

Begum Rokeya Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation will celebrate the Begum Rokeya Day today, marking the birth anniversary of Begum Rokeya, a pioneer of women's rights in the subcontinent.

Various socio-cultural and political organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the eve of the day, paying glowing tributes to the memory of the legendary woman.

In his message, the president called upon the conscious section

of the society to help expand women's education and achieve economic emancipation of women.

Khaleda Zia said Begum Rokeya took the initiative for the freedom of women as she had realised that no country could attain development by keeping the women in isolation because they represented nearly 50 per cent of the total population.

In her statement, Sheikh Hasina said empowerment of women is a pre-condition for ensuring human rights.

To mark the day, the Karmajibi Nari will hold a rally in front of the Engineers' Institute at 3.00pm today.

The Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Sramajibi Nari Moitri and the Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha will also hold discussions today.

Six win Berger art competition

The prize giving ceremony of Eighth Berger Young Painters' Art Competition 2003 was held at Hotel Sonargaon on Sunday.

Six young artists have been awarded in the ceremony, says a press release.

A total of 118 young artists across the country submitted 319 entries for the competition this year.

The winners are Hossain Mahmud Arif, Md Fokrul Alam (Tofa), Ahmed Sadrul Hasan Rafi, Masud Kabir, Julian David and Bithika Gotder.

Managing Director of Berger Paints Masih-ul-Karim will inaugurate an exhibition of 40 selected paintings from the competition at the Zainul Art Gallery of the Institute of Fine Arts today.

The exhibition will remain open from 11.00am to 7.30pm daily till December 14.

Dr Kamal leaves for China

UNB, Dhaka

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain left here for China via Geneva yesterday to attend a UN meeting on Palestine.

United Nations Asian Meeting for mobilising opinion for a peaceful solution on the question of Palestine begins in Beijing on December 16. Dr Kamal will address the plenary session and a public forum on December 18.

Before joining the Beijing meeting, he is expected to attend the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Refugee Education Trust in Geneva and the annual council meeting of Trustees of the South Asia Foundation in New Delhi.



Winners of the Eighth Berger Young Painters' Art Competition 2003 pose with the guests at the prize giving ceremony at Hotel Sonargaon on Sunday.



The Bangladesh Chhatra League laid a siege to the office of the vice-chancellor of Dhaka University yesterday protesting the hike in price for admission test forms.

Deadlock over BRTC service in Sylhet Shots fired at double-decker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An armed group of people fired several gunshots at a Jaintapur-bound double-decker of BRTC in the city's Shibganj area Sunday night, but no one was injured.

The hoodlums, however, ran

Helal, Babul new BSS unit chief, dy unit chief

BSS, Dhaka

Ihsanul Karim Helal and Enamul Haque Babul were elected unit chief and deputy unit chief of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) unit of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday.

The election was conducted by former DUJ president M Shahjahan Mian as election commissioner. DUJ President Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan was present as chief guest.

Earlier, the meeting chaired by former general secretary of National Press Club Swapan Kumar Saha discussed the latest situation of the unit.

DUJ General Secretary Omar Faruque and former general secretary Azizul Islam Bhuiyan also spoke.

away when the passengers chased them. A general diary has been lodged with the police.

Former upazila chairman and chief of 17 Pargana Shalish Samannaya Committee Sirajuddin Ahmed protested the incident and demanded an inquiry into the incident within 48 hours.

He also blamed the incident on the transport workers who have long been demonstrating against the BRTC service in three upazilas.

People Jaintapur, Kanaighat and Gowainghat upazilas have also been boycotting private bus and minibuses service in protest against the activities of the transport workers.

To end the stalemate over BRTC service, leaders of different political parties are trying to bring the two sides to a negotiating table. A meeting between the leaders of transport associations and the leading people of the three upazilas is likely to be held within a few days.

But the latest incident has infuriated former upazila chairman Sirajuddin Ahmed who said

he won't sit with the transport leaders across the table.

People of three upazilas would continue the boycott of bus until the permanent settlement of row over BRTC service, speakers at a rally said yesterday.

BRTC has introduced its service on Sylhet-Tamabil route temporarily, but the people demand that the service be made permanent.

The Brihattar Jainta Samannaya Samity, a forum of the people of 17 parganas of three upazilas, also pressed for the same demand.

At a public meeting at the Jaintapur upazila headquarters on Sunday evening, the forum decided to continue the boycott programme.

On the other hand, the transport operators have been demonstrating against the BRTC service.

At a rally last week, Executive president of the Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation Shahjahan Khan MP gave an ultimatum to the government to withdraw the BRTC service in Sylhet by December 13.

Book publishers submit memo to president

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Book Publishers and Sellers Association yesterday submitted a memorandum to President Iajuddin Ahmed demanding protection of publishing industry from the vested quarters.

The association also demanded redistribution of all textbooks to 324 listed organisations proportionately by cancelling previous allocation to 43 organisations by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) in violation of the rules.

