

# Govt carrying out balanced dev: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said her government has been carrying out methodical and balanced development activities across the country with undeveloped areas getting the preference.

"We believe in systematic and balanced development," she said when Information Minister M Shamsul Islam presented her 64 sets of books containing highlights of development works carried by the present government during the last four years in various fields in each district.

Mass Communication Department for the first time published such books with development profile of each

district titled "Zila Unnayan Porikroma 2001-2005."

Each book on specific district contains 80 pages on average briefly describing its history, location, historical importance and other information.

A total of 3,000 books for each district have been published in the first phase. The books will be distributed free of cost by public representatives in their respective areas and those will also be available in public libraries.

Appreciating officials of the department for doing a good job by publishing the books, the Khaleda said as people are involved in development process, they should know about the development sce-

narios in their respective areas as elsewhere in the country.

"These books will help them know the development picture of the country as well as their own areas," she said.

She said the Mass Communication Department has an important role in informing the grassroots-level people about the country's overall development, which will inspire and involve them more in development activities.

Deputy Minister for Information Abdus Salam Pintu, Information Secretary Md Hyder Ali and DG of the Mass Communication Department Abdul Mannan, Editor of the books, were present on the occasion.

# Govt pushing country towards conflict

Says Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the BNP-led alliance government wants to save itself by pushing the country towards conflict.

In a statement, she said: "The people are now united for putting an end to the misrule of the anti-liberation alliance."

Hasina, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, called

upon the alliance government to accept the 14-party combine's proposal to reform the Election Commission and the caretaker government system. "It will not be possible to gag the people's voice by resorting to firing, baton charge, teargas and arrest," she said.

Hasina strongly condemned and protested the police torture on and arrest of the opposition leaders and workers during the hartal hours. The BNP-Jamaat government has

chosen the path of repression and arrest to stay in power, she said.

The AL chief demanded immediate and unconditional release of the arrested leaders and activists.

She called upon the people of all strata to play courageous role to make a success of all the programmes announced by the 14-party combine, including hartal on Sunday.

# Bangla Bhai's wife placed on fresh 5-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Fahima Chowdhury, wife of JMB second-in-command Bangla Bhai, was placed under a fresh five-day remand yesterday.

Netrakona police produced her before the First Class Magistrate Goutam Sarkar after completion of a ten-day remand. After the hearing, the court granted the remand sought by the police.

On April 10, Netrakona police showed Fahima arrested in a blast case filed for December 8 explosion in the district and brought her to the Netrakona magistrate court with a ten-day remand prayer.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Netrakona Police Station Samiul Alam told the reporters that they have extracted important information about December 8 blast from Fahima during the remand, adding that they are hopeful of finding out more information about the blast during the five day remand.

# Land phone call charge hike protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Human Rights Commission (BHRC) and Citizens' Rights Movement yesterday protested the government's decision to increase the charge of outgoing call from BTB land phone to mobile phone by 500 percent.

If the government does not withdraw its decision and sticks to its increased call rate at Tk 1.50 per minute, the BHRC will file a case on behalf of the countrymen, said a press release.

At present, the call rate for every five minutes at peak hours is Tk 1.50, and for every eight minutes at off-peak hours is Tk 1.50.

The call rate can be increased, but 500 percent increase is nothing but an autocratic attitude of the government, the press release added.

Termining the decision as anti-people, the BHRC urged the government to withdraw it.

The Citizens' Rights Movement will hold a rally in front of the Institute of Fine Arts in the city today to protest the increased call rate and press for their eight-point demand.

These include fixing of call charge of all cell phones at Tk 0.50 per minute, no incoming charge from land phone to cell phone, fixing of land phone connection fee at Tk 2000 and NWD call charge at Tk 1.00 per minute.

# 4 JCD activists arrested for lifting sand from Meghna

UNB, Munshiganj

Four Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists were arrested from near the Meghna Bridge for lifting sand illegally from the river Meghna.

Police, led by Magistrate Wahiduzzaman, conducted the drive at Gozaria, adjacent to the bridge recently and arrested the four along with a dredging machine.

Three of them were identified as Sadar upazila unit JCD president Noor Hossain, Chhoto Sumon and Boro Sumon.

Police said they were engaged in illegally lifting the sand from the bridge area since long.

