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We maintain friendly ties with all: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh has been maintaining a friendly relationship equally with all, focusing on improving the people's socio-economic condition.

Stressing that Bangladesh has been moving forward following the "Friendship to all, malice towards none" policy, which was incorporated by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the foreign policy, the PM said, "We've a very good relationship with every country. Since we're following the policy the Father of the Nation had

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN AND SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM
Motorbikers wait at the closed City Filling Station on Satrasta in the capital for refuelling yesterday. (Inset) Oil tankers pictured inside the Jamuna Oil Depot in Fatullah, Naranganj. Thousands of people suffered yesterday as a faction of petrol pump owners and workers in the fuel distribution went on strike yesterday.



Fuel strike postponed till Sept 30

16-hour supply disruption makes people suffer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People suffered across the country yesterday as a faction of petrol pump owners and workers in the fuel distribution went on strike.

The 16-hour strike, which was called by a faction of the Bangladesh Petrol Pump Owners' Association, was postponed till September 30 yesterday.

Syed Sajjadul Karim Kabul, president of the faction, said this in a press conference after meeting with Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation officials.

The strike was called with a three-point demand -- fixing the sales commission for pump owners at 7.5 percent per litre, setting the tank-lorry economic life to 50 years, and issuing a gazette notification recognising the pump owners as "commission agents".

Kabul said, the government assured to fulfill the demands by September 30. "As the talks went well, we postponed the nationwide strike."

Before the announcement, the energy division yesterday met one of their demands by issuing the gazette notification in which it recognised them as agents of BPC.

Meanwhile, people suffered across the country because of the strike. People initially got fuel from maximum petrol pumps, but many of them ran out of fuel as the day progressed.

Mohammad Nazmul Haque, president of another faction of Bangladesh Petrol Pump Owners' Association, said the strikers were preventing their fuel trucks from leaving the fuel depots across the country.

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BR workers' demo halt train services for 5hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Temporary workers of Bangladesh Railway yesterday staged a sit-in at Malibagh level crossing in Dhaka, demanding job regularisation.

The protest led to a halt in train services between Dhaka and the rest of the country for more than five hours, starting at 10:00am at Malibagh.

The services resumed after police intervened and dispersed the protesting workers by charging batons around 2:15pm.

Superintendent of Dhaka Railway Police, Anwar Hossain, confirmed that seven individuals were detained during the operation.

"We have long been petitioning with the authorities concerned for their permanent job status.

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Childhood lost in dandy addiction

Hardware shops, shoemakers sell them the adhesive glue, claim street children

DIPAN NANDY and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

It was around 10:30am on Sunday.

A ten-year-old kid was seen standing in front of the Jahir Raihan Cultural Complex in Sutrapur, clutching a worn-out polythene bag in his hands.

When the correspondent asked what was in his hand, the boy casually replied, "I am having dandy."

"I feel better when I have this, it takes my hunger away. I do not have any family, I live alone," the boy added.

He says that he collects dandy from two primary sources -- hardware shops and shoemakers.

"I frequently visit various hardware shops in the Sutrapur vicinity, and buy a small pot of glue for Tk 70 to Tk 80, although

its actual price is Tk 60," he said.

"A single glue pot can be sniffed three times for three to four hours each time," he said.

Upon information from Arman, these correspondents visited a number of hardware shop owners in the Sutrapur about the sale of these glue pots.

"We do not sell dandies to street children. Because we know they are addicted," Ismail, a salesman at Mukti Traders, one of the hardware shops in the area, told this newspaper.

However, Russell (pseudonym), a salesman at Khaja Traders, admitted, "When our owner isn't around, we sell glue pots to street children for some extra income."

"Not only us, but other shops also do the same," he added.

Contacted, Rashed Hasan, the

Glue-sniffing has emerged as a prevalent and alarming practice among street children.

