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PM says at Nat'l Film Awards ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday handed out The National Film Awards 2021 at a star-studded event, featuring some of the biggest celebrities and artists from across Bangladesh, as they all gathered at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Usually, the award is given in a total of 28 categories. However, this year, 34 awards were given in a total of 27 categories.

This year, the jury board selected the winners from the eventual submissions of 21 full-fledged films, 17 short films, and 7 documentary films – totalling 45 films. While the winners were announced by the information ministry on January

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other dignitaries pose for a photo with the winners of the National Film Awards 2021 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Gunpowder, petrol used in attacks on Ahmadiyyas

Says Panchagarh SP

STAR REPORT

Miscreants used gunpowder and petrol during attacks on members of the Ahmadiyya community over a Jalsa event that left two dead and over 50 injured on March 3 in Panchagarh Sadar, said police.

SM Sirajul Islam Huda, superintendent of the district police, came up with the claim at a press conference at his office yesterday, six days after the incident, reports UNB.

The attackers used gunpowder and petrol for setting establishments on fire, he added, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, our Thakurgaon correspondent reported that police arrested 30 people in connection with attacks between Wednesday night and early yesterday.

With this, the number of total arrestees is now 165, said police. "We are arresting people on the basis of specific information and footage, irrespective of their political backgrounds," said SP Huda yesterday.

The incident was pre-planned and a group of trained cadres, equipped with lethal weapon, carried out the attacks on the Ahmadiyya community, the policeman claimed.

On March 3, two people were killed and at least 30 others, including seven policemen, injured in a clash between law enforcers and supporters of Islamist organisations demonstrating against

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Two vendors reluctant to supply fuel to BPC

Late payments to blame

MD NAZRUL ISLAM, Ctg

Two of the six vendors of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation have expressed reservations about providing further fuel cargos, in a development that raises questions of whether the state agency would be able to ensure uninterrupted supply in the coming months.

BPC owes Singapore-based Vitol Asia and China's oil trading giant Unipecc about \$282 million amid the ongoing dollar crunch.

Earlier in 2020, the two won a tender to supply up to 1.06 million tonnes of oil products in the first half of the year after placing the lowest offers.

Vitol Asia, the Asian unit of the world's largest independent oil trading house, had dues of \$152.60 million from BPC.

The company sent emails on August 8 and 10 last year informing that they will not be able to supply fuel to Bangladesh if BPC does not clear the dues and demanded interest on the late payments.

Then on February 28, officials of Vitol Asia met with BPC.

As of this month, BPC was unable to clear the dues, an official of Vitol Asia Bangladesh told The Daily Star asking not to be named.

Similarly, Unipecc – a subsidiary of Chinese Sinopec, the world's largest crude oil refiner by total capacity – had dues of \$129 million.

On February 28, the Beijing-based company

wrote to the BPC about its dues.

Then on March 4, a ship loaded with diesel from Unipecc arrived at the Chattogram port but the cargo was barred from leaving the vessel until the dues were cleared.

"We couldn't release the fuel due to the financial hold," said an official of BPC on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

On March 5, BPC made a payment of \$62.27 million to Unipecc and was able to release the cargo from the port.

The following day, BPC wrote to the ministry of power, energy and mineral resources expressing concern that if they are unable to clear the dues, the company may impose such a ban again.

If the fuel cargoes do not arrive as per schedule, the fuel reserves would decline alarmingly.

"There will be uncertainty over supplying uninterrupted fuel. As a result, it would impact the agriculture sector in the ongoing irrigation season," the letter added.

Khalid Ahmed, BPC's director of operations and planning, played down the incidents.

"Such financial hold is nothing new. It's like a strategy of the suppliers to keep BPC under pressure."

Vitol Asia got \$30 million yesterday, he told The Daily Star. The rest of the dues will be paid in phases, Ahmed added.

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Nat'l grid gets power from Adani on trial basis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Electricity supply from the controversial Adani power plant in Godda, Jharkhand began on a trial basis yesterday.

"We are getting 50 megawatts of electricity since 7:38 pm," ABM Badruddoza Khan, spokesman for Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, told The Daily Star.

The electricity was generated at a 1,600-megawatt ultra-supercritical power plant located on 425 hectares of land in an Indian village about 100 kilometres from the Bangladesh border and delivered through a dedicated transmission line.

Now the power plant will supply electricity to the national grid until commercial operation starts, Khan said, adding that the supply will gradually increase as per demand.