# Death anniversary



Today is the fifth death anniversary of Surendra Nath Halder, father of Chaitanya Chandra Halder, court correspondent of The Daily Star, says a press release.

On the occasion, recitation from the Geeta, Kirtan, discussion and a prayer session will be held at his village home at Nayakandi Bajitpur under Rajoir upazila in Madaripur district.

# EWU celebrates Bangla New Year

Students of East West University (EWU) welcomed Bangla New Year with a daylong programme amid festivity on April 15, says a press release.

East West University Sangskritik Sangha organised the programme, including a cultural show and Baishakhi Mela, on the university campus in the city.

The students took part in various events of the cultural show such as musical session, recitation and dance.



Two female Awami League activists throw brickbats at a bus during hartal hours at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

# Provide financial help to poor students

President tells stipend award ceremony

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday lamented that many students who pass SSC and HSC examinations with good results fail to pursue higher education due to financial constraints.

"As a result, deep frustration grips the dropout students who are also disregarded by their family and society," he said while addressing a stipend giving ceremony organised by Ziaur Rahman Foundation at the LGED auditorium in the city.

The president said if these students are provided with financial assistance, they could receive higher education and contribute to the welfare of the nation.

He expressed his hope that many other organisations would come forward to help students develop their talents in the greater interest of the country.

The president also thanked Ziaur Rahman Foundation for taking the initiative to give stipends to the students for the spread of education.

Education not only makes a man noble, but also benefits a society, state and its people, he said, adding that there is no alternative to education for developing human qualities, maintaining social discipline, alleviating poverty and promoting social values, creativity, tolerance and mutual respect.

Dr Iajuddin called on the students to develop their skills to face

the challenges of 21st century in this age of globalisation. "We have to attain international standards in every sphere. Suitable education, information and communication technology knowledge, creativity and continued efforts can play a significant role in this regard."

Stipends were distributed among a number of poor meritorious students at the function attended by State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Mion and President of the Foundation Tarique Rahman.

# AL activist killed for refusing to pay toll

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals yesterday killed an Awami League (AL) activist at Lalnagar of Daulatpur upazila in Kushtia for refusing to pay them toll.

The dead was identified as Kamrul Islam, 39, son of Mafizuddin. He was also the village quack.

Police said a gang, around 12:00am, went to Kamrul's home and asked him to go with them to examine a patient in a neighbouring village. He left for the village with the gang on his motorcycle and did not

return home.

Farmers of the area found Kamrul's body and motorcycle in a maize field yesterday morning.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Family members of the victim told journalists a gang of the area had demanded a toll of Tk 30,000 from Kamrul and threatened to kill him as he refused to pay.

They suspect they might have killed Kamrul.



Polio vaccine is being administered to a child at Debidas Ghat Lane Govt Primary School at Lalbagh in the city on April 18 on the occasion of the 13th National Immunisation Day.

# JCD stages armed showdown on JU campus

JU CORRESPONDENT

Tension runs high at Jahangirnagar University (JU) as Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) musclemen continued to stage armed showdown on the campus for third consecutive day yesterday.

Separate groups of JCD comprising 40-50 cadres belonging to President Parvez Mallik and General Secretary Nazmul Hasan Ovi staged showdown of huge arms and lethal weapons at Al-Beruni Hall, Al-Beruni Extension and Meer Musharrif Hossain Hall after 10:00pm in last three days.

Though the showdown is primarily designed to threaten Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists, a BNP cadre said it is a showdown of muscle-power ahead of the caretaker government.

"We feel ashamed when we find a university student holding arms just to show brute power. We also feel insecure at the same time," said a student of AB Hall requesting anonymity.

"The JCD is trying to let loose a reign of terror and muscle-power," said Mahmud Naser Jony, general secretary of BCL.

Expressing ignorance about the showdown, Parvez said, "Leaders of a dormitory can arrange a showdown to display their strength, but there is instruction not to harm BCL activists."

"I will look into the matter though I was not reported about any such incident," said Proctor Prof Sayed Kamrul Ahsan.

# Boy dies as wall collapses on him in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A minor boy died when a dilapidated boundary wall fell on him in the city yesterday.

He was identified as Abul Hossain Mobin, 10, a student of class IV at Shaheed Lt Selim Shikkhaloy.

