



Bhorer Kagoj pulls plug on print edition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The daily Bhorer Kagoj, one of the leading newspapers of the 1990s, has announced the termination of its print publication.

The newspaper issued a notice yesterday stating, "The Bhorer Kagoj authority has

decided to shut the main office of the newspaper from today under Section 12 of the Labour Act 2006, due to reasons beyond the owner's control."

Bhorer Kagoj online remains operational. The decision comes in the face of protests in the last few days by some journalists of Bhorer Kagoj, including a few pro-BNP ones, demanding salaries according to the 8th Wage Board and payment of arrears from their date of appointment, said sources at the newspaper.

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Hossain Ali has opted for a unique way to sell vegetable and flower seedlings. He collects seedlings of gourd and bean and other plants from Pirojpur's Swarupkathi and sells them on a boat for Tk 40-120 each in different areas of Khulna. The photo was taken in the Kheyaghat area of Rupsha upazila recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

NORTH OF MYANMAR Military, minority armed group agree ceasefire

Says China foreign ministry

REUTERS, Beijing

The Myanmar military and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) signed a formal agreement for a ceasefire that began on Saturday, China's foreign ministry said, halting fighting near the border of both countries.

The two sides held talks in China's southwestern city of Kunming where they thanked Beijing for its efforts to promote peace, ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said during a regular news briefing yesterday.

"Cooling down the situation in the north of Myanmar is in the common interest of all parties in Myanmar and all countries in the region, and contributes to the security, stability and development of the border areas between China and Myanmar," she said.

China will continue to actively promote peace and dialogue and provide support and assistance to the peace process in northern Myanmar, Mao said.

The MNDAA is one of several ethnic minority armed groups fighting to repel the military from what they consider their territories.

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GOVT SERVICE DELIVERY

Task force for using AI, social media

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A task force formed by the planning ministry is going to recommend the formation of an independent centre for delivering government services via social media and utilising artificial intelligence (AI).

Such proposals came against the context that influence of both social media and artificial intelligence has been on the rise in Bangladesh alongside other parts of the globe.

The 12-member task force, led by KAS Murshid, former director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, has finalised a draft report.

The nearly 600-page report will be submitted to Planning and Education Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud in a couple of days, said ministry officials.

The ministry formed the task force in September last year to develop strategies to boost the economy and mobilise resources for equitable and sustainable development.

The draft report provides strategic recommendations for addressing pressing challenges and facilitating equitable and sustainable development in Bangladesh under the interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus.

It emphasises short-term pragmatic interventions and long-term reforms across sectors, addressing economic growth, governance, public service delivery, and environmental sustainability.

The draft report says the name of the centre will be the Centre for Social and Behavioural Change Communication and Research (CSBCC&R).

It added that the establishment of the independent centre is essential to addressing the fragmented nature of current efforts in this critical area.

Currently, various departments handle communication initiatives without a cohesive strategy, leading to inefficiencies, and missed opportunities.

The CSBCC&R would centralise these efforts, providing a structured platform for both traditional media and digital communication strategies.

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The planning ministry formed the task force to develop strategies to boost the economy and mobilise resources for equitable and sustainable development.

Fragile Israel-Hamas ceasefire holding

90 Palestinian detainees freed on first truce exchange

AGENCIES

A fragile ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war was holding yesterday, following the dramatic exchange of three hostages for 90 Palestinian prisoners in an agreement aimed at ending more than 15 months of offensive in Gaza.

The three hostages released Sunday, all women, were reunited with their families and taken to hospital in central Israel where a doctor said they were in stable condition.

Hours later in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Palestinian prisoners released by Israel left Ofer prison on buses, with jubilant crowds celebrating their arrival.

The next hostage-prisoner swap would take place on Saturday, a senior Hamas official told AFP.

As the ceasefire took effect, thousands of displaced, war-weary Palestinians set off across the devastated Gaza Strip to return home.

In the northern area of Jabalia, hundreds streamed down a sandy path, heading to an apocalyptic landscape piled with rubble and destroyed buildings.

"We are finally in our home. There is no home left, just rubble, but it's our home," said Rana Mohsen, 43.

In the town of Beitunia, near Ofer prison, Palestinians cheered and chanted as buses carrying them arrived, with some climbing atop and unfurling a Hamas flag.

"All the prisoners being released today feel like family to us. They are part of us, even if they're not blood relatives," Amanda Abu Sharkh, 23, told AFP.

Now attention is starting to shift to the

rebuilding of the coastal enclave. "We are searching for 10,000 martyrs whose bodies remain under the rubble," said Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson of the Palestinian Civil Emergency Services.

At least 2,840 bodies were melted and there were no traces of them, he told Reuters.

Residents and medics in Gaza said that for the most part the ceasefire appeared to be holding, although there were isolated incidents. Medics said eight people had been hit by Israeli fire since yesterday morning in the southern city of Rafah, without giving details of their condition.

