

Tourists leaving Bandarban

Security drive against militants, criminals begins

UNB, Bandarban

Tourists have started leaving Bandarban as a temporary ban on tourism in Ruma and Rowangchhari upazilas came into force yesterday morning amid a security drive to either arrest or remove suspected militants and criminals from the hilly region.

The administration has also discouraged tourists from travelling to Thanchi and Alikadam upazilas as the joint forces are conducting security operations in the border areas of Ruma and Rowangchhari.

The military was joined by the Rab in the drive as the security officials were conducting extensive searches in villages. Military helicopters of the security forces were also patrolling the areas.

The Bandarban district administration imposed the travel ban on Monday night.

Yesterday morning, vehicles carrying tourists to Thanchi were sent back to Bandarban Sadar upazila from Milanchari police outpost, said Kamal Hossain, general secretary of Bandarban Micro-jeep mahendra Owners' Cooperative Association.

The tourists are only allowed to visit Meghla and Nilachal tourist spots in the hilly town, he said.

According to hotel owners, most of the hotel rooms were vacant and bookings were cancelled after the announcement of the ban.

Authorities of the Hotel Hilton and the Hotel Hill View said those who reached the town in the morning cancelled their plans and some of them headed towards Cox's Bazar.

A group of 70 people were supposed to check in at the Sairu Hill Resort in Thanchi yesterday morning, but they couldn't reach the resort as the Thanchi road was blocked, Mir Atiqur Rahman, deputy manager of the resort, told UNB.

"A group of 40 people also checked out in the morning, so the resort is empty now," he said.

Tariqul Islam, superintendent of police in Bandarban, said movement of tourists was being prohibited or discouraged following the orders of the higher authorities.



Carrying passengers, battery-run three-wheelers running on the Babu Bazar bridge in the capital even though small vehicles are not allowed there. The operation of such vehicles creates traffic jams in the area and increases risks of road accidents. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Situation 'critical'

Warns Ukraine after bombardments destroy power infrastructure across the country; Russian troops retake territory in Kharkiv

AGENCIES

Ukraine yesterday warned of an emerging "critical" risk to its power grid after President Volodymyr Zelensky said that repeated Russian bombardments had destroyed one-third of the country's power facilities as winter approaches.

That warning came as Russian forces claimed to have retaken territory from Ukrainian troops in the eastern Kharkiv region, Moscow's first announced capture of a village there since being nearly entirely pushed out of the region last month.

At the same time, Russian attacks rocked energy facilities in Kyiv and urban centres across the country, causing blackouts and disrupting water supplies, just one day after the capital was bombarded with a swarm of suicide drones.

"The situation is critical now across the country because our regions are dependent on one another... it's necessary for the whole country to prepare for electricity, water and heating outages," Kyrylo Tymoshenko, the deputy head of the Ukrainian president's office, told

Ukrainian television.

The strikes in the early hours of yesterday hit Kyiv, Kharkiv in the east, Mykolaiv in the south and central regions of Dnipro and Zhytomyr, where officials said hospitals were running on backup generators.

More than 1,100 towns and villages across Ukraine had been left without power after 10 days of Russia strikes.

Drones also bombarded Kyiv on Monday leaving five dead, officials said, in what the presidency described as an attack of desperation.

It was the second Monday in a row that Russia launched punitive strikes which military observers have said appear to be Moscow's response to battlefield losses, reports AFP.

Zelensky described the repeated targeting of energy infrastructure as "another kind of Russian terrorist attacks".

"Since October 10, 30 percent of Ukraine's power stations have been destroyed, causing massive blackouts across the country," the Ukrainian leader said on Twitter.

He said the attack meant that there was "no space left for negotiations with (President Vladimir) Putin's regime".

In the northeast, Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv some 40 kilometres (25 miles) from the border with Russia was hit with eight missiles, the regional governor said.

In Kyiv, meanwhile, the DETK energy provider said its staff were "doing their best to restore electricity supply after the destruction of a critical infrastructure facility in Kyiv city."

The mayor Vitali Klitschko said three people had been killed in yesterday's strikes.

Zelensky earlier said the fresh wave of nationwide strikes -- which he said had damaged a residential building and flower market in Mykolaiv -- was a Russian attempt to "terrorize and kill civilians."

Following the wave of kamikaze drone attacks against Kyiv on Monday, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba demanded EU sanctions on Iran, accusing Tehran of providing Russia with drones.

6 die of Covid-19, 287 test positive for the disease

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six people died of Covid in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, said a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services.

The health directorate also reported 287 new cases of coronavirus after testing 4,120 individuals.

The last time officials recorded six deaths in a day was on Sunday.

Of those reported dead yesterday, the youngest was aged between 21 and 30 years while another between 31 and 40 and the rest were 51 years and above.

Five of them were men and the other was a woman; one each died in Dhaka and Mymensingh divisions while two each in Chattogram and Rajshahi divisions.