Mobin was watching a cricket match being played at an alley at Meerbagh in Modhubagh at around 11:00am when a part of the wall suddenly fell on him.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where the doctors on duty declared him dead.

# Smugglers attack BDR men in Dinajpur, 7 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least two Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel and five smugglers were injured as a smuggling gang attacked a patrolling BDR team at Nayabad of Hakimpur upazila in Dinajpur yesterday.

BDR sources said a 20-member smuggling gang stepped into Bangladesh territory with huge amounts of Indian goods in the morning. As the BDR team challenged the legality of the goods, the armed smugglers attacked them. The BDR retaliated by firing 10 bullets in defence.

BDR sources claim at least five members of the gang received bullets but four of them managed to escape back to India. Shahidul Islam, 30, was arrested. Two BDR men were also injured in the clash.

# Close Up 1 concert in Khulna today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Close Up 1 team will stage a concert in Khulna today.

Artists Nolik, Rajib, Beauty, Sonia, Mehrab, Rashed, Rinku, Mehedi, Naorin, Rumi, Abid, Trishita and Ariful will render songs at the local stadium at 4:00pm, said a press release yesterday.

The programme will be conducted on an open stage by Debashish Biswas.

At a press conference at a local hotel, the organisers sought cooperation from all to make the concert a grand success.

It was addressed by Managing Director of Market Access Providers Limited Sharif Shah Kamal Taj and Senior Event Executive Sadiqul Alam Apu.

# Poetry Festival begins in Tangail today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A two-day Bangla Kabita Utsab (Bengali Poetry Festival) begins in Tangail today.

Organised by Tangail Public Library, the festival will be held at Bhasani Hall in the town.

Poet Al Mahmud will inaugurate the festival to be participated by more than 200 poets from India and Bangladesh.

Mahmud Kamal, secretary of the festival committee, said the festival will begin at 10:00am and continue till 11:00pm everyday.



Chittagong Photojournalists' Association stages a token hunger strike on the Chittagong Press Club premises in the port city yesterday protesting police action on the journalists.

# Vote against 4-party alliance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday urged the Bangladeshi expatriates to cast their votes against BNP-Jamaat alliance in the next general election to save the nation from the grip of corruption, terrorism and poverty.

The four-party alliance government took no measures for the welfare of the expatriates and failed to properly utilise their remittance,

he said and called on them to be united against the government.

The BDB chief made the call when Faruque Chowdhury, adviser to BDB unit at the UK, met him at his Baridhara residence in the city.

Badruddoza said corruption, terrorism and poverty marked the four and a half years' tenure of the alliance government and the ruling party men have grabbed crores of taka through corrupt means.

The alliance government has also tarnished the image of the

country by patronising religious militancy and indulging in wide-spread corruption, he added.

The BDB president also called on all to elect honest, talented and competent candidates for the greater interest of the nation.

BDB Organising Secretary Mahi B Chowdhury MP, Jubo Dhara leader Jahangir Alam Biplob and BDB activists were also present at the meeting.

# Two killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed in separate road accidents in Tongi and Jessore yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Jessore adds: A youth was killed in a road accident at Murali on the outskirts of the town yesterday.

The dead was identified as Tariqul Islam, 17, son of Yusuf Ali of RN Road area in the town.

A speeding truck from the opposite direction crushed Tariqul under the wheels when he was going to Murali from the town riding a bicycle leaving him dead on the spot.

The members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) rushed to the spot and arrested the driver and the helper of the killer truck.

BDNEWS from Tongi reports: A passer-by was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Ershadnagar under Tongi municipal area early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abu Taleb, 32, son of Abdus Samad of Boupara village under Gazipur Sadar.

Police said the accident occurred when a truck from Dhaka hit Taleb in front of Asia Petrol Pump while he was crossing the road.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Sylhet, Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and lowest 19.1 degree Celsius at Rangpur and Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:22pm today and rises at 5:31am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	23.0	56	40
Chittagong	33.5	24.5	75	50
Rajshahi	31.5	20.0	75	54
Khulna	34.3	21.8	61	51
Barisal	33.7	22.5	73	63
Sylhet	32.2	19.8	67	43
Cox's Bazar	34.8	25.0	63	51