

SSC, Dakhil exams start tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations, and Dakhil and SSC Vocational examinations under the country's nine education boards will begin tomorrow.

A total of 10,00,564 examinees will appear at 1,856 centres across the country for the SSC, Dakhil and SSC Vocational examinations.

Of them, 7,89,669 will appear in the SSC examinations under the seven education boards, 1,62,735 in the Dakhil examinations under the Madrasa Education Board and 48,160 in the SSC Vocational examinations under the Technical Education Board.

Of the SSC examinees this year, 2,03,030 will appear from science group while 3,46,723 from humanities and 2,39,916 from business studies.

At an education ministry press SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Students turning away from science study

Ratio of examinees in SSC dropped by 14pc in 15 years

ASHIQUIR RAHMAN

The ratio of science students to those in business studies and humanities groups at SSC and HSC levels has gradually declined in the recent years, posing a challenge to the country's development in science and technology.

Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (Banbeis) data show that the ratio of science examinees in the SSC decreased by 14 percent in last 15 years.

Only 30 percent of the total SSC examinees came from science group in 2005 while the figure was 44 percent in 1991.

Introduced at the SSC level in 1998, business studies gained great

popularity. Twenty-eight percent of the total SSC examinees appeared from the business studies group last year whereas only seven percent examinees appeared from the same group in 1998.

Although some officials of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Directorate argued that the ratio of science students started declining after the introduction of business studies at SSC level in 1998, Banbeis statistics show that science students had already decreased by eight percent in seven years before the introduction of business studies.

The Banbeis statistics also show that the number of students in

humanities group under the SSC was always high during the last 15 years while 40 percent of the total SSC examinees last year appeared from the group.

Banbeis statistic gave more frustrating picture of the percentage of science students in the HSC examination compared to humanities and business education.

Only 23 percent of the HSC examinees last year appeared from science group while 49 and 27 percent students appeared from humanities and business education groups.

The ratio of science examinees in the HSC decreased by three percent in last 15 years while SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

Independence Day parade to showcase govt success

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In an unprecedented move the home ministry has directed all ministries to prepare for participating in the traditional Independence Day parade at the old airport in the capital, highlighting 'four years of success of the government' on top of trucks, sources said.

Officials at different departments under respective ministries are now busy finding funds for the preparations that include renting trucks for over 'two weeks', creating replicas of structures built within the last four years, writing festoons and banners, and printing booklets for distribution during the day-long event. Some ministries, such as the cultural ministry will have to higher indigenous people

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Lumberjacks saw a chopped down tree's trunk into small pieces on the Sangsad Bhavan premises yesterday as felling of trees continues in the capital. PHOTO: STAR

Int'l Women's Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the theme 'The role of women in decision making,' International Women's Day will be observed in the country and elsewhere in the world today.

On this day in 1857, female workers of a sewing factory in New York clashed with local police while protesting against a 12-hour workday, low pay and unhealthy condition at workplaces.

The day was later declared as International Women's Day during the second International Socialist Women's Conference in Copenhagen in 1910, following a proposal by German Socialist Movement leader Klara Jatekin.

On the eve of the day, President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in separate messages asked all concerned to protect the rights of women across the country.

In his message, the president called for giving importance to women's opinion in spheres of personal, family and social lives to establish their rights.

The prime minister in her message said women in Bangladesh are now more confident and have been SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Razia's seven-member family cannot survive only on her labourer husband's income. She works at a construction site with her baby on the lap. PHOTO: STAR

TEJGAON BUILDING COLLAPSE Owners, builders still evade arrest

MORSHED ALI KHAN

With little progress in the investigations into the building collapses, authorities now fear that the influential owners, engineers and architects, whose negligence cost the lives and limbs of so many innocent workers, would walk free.

