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Holiday Notice

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today, Wednesday, April 14 on the occasion of the Bangla New Year. There will, therefore, be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow, Thursday.

Greetings

The Daily Star wishes its readers and patrons a happy Bangla New Year.

NEWS BRIEFS

RU reopens May 8

RAJSHAHI, Apr 13: Rajshahi University will reopen on May 8 after three months of unscheduled closure. The university was closed since die on February 6 following a bloody gunfight between rival groups of students. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Rajshahi University Syndicate Monday night with Vice Chancellor Prof M Anisur Rahman in the chair. RU officials said. Residential halls will be reopened for the students on May 7 and schedule for postponed examinations will be announced soon, reports UNB.

Four AGM workers held

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 13: Police arrested four casual workers of Adamjee Jute Mills in a raid on Dhaka Baju Colony area on charge of their involvement in terrorist activity. Two pipeguns, five bullets and one bayonet were recovered in the raid, police said. The accused are Zaman (24), Quddus (25), Rahim alias Kazal (24) and Rahim alias Raja (25). Police said they were wanted for long in connection with various terrorist acts, reports UNB.

45 injured in Pabna clash

PABNA, Apr 13: At least 45 people were injured, 19 seriously, in a clash between two rival groups at village Ghoshbari in Sadar thana today. All the 19 seriously injured were admitted to the Sadar Hospital where Abdur Rahman (30), Kaffuddin (30), Abdul Hossain (28), Abdul Jalil (45), Shukur Ali (35), Alimuddin (50), Abdul Wahab (27), Siddiqur Rahman (32), Abdul Pramanik (60), Khairul (15) and Azhar Ali (22) were said to be in critical condition, reports UNB.

Welcome, Bangla year 1400

By Staff Correspondent

The nation bade farewell to another Bangla year last night and welcomed the year 1400 at the stroke of midnight Tuesday.

Pahela Baishakh is being celebrated all over the country today with traditional festivity.

This year the occasion holds special significance and people from every walk of life prepare to usher in the new year.

The day has been declared a public holiday. The programmes of the day

include colourful processions, Baishakhi melas, discussions, musical soiree, children rallies and cultural functions across the country.

The programmes include Baishakhi fair, rally, cultural show, seminar, discussion

meeting, exhibitions, poetry festival.

Newspapers will bring out special supplements while Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television put on air special programmes.

The Postal Department will release a commemorative stamp of Tk 2 denomination on the day. An envelop of Tk 5 will also be issued and a special cancellor will be used for the occasion.

A "Baishakhi Mela" organised by the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) to celebrate the Bangla new years day of 1400 Bangla Saal begins today (Wednesday).

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the week-long mela at 3 pm at the Dhanmondi sports ground in the capital. See Page 12 Col 4



The Bangla year 1400 is here. Let the dawn of a fresh year instill in us virtues and bring such happy smiles on the faces of our countrymen. —Star photo by AKM Mohsin

GDP may rise by 1 pc

Star Economic Report

This year's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate is likely to increase by one per cent compared to that in the year 1991-92, according to a forecast by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) procured by The Daily Star.

This year, the GDP growth rate is estimated to be five per cent based on the performance trends in the key sectors of the economy in the first half of fiscal 1992-93 (July-December). It was four per cent in 1991-92.

The MCCI survey stated that the better performance in the current fiscal year was mainly attributable to the bumper rice crop estimated at over 9.5 million tons.

The industrial sector, however, fared badly and the production performance had fallen short of the target in nearly all sub-sectors. See Page 12 Col 7

The current state of the country's economy reflected dualism marked by success at the macro-economic level, and widespread problems at the micro or sector specific levels", the report said.

The performance of micro enterprise levels continued to dwindle threatening durability of the macro-economic success, MCCI observed.

The outlook depicted a bleak picture of the industrial sector and said that most nationalised industrial units were face with the problems of unsold accumulated stocks, worsening their liquidity situation.

A mass of the private industrial units was also facing a sluggish situation, showing either decline in growth or only marginal improvement, the report said.

The sluggishness in the See Page 12 Col 7

PM's New Year message

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday emphasised the need for consolidating the national unity to carry forward the pace of economic development in the country, reports UNB.

In a message on the eve of Pahela Baishakh today the Prime Minister urged upon all irrespective of party affiliation to be prepared for unitedly facing the challenges of the new century.

This Pahela Baishakh will herald Bangla New Year 1400, the last year of the eventful 14th century, Begum Zia said extending her greetings and best wishes to the countrymen. She also called for taking a fresh vow to build the country.

The Prime Minister also called upon all to make the country self-reliant and contribute to improving the living standard of the people by alleviating poverty. See Page 12 Col 3

Hasina's message

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina has greeted the people on the occasion of 'Pahela Baishakh', the Bangla New Year's Day, reports UNB.

In a message yesterday Hasina wished enrichment of the Bengali language and culture. "Let the Bengalee nation stand with its head high in the comity of nations of the threshold of a new century."

She also wished peace, progress and healthy political atmosphere at the beginning of the coming century.

The Awami League president said the new year is not an occasion of festivities and cultural extravaganza. "It's a day for taking a renewed pledge."

