preparing the budget, we evaluate how much progress we have made in implementing election pledges."

She mentioned that the AL government also considers how to implement the unfulfilled election pledges.

Talking about the Padma Bridge, the premier said her government could take up the challenge as she was honest in her purpose.

"We have built the bridge with our own money. Inshallah, I will inaugurate the bridge on June 25."

Hasina said Bangladesh has proved that it is no longer dependent on foreign funding by self-financing the construction of the Padma Bridge. "Bangladesh has changed a lot."

The premier also said a Canadian court declared all the allegations regarding this project false and baseless.

In this connection, the PM mentioned that Dr Muahmmad Yunus, just for a post of the managing director of Grameen Bank, carried out the conspiracy. "He illegally held the MD post of Grameen Bank at the age of 71. He lodged a case regarding the matter and lost," she said.

Hasina alleged that the World Bank cancelled the funding of the project on Dr Yunus' request.

She said the government was advancing the country using modern technology.

The PM said the government has developed the country from the rural level with 90 percent of its own sources.

The government has been able to bring the poverty rate under 20 percent, she said, expressing optimism that the rate would decline further in the upcoming census report.

"Coronavirus has slowed down our economic

growth. The growth reduced to 3.5 percent from 8 percent due to the pandemic. That was only for three months. Later, we regained our momentum and now we have almost 7 percent growth."

She mentioned that the government was preparing to face the challenges that may arise because of the country's graduation to a developing nation by 2026. "This will not be a tough job for us. Our export is increasing and the remittance inflow is increasing."

The AL chief said the party's next council will be held within December this year.

Hasina also put emphasis on strengthening the party to better serve the people.

She said the government was thinking of vaccinating the under-12 population against Covid-19 with the approval from the WHO.

"We have taken every

4 get life for throwing acid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Four people were sentenced to life imprisonment yesterday in two cases over hurling acid at three persons in Chattogram city and Rangunia upazila.

Chattogram's 5th Additional Sessions Judge Nargis Akhter and Chattogram's 3rd Additional District and Sessions Judge Ferdous Wahid separately handed down the punishments, said court sources.

Two siblings -- Farzana Latif Saki, 35, and her brother Iftekhar Latif Sadi, 33 -- were sentenced by Nargis Akhter for throwing acid on their two cousins in the port city's Badurtala area in 2010.

In another case, Masuma Khatun and her daughter Mustafa Begum were awarded the punishment by the court of Ferdous Wahid in connection with the incident that took place in 1995.

Convicts Saki and Sadi were sent to jail after the delivery of the verdict. The two others -- Masuma and Mustafa -- are on the run, said the sources.

20kg gold seized in 2 dists

STAR REPORT

The BGB and Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID) seized around 20kg gold in Jashore and Chattogram yesterday.

On information, a team of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), along with an executive magistrate, intercepted three cars near Bahadurpur Government Primary School in Jashore around 3:00am.

They recovered 135 gold bars weighing 15.8kg from the cars and detained six people, said Lt Col Shahed Minhaj Siddique, commanding officer of 49th BGB Battalion.

The detainees are: Jahidul Islam, Nazmul Hossain, Arif Miazi, Shah Jalal, Abu Hayat Jony and Rabiul Alam Rabbi.

In Chattogram, a CIID team recovered 34 gold bars weighing 4kg from a passenger of an Air Arabia flight from Dubai at Shah Amanat International Airport.

Officials boarded the aircraft after facing obstructions from the aircraft staffers, said AKM Sultan Mahamud, deputy commissioner of CIID, Chattogram. He said officials detained passenger Saiful Islam.

Hit by DSCC garbage truck, woman dies in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman died after being hit by a garbage truck of Dhaka South City Corporation while she was crossing a road in the capital's Mugda on Tuesday night.

The dead -- Nazma Begum, 45 -- was a resident of Madaripur's Shibchar upazila.

Mugda Police Station OC Jamal Uddin Mir said the vehicle hit the woman in TT Para of Mugda around 10:00pm, leaving her badly injured.

She was rushed to Mugda Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead, the OC added.

Police seized the vehicle and detained driver Sohel Rana.

In November last year, two people, including a Notre Dame College student, were killed after two garbage trucks of two Dhaka city corporations hit them in the capital's Gulistan and Panthapath areas.

Father fulfils

FROM PAGE 1
nurse, possibly after watching footage on television of the country's longest bridge being built.

Apurba's father Jashim Uddin, a government employee residing in the capital's Jatrabari, decided to fulfil his son's dream -- a moving tale that was told in the country's highest spheres.

On March 30, the father hired an ambulance to take his son close to the 6.15-km double-decker bridge, which will open to the public on June 25.

Before they could go near the bridge, however, security personnel stopped them.

But after passionate pleas from the father and seeing the eagerness of the bed-ridden youth, project officials let the ambulance progress to a point beneath the bridge at the Mawa end, close to the shore of the mighty river.

"From that spot, my son could see the bridge so closely. He could not speak, but his face was lit up with smiles," Jashim told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I could not hold back tears seeing the smile on his face," said the father.

The story of the journey to see one of the country's biggest infrastructural achievements found its way to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. During yesterday's Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc) meeting, the PM shared the incident with her cabinet colleagues and officials, according to sources present.

"What the prime minister said has reflected the emotional attachment of the countrymen with the Padma Bridge," said a source.

Built with the country's own funds, the long-cherished road-rail bridge will directly connect the capital with the southwestern parts of the country. The Tk 30,193 crore project will have an immense impact on the economy, contributing around 1.2 percent to the annual GDP once the bridge is operational.

An project official, wishing not to be named, told this newspaper that the family's effort to fulfil their son's wishes moved them.

"There's no permission from the authorities to allow any vehicle from outside on the bridge. But we allowed the family in the ambulance to take a tour to a point under the bridge from where they could see the whole structure," the official said.

Before allowing them to go through, they talked to Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam, the official said.

Jashim Uddin said his son, younger of two children, was diagnosed with problems in his heart in 2011, and fell seriously ill in 2016. Things took a turn for the worse in 2018 when he stopped speaking.

"We had to arrange treatment at home with a nurse attached. A ventilation system has been installed so that he can breathe," he said.

Jashim Apurba used to talk about the bridge while it was under construction.

"Perhaps his interest grew after watching the construction on television or hearing from us," he said.

"I told him about the inauguration of the bridge today [yesterday]. I promised that I will take him to a Padma Bridge trip at least once after its inauguration."