

‘END TO EXTORTION’

# Auto-rickshaw drivers block Savar highway

10 including one cop hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Battery-run auto-rickshaw drivers blocked Savar's Nabinagar-Chandra highway to protest what they claim is “police extortion” yesterday. Thousands of drivers blocked the highway’s Palli Bidyut area around noon. They burned tyres along the side of the road in protest. The drivers also clashed with police, who were trying to remove the blockade. Several vehicles have been left vandalised. The protest led to a two-km long traffic jam on both sides of the highway for one hour till 1:00pm. However, police charged baton on the demonstrators and managed to remove them from the highway around 1:00pm, said Ashulia Police Station’s Officer-in-Charge Kamruzzaman. The OC said that one policeman was injured when protestors threw brickbats at them while they were working on removing the blockade. According to the auto-rickshaw drivers, at least eight to ten protestors sustained injuries during the police action. The injured received primary treatment from local hospitals. Officer-in-Charge of Savar Highway Police Station Atikur Rahman, said, “Battery-run auto-rickshaws are banned on highways. We seize and fine them if they are seen on the highway. A fine of Tk 2,500 is collected through Ucash from the drivers and a receipt is also given. There is no place for extortion.”



A friendly game of football at the beach is perhaps one of the most refreshing activities during a vacation. These youngsters who recently visited Cox’s Bazar seem to think just that, as they were seen sprinting on the soft sand while the cool breeze flew by.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# Headache for Mymensingh residents

City corporation unable to remove roadside construction materials, despite attempts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Construction materials of high-rise buildings kept on roadsides and footpaths for months have become a common scene in the Mymensingh city. Even though this is causing great peril to residents, no action has been taken against these construction firms, alleged locals. At Durgabari by-lane in the city, construction of a high-rise building has been going on for months occupying the footpaths with construction materials and hindering pedestrian movement by narrowing the road. But the authorities have hardly ever intervened in this situation.



According to the Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) sources, construction work on over 100 high-rise buildings is ongoing in the city at present. Busy roads like Durgabari Road, Ganginarpar and CK Ghosh Road, have been narrowed down for illegal parking and construction materials, resulting in daily gridlocks in the city. Advocate Nazrul Islam Chunnu, convener of Jonouddhog Mymensingh (a citizens’ forum), said on multiple occasions, they informed the MCC authorities about the occupied footpaths and roadsides with construction materials but to no avail. Occasionally, MCC takes steps against this issue.

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# Trial of graft case against Shahed begins

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The trial against Regent Group Chairman Mohammad Shahed in a case filed for acquiring illegal wealth worth Tk 1.69 crore began at a Dhaka court with deposition of the complainant yesterday. Judge Mohammad Nazrul Islam of the Special Judge’s Court-10 of Dhaka recorded the statement of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Farid Ahmed Patwary, who filed the case. Later, the defence for Shahed cross-examined the witness partly on different points. The judge then fixed July 17 for the next hearing. On April 17, the same court framed charges against Shahed in the case.

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# A loss of Tk 200cr in livestock, poultry



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASTR

DWOHA CHOWDHURY and MINTU DESHWARA

Rearing cattle has always been easy for the people of haor areas in the country’s northeastern region due to ample supply of natural fodder like grass. But the situation has changed this year. Grazing land in 34 upazilas of four northeastern districts – Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sunamganj – have been submerged by floodwater. The recent flood caused a loss of over Tk 200 crore in livestock and poultry sector in this region, according to Sylhet Divisional Livestock Office. Thousands of people took shelter in flood centres, while others kept searching for high-ground with their cattle. Sanat Saha, a resident of Baramaidan village in Moulvibazar’s Barlekha upazila, has been rearing four cows for the last eight months, ardently waiting to reap the profits in the forthcoming Eid-ul-Azha. When his house went under floodwater, he along with his five family members and four cows took shelter on a nearby road. “The fodder stored in our house has been damaged completely. Our grazing lands have also submerged. I’ve been struggling since last week to arrange fodder for my cattle,” he said. Like him, thousands of the region’s people are

