



Children perform at an Ekushey programme at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. Sammilita Sangskritik Jote organised the event.

President assents to six bills

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday assented to six bills passed in the 20th session of the eighth Parliament.

The bills are The Court of Wards (Amendment) Bill, 2006; The Censorship of Films (Amendment) Bill, 2006; The Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2006; The Drugs (control) (Amendment) Bill, 2006; The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2006; and The Fertilizer (Management) Bill, 2006.

Drug trafficker escapes from police van

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An alleged drug trafficker managed to escape from a police van five minutes after his arrest at 8:45pm on Wednesday from a hotel at Natun Bazar under Khulna thana.

There were four armed constables guarding Pichchi Selim, 28, in the police van, witnesses said.

Selim, also an activist of Jubo Dal, was arrested twice last year for selling drugs such as heroin and hemp. But he was released on bail every time under political influence, local people said.

He is also linked with an underground party, said the businessmen of Natun Bazar.

Police could not arrest him till filling of the report at 5:00pm yesterday.

Dhaka-Colombo air link to increase trade underscored

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday requested Sri Lanka to take initiatives to reduce the trade gap between the two Saarc countries.

The request came when Sri Lankan Parliament Speaker WJM Lokubandra met with him at Bangabhaban.

During the meeting, Iajuddin also called upon the Sri Lankan government to import melamine, ceramics, jute goods, leather goods and pharmaceutical products from Bangladesh at competitive price.

He said establishment of Dhaka-Colombo air link is an important step for improving trade link as well as increased people-to-people contact between the two countries.

Lokubandra said there will be Saarc Speakers' Conference in Colombo at the end of next month.

Meanwhile, appreciating the initiative to hold Saarc Speakers' Conference, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday emphasised close contacts of lawmakers of this region to exchange views and experiences.

Khaleda, also current Saarc chairperson, made the remarks when Lokubandra met her at the PM's office.

Resumption of Dhaka-Colombo direct air-link to increase trade and flourish tourism sector and import of high quality medicines at reasonable prices from Bangladesh by Sri Lanka also came up for discussion at the meeting.

A trade fair of Sri Lanka will be held in Dhaka in March.

The Sri Lankan Speaker arrived in Dhaka to discuss matters relating to the Saarc Speakers' Conference to be held in Colombo next month.

Khaleda wished an all-out success of the Speakers' conference.

Lokubandra thanked Khaleda for Bangladesh's quick and huge support to help tsunami victims in Sri Lanka under her personal

initiative.

He also thanked her for successfully hosting the 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka and congratulated her on her election as its chairperson.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner Gamini S Munasinghe was also present.



Death anniversary of Tawfiq Aziz Khan tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fifth death anniversary of Tawfiq Aziz Khan, an eminent journalist, sports writer and commentator, and former executive editor of The Daily Star, will be observed tomorrow.

One of the leading journalists of the country, Tawfiq Aziz Khan joined the then Pakistan Observer as a staff reporter in 1958 while he was a student of Dhaka University.

He also worked as public relations officer at the erstwhile EPIDC (East Pakistan Industries Development Corporation) and Titas Gas Corporation from 1968 to 1975, before joining the now-defunct Dainik Bangla and weekly Bichitra as general manager.

Tawfiq Aziz Khan joined The Daily Star in 1990 as its founding managing editor. He became executive editor in 1997 and worked in that capacity till his death.

As a sports commentator, he had worked in radio, and later in television, since 1958.

On the occasion of his death anniversary, a prayer session will be held at his home at Pabna today.



PHOTO: PID

Sri Lankan Parliament Speaker WJM Lokubandra called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday.

Water supply policy for Dhaka soon

UNB, Dhaka

A water supply policy for Dhaka is likely to be finalised within the next week giving long-term management and distribution guidelines for Dhaka Wasa.

LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said this yesterday after a meeting with a delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) at his Secretariat office.

The delegation was led by Urban Development Specialist and Mission Leader of ADB Shakeel Ahmed Khan.

ADB Country Director Hua Du was also present.

The policy, to be known as 'Dhaka Water Supply Policy', will work as the key instrument to guide the future supply and distribution of drinking water in the city areas.

"The new policy will contain specific guidelines for water management and distribution in Dhaka city... This will guide as to how the surface and ground-water could be utilised in a better way," Bhuiyan said.

ADB will provide financial support to

implement water supply projects in the city under the new policy.

The ADB officials said they will continue the bank's support to water supply and sanitation projects.

ADB will specially finance a pilot project in Dhaka to examine the viability of a newly designed self-management water supply scheme for a particular area, which will work as model for other Asian countries.

ADB will provide one million US dollar to conduct a study under the project, said the ministry officials.