

Bangladesh not lagging behind in global competition: FM

BSS, New York
Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has said Bangladesh at present is not lagging behind in global competition in the field of democracy, development and diplomacy.

3 BCL workers get 4 years for damaging vehicles

BSS, Natore
The Speedy Trial Court, Natore, has sentenced three activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) to four years' imprisonment each for damaging vehicles and furniture during a hartal in the district.

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil speaks at a press briefing on Netrakona-3 by-election at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil speaks at a press briefing on Netrakona-3 by-election at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday.

Global peace could be restored through love and harmony

Speakers tell IIFWP seminar

BSS, Dhaka
Speakers at a seminar yesterday observed that manifestation of love and harmony among the followers of different religions can help restore peace in the society as well as in the world.

Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) organised the seminar on the occasion of inauguration of its Bangladesh chapter.

Chaired by President of IIFWP, Bangladesh chapter, and Vice-Chancellor of Southeast University Prof. M Shamsheer Ali, the seminar was addressed by State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan as chief guest.

Director General of IIFWP, India, and President of Women Federation for World Peace, Indian chapter, Ursula McLackland presented the keynote paper. Dr Paresch Chandra Mandal, professor of Sanskrit Department, Dhaka University, Dr Thomas Costa, development director, Caritas Bangladesh, D P Barua, trustee of Bangladesh Buddhist Welfare Trust, Prof. Dr M Nazrul Islam and Zeenat Ara Bhuiyan took part in the discussion.

when transition was taking place at a faster pace than ever before and the world is increasingly feeling the urgency for dialogue among religions, harmony among the races and understanding across the cultures.

The efforts for world peace need to be enhanced by the wisdom of world's religious traditions, as well as by the leaders in the fields of arts, science and media, they said.

Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan said everybody should realise that in the present day world none could live alone and the world is a place to be shared among its population irrespective of race, religion and nationality.

He urged all to contemplate religion as their pride and said the question of religious majority and minority should be kept aside and everybody should help establish peace in the society.

Ursula McLackland said the political leaders have failed to earn a good name as they kept themselves busy with their own parochial interests and do not regard the interests of the country or its people.

Dr Thomas Costa said where love stops, violence and deprivation begins there. A leader must be proactive with adequate religious knowledge, he added.

Referring to a recent survey in an Indian university where more than 50 per cent students favoured sex without marriage, D P Barua said Western cultures have been damaging our traditional family bond, religious and social values.



PHOTO: PID

State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan speaks at a seminar titled 'The World at a Turning Point: True Leadership and Good Governance' at Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

Mystery virus in Canada revives Sars worries

ANN/ THE STRAITS TIMES

A mysterious Sars-like outbreak has spread to a second nursing home in the Vancouver area, Canadian health authorities said on Wednesday, raising concerns about a new wave of the virus.

The officials first revealed last week that an upper respiratory ailment, described as relatively mild, had initially infected residents and medical workers at Kinsmen Place Lodge in Surrey, Vancouver. They did not identify the second home that has been hit.

In response to the Canadian cases, the Ministry of Health (MOH) in Singapore released a statement yesterday reminding all hospitals to continue maintaining precautionary measures against Sars.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has joined Canadian health officials in investigating the latest Sars-like outbreak.

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Eleven people have died at Kinsmen Place Lodge since the discovery that the illness had spread to 143 people there, Canadian officials said on Wednesday.

The second outbreak at the unidentified nursing home appeared just as the first one was dissipating towards the end of last month, The New York Times reported.

In the second nursing home, nine of about 100 of its residents have contracted a mild upper respiratory infection, but little cough and no pneumonia or fever.

"If this were Sars in British Columbia, we would have expected to see severe illness causing severe pneumonia," said Dr Perry Kendall, the British Columbia health officer, in an interview with The Washington Post.

"Instead, we are seeing a mild illness...which is why we favour the hypothesis that it is an altered or mutated virus, not the virus that caused the worldwide in the spring."

Canadian health officials emphasised that much more laboratory work needs to be done to determine whether the virus identified in Surrey is Sars or one of a number of others from the same coronavirus family that can cause respiratory illness.

"So it is way too early to say it is the Sars virus," Dr Kendall said. Initial tests ruled out infectious causes such as influenza, adenovirus, Legionnaire's disease and mycoplasma.

Sars killed 44 people in Toronto and 812 people worldwide after it was identified and spread early this year from China.

On July 5, WHO declared the worldwide outbreak contained.

58pc people not aware of what to do in case of major earthquake

Opinion poll reveals

BSS, Dhaka

About 58 per cent people are not even aware of what to do in case of a major earthquake in the country, according to an opinion poll.

Others believe that although the experts are aware of the consequences, they are not sincere in implementing regulations related to construction of building.

The Centre for Sustainable Development (CFSD) conducted the opinion poll in six divisional headquarters between August 10 and 13 this year in which 1005 people took part.

Of the respondents, 27 per cent were illiterate, 31.6 per cent studied up to class five, 27 per cent studied up to class nine, 12.1 per cent had education up to SSC or HSC and the rest have university degrees.

Dr Ainnur Nishat and Dr AK Enamul Haque supervised the poll.

The poll asked questions on several other issues. On earthquake related emergencies, about 52.2 per cent of the respondents said that rather than waiting for the government, local people should prepare themselves to deal with any consequences of the earthquake.

However, 47.8 per cent think that government can successfully deal with emergencies related to earthquake.

On the recent launch accidents, 52 per cent respondents suggested stern action against the launch owners who are deliberately violating laws.

On the other hand, 48 per cent think that government cannot do much against the launch owners unless the owners associations take actions against their members for violating laws.

The law and order situation has been a major contentious issue since long. So far, the government took several measures to improve law and order. About 47.9 per cent of the respondents said that overall law and order has not improved.

The rest 52.1 per cent are somewhat satisfied and think that there has been some improvement despite apparent failures. However, only 15.2 per cent said that the law and order has improved up to their expectation.

The government has formed joint forces, comprising BDR, police and coastguards to deal with growing

insurgencies in the southwest region.

Of the respondents, 66.2 per cent appear to have support for the government initiatives and deployment of joint forces. The rest 33.8 per cent, however, suggested that government should take steps to improve the efficiency of police.

Sixty per cent of the respondents

were not in favour of sending troops to Iraq even with the approval of the UN as long as US troops remained stationed there.

Most of them did not want to send the Bangladeshi soldiers in the conflict zone. On the other hand, nearly 40 per cent said troops can be sent with UN authorisation.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Chittagong, Barisal, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at many places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions till 6.00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls at places is expected during the period, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 25 degree at Cox's Bazar.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:25pm today and rises at 5:37am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)

Dhaka 33.0 26.4 69 85

Chittagong 31.5 26.0 72 74

Rajshahi 32.5 27.0 92 82

Khulna 32.5 27.8 75 98

Barisal 31.4 27.6 75 90

Sylhet 35.0 27.0 87 83

Cox's Bazar 31.0 25.0 85 92



PHOTO: STAR

The National Shop Employees Federation took out a procession in the city yesterday to press for its 10-point demand.

DHAKA TODAY
Dance drama
Russian film show
Painting exhibition
Cultural function
WFWP programme
Seminar
Workshop
Memorial meeting
Film show
Dhaka Tomorrow
Art competition
Musical evening