She called on the people to save the country from the hands of "evil forces," consolidate democracy, foil conspiracy against national independence and ensure people's minimum needs by eradicating corruption and bribery. See Page 12 Col 3

Yr 1400 Celebration Council to hold function at Suhrawardy Uddyan

The Year 1400 Celebration Council will hold its scheduled opening ceremony of Pahela Baishakh programme at historic Suhrawardy Uddyan ignoring what it said official restriction on the venue.

The celebration council sources told UNB last night that they would not change its venue which was selected two weeks ago. The government will be responsible for any unpleasant incident, they warned.

The authorities, they said, had asked the organisers not to hold their function at Suhrawardy Uddyan.

Meanwhile, Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday blasted the government for prohibiting the scheduled See Page 12 Col 3

Sircar's recommendation fails to get approval

By Nurul Kabir

A recommendation of the Education Minister seeking withdrawal of a state-sponsored case of 1990 implicating 24 persons in campus terrorism failed to secure the approval of a sub-committee of the parliamentary standing body on the Home Ministry yesterday, committee sources said.

The case, now under trial in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, implicated, among others, Ilias Ali, former general secretary of the ruling BNP's student wing the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

The police submitted a charge-sheet after investigations saying that on September 17, 1990 one Khokan and one Masud were severely injured in See Page 12 Col 3

violence on the Dhaka University campus. The charge-sheet implicated 24 persons.

The case, lodged with Dhanmondi Police, had charged Ilias and others under Bangladesh Panel Code Sections 307 (attempt to murder), 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting with firearms), 326 (injuring someone gravely), and 448 (trespassing).

Ilias, along with 11 others, was expelled from the Dhaka University five years ago for his alleged involvement in campus violence. He was arrested last September in connection with two separate murders on the Dhaka University campus and is now in jail.

Education Minister Barris- See Page 12 Col 3

Golam Azam's writ

Denial of citizenship may lead to civil war, says counsel

Denial of citizenship to Jamaat leader Golam Azam would lead to a civil war, Barrister AR Yusuf observed while concluding his argument in the High Court yesterday, reports UNB.

Earlier, opposing the writ petition of Golam Azam, Attorney General Aminul Huq had remarked that restoration of his (Azam) citizenship and rehabilitation in politics would lead to a "national catastrophe."

Yusuf concluded his arguments yesterday the 18th day of the hearing of the writ challenging the notification which disqualified Golam Azam from becoming a citizen of Bangladesh. A single bench comprising Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury is hearing the petition.

Admitting that the case is of public importance, the counsel said 75 per cent people of Bangladesh are in favour of Golam Azam while 25 per cent are against the Jamaat leader.

Earlier, submitting his arguments, Attorney General Aminul Huq said all government starting with the one headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman down to the present government had refused to grant citizenship to Golam Azam. This fact should not be brushed aside.

The Attorney General said it should be assumed that government exercises power responsibly and reasonably. Today, if this court invalidates the notification whereby Golam Azam was disqualified, it would tantamount to rehabilitating Golam Azam in the politics of Bangladesh. "This will be a national catastrophe," he observed.

He submitted that the court should take into account the debates in parliament where there was a sort of national consensus against granting citizenship to Golam Azam. Three political parties—ruling BNP, the Awami League and the Jatiya Party—which constitute

the vast majority, were against granting citizenship to the Jamaat leader.

Referring to the principle of natural justice, the Attorney General said the principle had no application since Golam Azam did not acquire vested rights in Bangladesh by the operation of law.

He further argued that substantial compliance of the principle of natural justice had been complied with because there was a notification on February 15, 1972 in the Bangladesh Gazette directing Golam Azam to appear before a court, which he (Azam) did not comply with.

Whether a person shall be a citizen of Bangladesh according to the provision of law of citizenship shall be decided by the government and that the decision of the government shall be final, he added.

If the court attempts to look into facts it will be usurping the function of the See Page 12 Col 8

Trade unions announce 72-hour strike programme from May 11

By Staff Correspondent

The Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) and the action committee of the trade unions in the jute-textile-cotton-sugar-BSEC have declared an all-out three-day (72 hour) strike across the country May 11, 12 and 13.

The two trade union bodies would go for the strike if the government failed to announce the National Wages and Productivity Commission Report, fixation of national wages and halt to the disinvestment process.

At separate press conferences held in the city yesterday, the two trade union bodies said that the strike would be observed at all industries, mills, by road, rail, water transport and like sectors. The strike would exclude utility, medical and emergency services, they added. The SKOP press conference

was addressed by Abdus Salam Khan while Mujibur Rahman Bhuiyan, Iskandar Ali, Golam Mohiuddin, Shahidullah, A Matin Master, Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Makhlesur Rahman and other labour leaders of different trade union bodies attended.

Identifying Finance Minister M Saffur Rahman as the main obstacle to the SKOP demands, the labour leaders said, "The Finance Minister is misleading the public by publicising that the SKOP movement aims at enhancing workers wages illegally."


They said, "But the SKOP is only fighting to restore the real wages of the workers. The real wages of the workers are going down every year but the cost of living is hitting the sky." The SKOP gave the government a deadline May 8 to

agree to the SKOP's demands. But the leaders said, "The door to discussion with the government on these issues would remain open till the strike began."



Govt to conduct land survey in CHT soon

A high-level meeting has decided rapid implementation of the government plans for land survey in the three hill districts, reports UNB.

The meeting, held at Bandarban Circuit House Monday evening with State Minister for Land M Kabir Hossain in the chair, had a detailed discussion on the problems of land and survey in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari districts, officials said.



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