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A journey by train with PM



AGENCIES

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the 82km railway track from Dhaka to Faridpur's Bhanga upazila under the Padma Bridge Rail Link Construction yesterday.

During her train ride to Faridpur, at least 50 individuals of various backgrounds and ages accompanied the PM.

They included freedom fighters, vendors, traders, RMG workers, drivers, farmers, and students.

There were also people from diverse religious backgrounds, and members of indigenous communities. Law enforcement officials, armed forces personnel, along with members of the fire service, scout, and BNCC were also present.

The premier, along with her family members, boarded the train by waving a green flag at 12:55pm.

She spoke to her co-passengers in the special train containing 14 coaches that was heading to Bhanga from Mawa.

Talking about the train journey alongside the prime minister, freedom fighter Aminur Rahman Farid said, "I can't articulate this feeling. I can't believe I was

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Running out of options to stop vehicles at signals, a community police member uses a rope as a measure to control traffic. The photo was taken near Gulistan Police Box recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Courts hamstrung by judge crisis

ASHUTOSH SARKER

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has been facing an acute shortage of judges, as no new one was appointed after December 8 last year.

Meanwhile, three judges including a chief justice have retired in the last 10 months.

Each of the Appellate Division judges including Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan is burdened with around 3,750 cases on an average as around 22,500 cases are pending with this court, SC sources said.

The number of apex court judges has come down to six from 11 in 2009 after appointments and retirements of some judges.

In the last 10 months, Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique retired on September 25, Justice Md Nuruzzaman retired on June 30 and Justice Muhammad Imman Ali on December 31 last year.

On July 9, 2009, the then president raised the number of judges at the Appellate Division from seven to 11, prior to disposing of some important cases, including those centring the

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Joint effort needed to ensure land rights for them

Speakers tell event on marginalised people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Marginalised people are often deprived of land ownership and evicted from their land. To address this injustice and provide opportunities for them, people need to work together, said Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday.

He made the remark at the opening of a two-day regional conference in Dhaka.

The Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and the Association for Land Reform and Development organised the event to bring together key stakeholders and experts from different countries.

Khushi Kabir, chairperson of ALRD, said while policymakers have signed agreements, their commitment to policy implementation often falls short.

Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD, urged participants to collaborate in finding solutions to the complex challenges posed by climate change and land rights.

Man held with 1kg crystal meth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday claimed to have arrested a drug dealer with one kg of crystal meth, or "ice" in Abdullahpur area of Uttara.

The arrestee, Iftekhar Uddin Shakib, 24, was arrested in front of Polwel Carnation Shopping Centre around 11:00am.

Iftekhar moved to Uttara around six months ago, Mohammad Morshed Alam, deputy commissioner of Uttara division of DMP, said while addressing a briefing.

Police arrested Iftekhar based on information that a big narcotics consignment was entering the capital. Police recovered the crystal meth wrapped inside a polythene bag from Iftekhar's possession, DC Morshed said.

"Primary investigation revealed that Iftekhar, hailing from Teknaf, ran a drug peddling gang. He collected narcotics from a drug dealer and sold them to different areas of Dhaka," he said.

They used Facebook messenger to take orders and delivered the drugs inside Mobil cartons.

A case was filed in this regard.

Dengue death toll crosses 1,100

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 13 more people died from dengue in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, as the country grapples with a record outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease. Of the 13 deaths, nine were reported in the capital.

At least 2,555 dengue patients were hospitalised in the 24-hour period, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Dengue has so far claimed at least 1,109 lives this year and nearly 2,28,779 were infected, making this the deadliest year since the first recorded epidemic in 2000.

BNP REACTS TO QUADER'S COMMENT ON URANIUM



Quader makes many reckless comments about his political opponents that only make people laugh. One of our leaders who lives outside the country told me not to protest his comment as it has become a matter of entertainment for us.

Mirza Fakhru
BNP secretary general



There was a minister in Iraq named Ali. He was believed to be overseeing the production of toxic chemical weapons. So, everyone called him Chemical Ali. A Chemical Quader has also emerged in Bangladesh.

Ruhul Kabir Rizvi
BNP senior joint secretary general



I would like to ask him: do you have any idea about what uranium is and its types? It's the delusion of an insane person. We also know how to use abusive words, but we don't do that as BNP is a party of gentlemen.

Mirza Abbas
BNP standing committee member

NIKO GRAFT CASE

Khaleda's lawyers start cross-examination

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The defence for BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday started cross-examining ACC Deputy Director Muhammad Mahbul Alam, complainant of the Niko graft case.

Aminul Islam cross-examined the complainant for over two hours.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman set October 16 for the next hearing.

The ACC filed the case in December 2007, accusing Khaleda and several others of abusing power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko when she was prime minister between 2001 and 2006.

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