In the same 24 hours, 554 Covid-19 patients recovered from their illness. The overall recovery rate now stands at 97.16 percent.

Psychiatrist sent to jail on charges of raping patient

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The head of the psychiatry at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital was sent to jail on Monday on charges of raping a patient.

Associate Professor Ramendra Kumar Singha was arrested at his private chamber at Labaid Diagnostic Centre in Sylhet city on Sunday night.

A woman, who has been a patient of his since 2018, accused him of raping her and making false promises of marriage, said Ali Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

The young woman went to his chamber that evening and said he had impregnated her and demanded that he marry her, the OC added.

Officers later took the woman and the doctor to the police station where she filed a case.

A court sent him to jail the next day, the OC added.

Man arrested with 13kg gold

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Guard Bangladesh members yesterday arrested a man with 106 gold bars worth around Tk 12.22 crore near the Bangladesh-India border in Bangda area of Jhikargacha, Jashore.

Saju Ahmed, 20, who is from Chougachha, was trying to smuggle the bars weighing almost 13kg to India, said Lt Col Minhaz Siddique, commanding officer of BGB Battalion 49.

A BGB team raided the area after being tipped off about the matter, he added.

Sri Lanka stay alive

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Shanaka's team recovered to post 152-8 with Pathum Nissanka making a gritty 74 and Meiyappan ending with 3-19.

"Really disappointed with the way we ended the innings (with the bat). We could have scored 180-190," said Shanaka. "But it was important to get a win, we focused on a win only. He (Nissanka) was outstanding."

Earlier, Bas de Leede took two wickets and made an unbeaten 30 as the Netherlands took a giant step towards the Super 12 stage with a tense five-wicket victory over giant-killing Namibia.

It left Group A finely poised heading into the third and final matches on Thursday, where net run rate could prove decisive.

Namibia were restricted to 121-6, with the Dutch using seven different bowlers to put the clamps on.

The Europeans, boosted by former South Africa and India coach Gary Kirsten on their staff, were cruising at 91-1 in the 14th over in reply before Namibia took four late wickets to set up a nervous finale.

The Netherlands needed six runs off the last over, with De Leede the hero, hitting a boundary and then scoring two to secure the win with three balls left.

Govt losing control

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that none can stay in power resorting to suppression, repression, killing, firing, and enforced disappearance.

DEMO ON THURSDAY

The BNP has called for a countrywide demonstration on Thursday protesting police attacks on the partymen, their arrests and harassment with "false cases".

BNP Senior Joint General Secretary Ruhul Kabir Rizvi announced the protest at a press briefing at the party's Nayapaltan central office yesterday.

As part of the protest, Rizvi said, all the partymen in divisional cities, including Dhaka, and districts will hold rallies and stage demonstration on the day.

He also said that Khulna division will not be a part of the countrywide protest as the party would hold a public rally in Khulna city on Saturday.

A signal to admin and police?

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yet been told of any reason," Baqui said as The Daily Star contacted him for his comments.

Asked about his alleged links with a political party, Baqui said there is no scope for being involved in politics while in civil service.

Delwar told The Daily Star he had nothing to say. "I got a promotion after 21 long years of my service, and now I am having to go [four years] before my service life was to end."

100 new bridges opening at once

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On October 10, Hasina inaugurated the Modhumoti Bridge in Narail and Bir Muktiyoddhda AKM Nasim Osman 3rd Shitalakkhya Bridge in Narayanganj.

Speaking at the event, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader sought time from the prime minister to open the 100 bridges.

Talking to reporters on Sunday, Quader said the prime minister would take part virtually in the inauguration programme held in at least three places, where most of the bridges would be opened.

There are over 4,500 bridges and around 13,800 culverts under the 22,476km road network of RHD. Of the road network, 3,991km is national highways, 4,897km regional highways and 13,588km district roads.

National highways connect the capital with divisional headquarters, sea ports, land ports and international highways. Regional highways connect district towns with river ports and land ports. District roads link district towns with upazila headquarters or one upazila HQ with another.

Shishir Kanti Routh, additional chief engineer (bridge management wing) of RHD, said opening the 100 bridges would further increase the capacity and efficiency of the road network.

He added that around half of the

According to sources in the police, the three were sent into retirement due to their alleged links with the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

The police sources also said at least two officials of the ranks of deputy inspector general and additional DIG might lose their jobs.

They added that this move by the government is designed to send a signal to other officials.

The developments over the last three days have caused discomfort

100 bridges would be opened in three hilly districts, which would improve the road communications of the region and boost tourism there.

Shishir said they would replace all Bailey and narrow bridges gradually and already started a feasibility study for constructing over 100 more bridges.

41 BRIDGES IN KHAGRACHHARI

The highest 45 bridges would be opened in Chattogram zone of RHD, 18 in Sylhet, 14 in Barishal, two in Dhaka, six in Mymensingh, one in Cumilla, five in Gopalganj and Rajshahi each and four in Rangpur zones.

Ataur Rahman, additional chief engineer of Chattogram zone of RHD, said out of 45 bridges, the highest 41 would be opened in Khagrachhari, two in Dohazari in Chattogram and one each in Rangamati and Bandarban.

Most of the bridges are on district roads and some on the regional highways, and the bridges would mainly replace Bailey bridges, he told this correspondent yesterday.

Mahmud Al-Nur Salehin, RHD's Rangamati division executive engineer, also currently working as executive engineer of Khagrachhari, said the number of roads in the hilly districts are very limited.

The roads often become non-operational following the collapse of any of the Bailey bridges, he said.

among many bureaucrats and police officials who were recruited during the BNP-Jamaat tenures.

After the forced retirement of the information secretary, whispers pervade the Secretariat, but none would make any comments in public.

Even Bangladesh Administrative Service Association, an organisation of civil bureaucrats, didn't issue any formal statement after Information Secretary Mokbul Hossain's force retirement.

"So, construction of the new bridges will ensure uninterrupted road communications between different districts and upazilas," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

All 18 bridges, including the long-awaited Kushiara ones, in the Sylhet zone will be inaugurated from Sunamganj.

The project to construct the 702m bridge over the Kushiara river in Sunamganj began in June 2014 and it was supposed to be completed within three years. The bridge, which has been constructed spending Tk 155 crore, is finally going to open.

Opening of the bridge will cut distance between Sunamganj and Dhaka by 55km as the bridgewill directly link the district with Dhaka-Sylhet highway, Ashrafur Islam Pramanik, executive engineer of Sunamganj RHD, told this correspondent.

Another major bridge is the 402m Surma bridge, which will connect Doarabazar upazila and Chatak upazila headquarters with Sylhet city directly, he said. Other bridges, all two-lane ones, will actually replace narrow and risky Bailey bridges, he added.

Out of 14 bridges in the Barishal zone, four are in Barishal, Jhalakathi and Pirojpur each and two in Patuakhali, said Masud Mahmud Sumon, executive engineer of Barishal RHD.

A Rooppur milestone

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the possibility of further extension, according to Rosatom, the state atomic energy corporation of Russia.

Briefing reporters ahead of the second reactor installation, Yeafesh Osman, minister of science and technology, yesterday said the first unit of the plant will go into commercial operation in 2024 and the second unit the following year.

He said that the first unit should be ready to supply electricity to the national grid by December 2023.

Asked whether the national grid will be able to take the electricity generated from the plant, he said, "It not only depends on the power plant, it is [also] up to those who will buy electricity from it."

About whether buyers are ready to purchase electricity from the plant, he said, "I am not in a position to answer that ... [However] They are trying to supply the electricity to the grid on time."

"If the grid is not ready for it, it will be a loss for the country."

He added that the fast pace of the construction surprised many countries in the world. "We had presented our progress in an international conference, where a couple of other countries building their own nuclear power plants with the support of Rosatom said that they have not seen much progress [in their own projects]. It [our progress] was possible due to the Bangladeshi workers in the plant."

Some of the countries even expressed their desire to hire Bangladeshi workers for their plants, he said, adding, "It only underscores how fast our workforce in the plant have developed skills. It means their wages will also rise in the international market."

Around 33,000 people have been working on the Rooppur power plant construction.

Of them, 5,500 are foreign workers, including 4,000 Russians, according to the project officials.

Whether the Ukraine-Russia war has had any impact on the

construction, he said, "I can't say anything in that regard. However, I can say Bangladesh and Russia are both trying to ensure smoothness of construction."

He said that all teams of the International Atomic Energy Agency who visited the plant have expressed satisfaction with project progress.

Project Director Shawkot Akbar said physical work progress of the first unit is around 70 percent and while that of the second is 48.

Regarding the concern over radiation, he said people living 300 metres from the plant can be safe from radiation.

"A total of 23 automated radiation sensors would be established within a 20km radius of the plant, so that radiation levels could be monitored."

Amid the growing demand for electricity, the government moved to build the country's first nuclear power plant in Pabna and gave Rosatom the task of implementation.

The government listed this ambitious mega project as one of the top-10 priority projects or fast-track projects to be completed on time.

The foundation stone of the plant was laid in October 2013 and construction began, on 1,062 acres of land, in November 2017.

With the first nuclear power plant at Rooppur, Bangladesh will become the third Asian country -- after India and Pakistan -- to harness the power of the atoms.

Nuclear power plants built with VVER-1200 reactors are characterised by an unprecedented level of safety, which allows them to be classified as generation "3+".

Rohingya youth

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are conducting drives to detain the criminals, he added.

On October 15, two Rohingya leaders were killed in an attack at the same refugee camp.

Syed's father Jomil Hossain, inhabitant of Block-10/A Rohingya camp 19, was also killed by miscreants.