The Israeli military said it fired warning shots against suspects who approached troops deployed according to the ceasefire agreement.

Minutes after the truce began, the United Nations said the first trucks carrying desperately needed humanitarian aid had entered the Palestinian territory.

UN relief chief Tom Fletcher said 630 trucks had entered into Gaza, with 300 of them headed to the north of the territory.

The World Food Programme (WFP) said it was moving full throttle to get food to as many Gazans as possible.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called the first phase a "temporary ceasefire" and said Israel had US support to return to the war if necessary.

Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, said its adherence to the truce would be "contingent on the enemy's commitment".

The offensive's only previous truce, for one week in November 2023, also saw the release of hostages held by Hamas in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

- Next hostage-prisoner swap on Saturday
- Palestinians begin searching for people under rubble
- 630 aid trucks enter into Gaza, says UN relief chief

JULY ATROCITIES

Ex-NTMC chief's counsels challenge ICT's jurisdiction

Order on petition to be delivered tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defence lawyers of sacked army major general Ziaul Ahsan, accused of crimes against humanity at the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), challenged the tribunal's jurisdiction over atrocities during the July uprising.

They also called for an acquittal of the former head of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC).

The defence team, which includes Ziaul Ahsan's sister Naznin Nahar and senior lawyer M I Farooqui, filed a petition challenging its judicial authority.

The three-judge court, headed by Justice Golam Mortuza Majumdar, held a lengthy hearing on the matter and set January 22 for an order on the petition.

Lawyers from both sides spoke to the media after the proceeding. Naznin said that the tribunal was formed in 1973 to prosecute war criminals, as explicitly stated in Article 150 of the constitution. The tribunal was established to try those responsible for the crimes during the 1971 Liberation War. However, the tribunal is now trying cases related to events from July-August, which was a political conflict, not a war, she pointed out. Therefore, she said, they had filed a petition challenging the tribunal's authority to try such cases.

She also said that the High Court judges currently sitting in the tribunal should remain there, as they do not have jurisdiction over the tribunal.

Chief Prosecutor Muhammad Tajul Islam said the defence petition's main argument was that the tribunal had no authority to try crimes against humanity because no war had taken place in Bangladesh during July or August last year.



Ziaul Ahsan

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Textile dye wastewater discharged by garment factories in Savar's Vakurta union flows through a canal and into the Turag River, a major waterway in the Dhaka district. These industries are required by law to have effluent treatment facilities so that they don't pollute the environment with the waste they generate. However, these factories are violating that regulation and inconsiderately dumping untreated effluents into a river that is already severely polluted. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

শৌক সংবাদ

বরিশাল জেলার বাকেরগঞ্জ উপজেলার কুতিসন্তান বিশিষ্ট শিল্পপতি, সিআইপি এবং প্রিটি গ্রুপ অব ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ এর সম্মানিত চেয়ারম্যান জনাব মোহাম্মদ আলী তালুকদার ফরুক গত ১৬ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ইং রাত আনুমানিক ১০ঃ৩০ ঘটিকায় চেম্বারের এগ্যাপোলো হাসপাতালে চিকিৎসাধীন অবস্থায় শেষ নিশ্বাস ত্যাগ করেন (ইল্লালিদ্দাহি ওয়াইল্লা ইলাইহি রাজিউন)।

গত ১৮ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ইং বাদ এশা মরহুমের প্রথম নামাজের জানাজা গুলশান কেন্দ্রীয় জামে মসজিদে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। দ্বিতীয় নামাজের জানাজা ১৯ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ইং তারিখ সকাল ১০ ঘটিকায় নিজ গ্রাম আফলকাঠি সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের মাঠে অনুষ্ঠিত হয় এবং পরিবারিক কবরস্থানে তাঁর দাফন কার্য সম্পন্ন করা হয়। মৃত্যুকালে তাঁর বয়স হয়েছিল ৭৩ বছর এবং তিনি স্ত্রী, চার ছেলে ও দুই মেয়েসহ অসংখ্য আত্মীয় স্বজন, সহকর্মী, শুশ্রূষা ও শুভানুধ্যায়ী রেখে গেছেন।

আমাদের প্রানিয়য় চেয়ারম্যান মহোদয়ের মৃত্যুতে প্রিটি গ্রুপের সকল কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীগণ গভীরভাবে শোকাহত আনুশ্রবণে আত্মীয় আত্মীয় শ্রদ্ধা কামনা করছি এবং শোকাহত পরিবারবর্গের প্রতি গভীর সমবেদনা ও সহানুভূতি জ্ঞাপন করছি। দোয়া করছি যেন মহান আল্লাহ তায়ালা ওনার পরিবারের সদস্যদের এই শোক সহ্য করার তৌফিক দান করেন এবং মরহুমকে জান্নাতুল ফেরদৌস নসিব করেন। - আমিন।

PRETTY GROUP

প্রিটি গ্রুপের সকল কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীবৃন্দ