The plant was supposed to start commercial operation by December 16 last year but was later shifted to March 26 this year.

As per the power

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SWADHINATA PADAK 2023

9 individuals, fire service chosen

UNB, Dhaka

Nine individuals and one institution have been chosen for this year's Swadhinata Padak, Bangladesh's highest civilian award, for their contributions to the country.

Freedom fighter Colonel (retired) Shamsul Alam, Lieutenant AG Mohammad Khurshid (posthumous), martyred Khwaja Nizamuddin Bhuiyan, and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya have been named as winners of the award for their contributions to Bangladesh's independence and Liberation War.

Begum Nadira Jahan (Surma Zahid) and icddr, acting senior director Dr Firdausi Qadri will receive the award for their contributions to research and training, the Cabinet Division said in a notification yesterday.

Mohammad Moinuddin Ahmed (Selim Al Deen) will be given the award posthumously for his contribution to literature.

Pabitra Mohan Dey and ASM Raquibul Hasan will receive the honour for their contribution to culture and sports respectively.

The Department of Fire Service and Civil Defence has been picked for the award in the "public service" category.

Bangladesh has been honouring individuals and institutions with the Swadhinata Padak since 1977 ahead of Independence Day on March 26 every year.

Denmark opens undersea graveyard for imported CO2



AFP, Copenhagen

Denmark has inaugurated a project to store carbon dioxide 1,800 metres beneath the North Sea, becoming the first country in the world to bury CO2 imported from abroad.

"Today we opened a new chapter for the North Sea, a green chapter," Denmark's Crown Prince Frederik on Wednesday said at the inauguration ceremony in the town of Esbjerg in the west of Denmark.

The CO2 graveyard, where the carbon is injected to prevent further warming of the atmosphere, is on the site of an old oil field.

Led by British chemical giant Ineos and German oil company Wintershall Dea, the "Greensand" project is expected to store up to eight million tonnes of CO2 per year by 2030.

Still in their infancy and costly, carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects aim to capture and then trap CO2 in order to mitigate global warming.

Over 200 similar projects are currently operational or under development around the world.

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'SCUSE ME, MA'AM! ... A chestnut-tailed starling tries to grab the attention of another, who seems to be lost in its own thoughts! These birds are resident, or partially migratory, throughout India and much of Southeast Asia. Usually spotted in the upper canopies and leaves of trees, they prefer areas such as open forests, plantations, or cultivations. However, they do sometimes venture out into the concrete jungle, like these two taking a tour of Babar Road in the capital's Mohammadpur. Like other species of starlings, they too are omnivorous – eating fruits, nectar and insects mostly. It is most fascinating to watch them fly together like a tight-knit family, often rapidly changing directions with exceptional synchrony. While the chestnut-tailed starling is in the "least concern" category of the IUCN's Red List, deforestation, like for all birds, remains a threat to its population.

PHOTO: MOSABBER HOSSAIN

Woman gang-raped by supervisors of brick kiln

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Noakhali

The supervisors of a brick kiln in Lakshmipur and their cohorts gang-raped and tortured a 18-year-old woman on Wednesday night, according to a complaint filed with Lakshmipur Sadar Police Station.

The woman said the accused confined her husband to the brick kiln and then raped her at her home, which is nearby.

Two days before the rape, the supervisors and their men said a relative of the woman's husband, a worker at the kiln, had stolen their money.

On Tuesday, the men held her husband captive and asked him where his relative could be found, said the mother of a two-year-old child.

The accused men chained her husband and tortured him. She went to the brick kiln and pleaded with them to release him, but to no avail.

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Uttara Jute Fibres & Industries Ltd.
Heartiest Congratulations
Selected as the Best Jute Mill in the country

On the occasion of National Jute Day 2023, we express our sincere gratitude and thanks to the Ministry of Textiles and Jute for nominating Uttara Jute Fibres & Industries Limited for the award in the filed of Best Jute Mill (Hessian, Sacking and CBC) category.

Mr. Sarang Kumar Modi, Director, Uttara Jute Fibres & Industries Limited received the award.

To share the glory, we acknowledge the contribution of our Managing Director Mr. Gourhari Lal Modi, his successor Mr. Dilip Kumar Modi and JIC Bank Ltd. as our core financial partner. We congratulate them all from the family of Uttara Jute Fibres & Industries Limited.

We wish all our well wishers good health, longevity and success.

On behalf of -
Uttara Jute Fibres & Industries limited,
Family members and officers-employees