passing their days in fear of losing their cattle through starvation. “We’re in deep trouble as we’re not being able to arrange fodder for our cattle. We’re not sure, how long our cattle will survive in such a situation,” said Sarada Biswas, a resident of the same village, who took shelter on a nearby bridge with her cow. Meanwhile, many families have already lost their cattle due to the floods. “I was rearing three cows with the aim to sell them ahead of Eid. When our house was inundated, we shifted to a safe place for our survival. But I couldn’t save some of my cattle, as two of my cows drowned. Now, I’m struggling hard to arrange fodder for my only cow,” said Emon Miah, a resident of Bhukshimoil area in Moulvibazar’s Kulaura upazila. According to Sylhet Divisional Livestock Office data, at least 11 cows, 6 buffaloes, 23 goats, 17 sheep, 5,076 chickens, and 1,349 ducks so far have drowned in floodwater in three districts – Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Habiganj. Besides, 2.28 lakh cows, around 29,000 buffaloes, 59,000 goats, around 20,000 sheep, 6.14 lakh chickens and 3.21 lakh ducks are now facing fodder crisis in the three districts, said sources at the office.

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# BCL leader held over abduction, extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A Chhatra League (BCL) leader and four of his associates were arrested on Sunday on charges of extortion and abduction in Pabna’s Santhia upazila. They were sent to jail yesterday, after being produced before court. Earlier, police rescued Helal Uddin, the abducted man, from Santhia municipality mayor’s personal office on Sunday afternoon, after a call was made to 999. Hasibul Khan Sana, secretary of Santhia upazila BCL; Mehedi Hasan Rubel, former joint secretary of upazila BCL; Shondip Kumar of Konabari village;

PHOTO: STAR

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# Raushan Ershad returns home after 8 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition leader and chief patron of Jatiya Party Raushan Ershad returned home yesterday after around eight months of treatment at a hospital in Bangkok. The opposition leader is likely to attend the ongoing budget session of parliament on June 30. Raushan (78) is scheduled to leave Dhaka for Bangkok on July 4 for a routine check-up, office of the opposition leader in a press release on June 22, said. She was flown to Bangkok by air ambulance on November 5 last year.

# Jatiya Muktijoddha Council bill placed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Muktijoddha Council will prepare a list of Members of National Assembly (MNAs) and Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) elected in the 1970 general election who supported Pakistani forces during the Liberation War in 1971. The council will recommend the government to publish the list as gazette. The council has been given these extra responsibilities in the report of Jatiya Muktijoddha Council Bill 2022, which was submitted in the parliament yesterday. Chairman of the committee, Shahjahan Khan, placed the report before the House.

# 40,200 hajj pilgrims reach Saudi Arabia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 40,200 Bangladeshi hajj pilgrims arrived in Saudi Arabia as of Sunday since the hajj flights started on June 5. Of the total hajj pilgrims, 3,385 went to Saudi Arabia under government management and 36,815 under private management. The religious affairs ministry published a notice in this regard. Meanwhile, three intended hajj pilgrims failed to go to Saudi Arabia due to fraudulence by a hajj agency. Sabilul Jannat Air Travels Ltd (hajj license-1140), in Dhaka’s Uttara, took Tk 17.20 lakh from the three but didn’t send them to Saudi Arabia, according to the ministry. This newspaper couldn’t contact any official of the agency and the three victims for comments.

# 17 hospitalised with dengue

UNB, Dhaka

At least 17 more dengue patients have been hospitalised in 24 hours till yesterday morning. All the patients were admitted to hospitals in the capital, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). With the new cases, the total number of dengue patients rose to 959. Among the patients, 114 are still undergoing treatment at several hospitals. On Tuesday, DGHS reported the first death of the season from the mosquito-borne viral disease.