A delegation handed over the memorandum to Abdul Gani Hawlader, private secretary to the president at Bangabhaban.

Earlier, the association held a grand rally at Banglabazar.

Chinese military team meets army, air chiefs

UNB, Dhaka

Chinese military delegation called on Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury and Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Fakhru Azam at respective headquarters here yesterday.

They discussed matters of professional interests. Chinese Ambassador Chai Xi was present on the occasion.

Earlier, the delegation leader General Wu Quanxu placed wreath at Shikha Anirban (the Eternal Flame).

Obituary



Md Jahangir Hossain, a medical services officer of the Somatec Pharmaceuticals Ltd., died in a road accident on Dhaka-Chittagong highway on Sunday.

Saturday. He was 25, says a press release.

Abu Ahmed



Abu Ahmed, founding president of Bangladesh Ganaparta Adhidaptar Jatiya Karmachari Sangsad, died on Sunday night at the age of 54, says a

press release.

He is survived by his wife, and two daughters.

The Karmachari Sangsad will hold a condolence meeting at the Public Works Building at 11.00am on Thursday.

Chittagong second most vulnerable to Aids

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong is the second most vulnerable to onslaught of Aids after Sylhet in the country, said the speakers at a discussion here yesterday.

They said the growing number of AIDS patients has triggered an alarming situation here.

The discussion, organised by a NGO Ashar Alo Society (AAS), was held at a local hotel with Prof Dr A Q M Sirajul Islam, former head of the skin diseases department of Chittagong Medical College Hospital, in the chair.

Director of Health for Chittagong division Mir Jalal Uddin attended the discussion as chief guest.

Earlier, the project-in-charge of AAS Nazma Begum delivered her address of welcome.

She disclosed that so far 40 AIDS patients have come under its treatment in Chittagong.

Former presidents of Chittagong Union of Journalists Kazi Jafarul Islam and M Nasirul Huq, Prof Dr Sultanul Alam, Dr Nur Mohammad and Dr Didaruzzaman also spoke.



Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk visited the stall of Uttara Finance & Investments Ltd. at the Agri-Invest 2003 Bangladesh Exhibition held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre recently. The company's Chairman Rashid-ul Hasan, Vice-Chairman Matir Rahman and Managing Director SM Shamsul Arefin were also present.

Spanish film session

In association with Alliance Francaise, Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two contemporary Spanish films titled 'The Girl of Your Dreams' (1998) by Fernando Trueba and 'Goya in Bordeaux' (1999) by Carlos Saura. Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm and 7.00pm.

Film show

The Academy Film Society will screen a Japanese film titled 'Kwaidan'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

BNPS discussion

Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) organises a discussion on the role of male in resisting repression on women in observance of Begum Rokeya Day. Venue: BNPS auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 3.00pm.

Conference

South-South Centre, Bangladesh will hold a South Asia Conference for the prevention and treatment of Obstetric Fistula with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: IDB Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.

Symposium

The inaugural ceremony of the regional symposium on disability, organised by National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled, will be held with Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed as chief guest. Venue: BIAM auditorium, New Eskaton. Time: 9.45am.

PHM meeting

A joint meeting of the steering committee and world social forum organising committee of the People's Health Movement (PHM) will be held. Venue: 9/2, Block-D, Lalmatia. Time: 3.00pm.

Lecture on Quran

A lecture on 'The Quranic Concept of Heaven', organised by Dev Centre for Philosophical Studies, will be held. Venue: Room no 2028, Arts Building of Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm.

Condolence meeting

A meeting to condole the death of Ahmedul Kabir, former chief editor of the daily Sangbad and veteran politician, will be held. Venue: National Press Club auditorium. Time: 3.00pm.

Seminar

A seminar on 'Terrorism in politics: Endangered human rights', organised by Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonnoy Parishad (BMSPP), will be held. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.

Lecture on Rokeya

In observance of Begum Rokeya Day, Bangla Academy organises a solo lecture on Rokeya and reading from her writings. Venue: Seminar room of the academy. Time: 3.30pm.

Concluding session

The concluding session of the 10th Asian conference on Diarrhoeal disease and Nutrition will be held with State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mizanur Rahman Sinha as chief guest. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Sher-e-Banglanagar. Time: 7.00pm.

Leprosy conference

The inaugural session of a regional conference of Leprosy Managers of South-East Asian Region will be held with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 9.00am.

Symposium on disability

The inaugural session of a regional symposium on disability, organised by the National Forum for the Disabled, will be held with Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed as chief guest. Venue: BIAM auditorium, New Eskaton. Time: 9.45am.

Tribute to Salahuddin, Sheikh Niamat Ali

In a tribute to Salahuddin and Sheikh Niamat Ali, acclaimed filmmakers of the country, a 3-day film session has been organised by 15 active and like-minded film societies. Two films by Salahuddin 'Surjansan' (The Sunbath), 1962 and Je Nodi Monupathe' (The River flowing through the Desert), 1961 will be screened. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 1.30pm and 4.00pm.

Film show

The Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Roger and Me'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.