Commonly referred to as "dandy," the adhesive glue used by shoe repairers contains toluene, a sweet-smelling and intoxicating hydrocarbon. Abandoned by family and looked down upon by society, these children, mainly

aged between 10-16, usually consume dandy to satisfy their hunger and get temporary relief from harsh realities of their life.

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Navy Chief Nazmul Hassan promoted to Admiral

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Naval Staff M Nazmul Hassan has been promoted to the rank of Admiral.

The navy chief was conferred the new rank in the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday, said a press release.

He was adorned with the new rank badge by Lt Gen Ataul Hakim Sarwar Hasan, acting chief of army staff, and Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan.

PM's Security Affairs Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique; PM's Principal Secretary M Tofazzel Hossain Miah; Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lt Gen Waker Uz-Zaman; and Senior Secretary of Defence Ministry Golam Md Hashibul Alam were present on the occasion.

It's for govt's own interest Say Ganatantra Mancha leaders on CSA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The people of Bangladesh will fight for their civic rights like 1971 to bring down the current government, said leaders of Ganatantra Mancha yesterday.

The government is trying to curb people's rights by implementing acts like the Cyber Security Act 2023, they said at a discussion titled "Cyber Security Act: A New Tool to Suppress Freedom of Speech" at the Jatiya Press Club.

Addressing the programme, Nagorik Oikyo President Mahmudur Rahman Manna expressed concern about the lack of specific definitions within the law, which leaves scopes for misinterpretation and misuse.

"Law enforcement agencies will define it at their will, which could be very dangerous," he explained.

Hasnat Kaiyum, chief coordinator of Rastra Sangskar Andolon, pointed out the sacrifices made by millions of Bangalees during the 1971 Liberation War, and voiced opposition to the current government's actions.

"The current government is curbing our freedom of expression through the implementation of such laws [CSA]. This must not continue, and we will fight against it..."

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Find a way to implement CEDAW Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should withdraw reservations about articles 2 and 16.1(c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to ensure the equality of women in society, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

Signed in 1984 by 186 countries, including Bangladesh, the full implementation of the treaty still remains a distant possibility. However, its implementation is necessary to meet Sustainable Development Goal 5, which advocates the reformation of discriminatory property and inheritance rights for men and women, they added.

The discussion, centred on the theme -- crafting non-discriminatory laws and implementation of CEDAW -- was organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at the capital's Topkhana road, marking the signing day of the treaty.

Ferdous Ara Begum, a former member of the UN CEDAW Committee, stressed that discussions should be held among the concerned parties including religious leaders to come across the opposition to the treaties.

"A total of 29 Muslim countries have ratified the treaty without any reservations. If they can do it, why can't we? We need to hold discussions to come to a conclusion in this regard," she stressed.

Dr Shahnaz Huda, professor of law at Dhaka University, Bangladesh has signed many international treaties but most of them haven't been implemented or incorporated into the law. CEDAW is another such example.

Fauzia Moslem, president of Mahila Parishad, said, "Power politics is affecting culture and society, creating hatred which is finding a way out through violence against women."

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Maisha, a resident of the capital's Mirpur-11, is battling dengue for the last 11 days. The a five-year-old is currently being treated at Shishu Hospital. The photo was taken yesterday.

Stolen newborn rescued, four arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested three people yesterday, three days after a newborn was stolen from Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

They rescued the baby from Kamrangirchar Saturday, Muhammad Ashraf Hossain, a deputy commissioner of DMP, told a press conference at its Media Centre yesterday.

He said the baby, Abdullah, had not been getting his mother's milk. A woman named Nusrat, who was in the next bed, voluntarily breastfed the baby while her baby was in ICU.

On Thursday, when Abdullah's mother fell asleep, Nusrat took the baby out of the hospital, handed him over to her husband in Azimpur.

Nusrat was identified in CCTV footage, and the baby was found at her house.

Nusrat was in police custody at DMCH. Three others, including her husband, were also arrested, said the police officer.

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