Detectives investigating the Tejgaon building collapse on February 25, which killed 21 people and injured over 50 workers, have made no progress whatsoever in apprehending the seven absconding accused in the case. Detective Branch (DB) Deputy Commissioner Shahidul Islam told The Daily Star that despite several raids at different locations they were unable to arrest anyone. Sources in DB said they are sure the accused in the Tejgaon building collapse case will soon surrender to the court and eventually obtain bail, as in the case of the collapsed Spectrum building in Savar. In fact, lawyers of the principal accused in the Tejgaon building collapse, Chairman of Phoenix Group Din Mohammad, tried to

obtain an anticipatory bail from the High Court on Sunday but the prayer was rejected on the ground that the court could not do so in absence of the accused.

Detectives investigating the case in connection with the collapse of nine-storey Spectrum building in Savar on April 11 last year, that killed 62 garment workers and injured hundreds, are yet to submit the charge sheet. The investigation officer of the case Kanchan Kumar Roy told The Daily Star that the investigation is taking a long time because dozens of people are culpable for the collapse of the building. "The investigation is nearly finished," he said.

Following the collapse of the Phoenix building in Tejgaon, as usual Sub-inspector of Tejgaon Police Station Khalilur Rahman filed a case accusing top officials of the Phoenix Group. The accused are the Chairman of the company Din Mohammad, Directors Shoeb Ahmed and MA Jalil, Managing SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Many victims may become crippled

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Many of the injured in the Tejgaon building collapse may become crippled and remain as burden on their families for life.

"I have become a burden on my poor, aged mother," 50-year-old construction worker Tofazzal Hossain said in a choked voice as he shows his left leg, which has been cut off from the knee.

Tears rolled down his cheeks as he tried to describe his predicament. SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Take part in polls, accept verdict

PM asks opposition

UNB, Dinajpur

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said the opposition has no alternative but to go for election and accept people's verdict.

"You (opposition) must go to the polls. There is no alternative, so take part in the election and accept people's verdict," she said. Addressing a public meeting at

Dinajpur Gora Shaheed Maidan, the prime minister said, "This opposition party wants to capture power anyway, even through rigging rather than reform."

Referring to her government's stern action against the bombers, she said all those who are engaged in bombings will be caught.

"But opposition parties are SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

IRAN'S NUKE STANDOFF UN watchdog meets amid US-Russia rift

AFP, Vienna

The UN atomic agency met in Vienna Tuesday amid a US-Russian rift over a compromise plan that could head off UN Security Council action against Iran's suspect nuclear programme. The US government demanded

Monday that the international community act to prevent Iran from making nuclear weapons, with a senior official saying Tehran had already "crossed the international red line".

Washington said it would not accept any uranium enrichment by SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Blasts rock Indian temple town

12 killed in temple, railway station

BBC ONLINE, AFP, Lucknow

At least 12 people have been killed after three explosions in the northern Indian pilgrimage city of Varanasi.

Senior superintendent of police Paresch Pandey told the BBC Hindi service that at least 30 others had been injured.

The first explosion occurred at a Hindu temple and was followed by at least another blast at a railway station. Police were trying to defuse another bomb.

"The number of bomb blasts is

now established at three and the death toll is 12," Varanasi's deputy administrator Kamlesh Pathak told AFP by telephone from the holiest Hindu city, which lies on the banks of river Ganges.

Pathak said 10 people, mainly devotees, were killed at the revered Hanuman Temple shrine when the first blast occurred and two passengers were killed in the second bombing in the Varanasi rail station 10 minutes later.

"The third blast occurred inside a crowded coach of the Shiv Ganga SEE PAGE 6 COL 8

Second Test starts today

BISHWAJIT ROY, from Bogra

Bangladesh will try to avoid a series whitewash when they take on Sri Lanka in the second and the final Test at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium here today.

The match will also mark the Test debut of the beautiful venue in the northern part of the country SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

PM to attend D8 summit on May 13

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will attend the D8 Summit to be held in Bali, Indonesia, on May 13. The prime minister said this when

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Prayer Timing		
March 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-10	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-07	6-11
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation