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# The Daily Star

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## Hasina, Khaleda to attend programmes at same venue, same time in city

By Staff Correspondent  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda are scheduled to attend separate programmes at the same venue at the same time in the city tomorrow.

Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to chair a discussion at the Ramna Batamul at 3 pm tomorrow, organized in observance of the 79th birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, an Awami League press release said.

Begum Zia, also Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad is also scheduled to address a 'Eid-reunion' of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at the same venue at the same time.

AL Office Secretary Abdul Mannan Khan told The Daily Star last night that they had no knowledge of any other programme at the Ramna Batamul on the day. He said that necessary permission for holding the discussion was obtained from

## PM opens 'Holiday Home' at Kuakata

KUAKATA, Barguna, Mar 14: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today underscored the need for developing the tourism industry, utilising the country's natural beauty, to attract foreign investment and for economic development, reports UNB.

"The government has undertaken a massive development plan for the tourism industry, including development of exclusive tourists zone," she said inaugurating the 'Holiday Home' at the tourism centre here this afternoon.

Tourism Minister Engr Mosharrar Hossain, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Secretary-in-Charge of Tourism Omar Hadi and Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation Chairman Khondaker Rashidul Haq also spoke on the occasion.

The Holiday Home was constructed at the panoramic Kuakata tourism centre, 390

## ICFM session begins in Doha today

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad left Dhaka yesterday for Qatar leading a five-member delegation to the 25th session of Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) beginning today in Doha, reports BSS.

The ICFM session is being held prior to the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit slated for the year 2000 in Qatar. All the 53 members are expected to attend the ICFM session.

The members of the delegation included Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman and Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sohrab Hossain.

Bangladesh ambassadors to Qatar and Saudi Arabia will join the delegation in Doha.

Political, economic and cultural issues that affect the Islamic world will come up in the five-day session of the foreign ministers.

Azad is scheduled to return home on March 21.

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# 20 drown, many missing as 2 launches capsizes

By Staff Correspondent

At least 20 people drowned and many others were missing as two passenger launches, caught in a storm, capsized in the Kholpechua river in Ashasuni thana of Satkhira district Friday afternoon.

Till yesterday evening, 20 bodies were recovered as rescue operation continued, the DC of Satkhira told The Daily Star.

When contacted over tele-

phone at 6:30 pm, the DC said one of the sunken launches was salvaged and efforts to salvage the other were on.

"It is not yet clear if more bodies are there in the other launch or in the river," he said, adding the rescue operation would continue.

A UNB report, however, put the number of missing passengers at 50.

The storm also hit the locality, damaging houses and crops, said the DC.

The launches were caught in the storm at a place between Pudhakka and Chalinirhat areas of Ashasuni thana. Both were bound for Pudhakka, carrying a total of about 150 passengers. Many of the passengers might have swam ashore, district officials said.

BSS adds: Of the recovered bodies, 12 were found in the launch "M Raju", seven in "ML Kalpona" and one was found floating in the river.

Local MP Mokhesur Rahman said that 17 of the recovered bodies were handed over to their relatives while three were kept at the Ashasuni thana as there were no claimants for those till last night. The injured

passengers were admitted to Ashasuni health complex.

The storm badly damaged dwelling houses and crops in Ashasuni, Protappagar, Sriula and Anulla unions of Ashasuni thana.

A three-member committee, headed by the Additional District Magistrate, has been formed to probe the incident.

The officials explained that

rescue operation was delayed because report of the accident reached the district headquarters much late as storm disrupted telecommunications.

The DC said they had received the news only yesterday morning through wireless and arranged rescue operation soon after.

The DC, the SP and local MP also visited the spot.

## Branded fraud defaulters go unpunished: FBCCI

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday suggested a two-point proposal to solve the problems of bank loan default, reports UNB.

The FBCCI at an emergency meeting of its executive committee proposed to form Loan Default Affairs Committee and Investment Committee.

It expressed concern over the disclosure of the list of loan defaulters in Parliament on March 4 by the Finance Minister.

The defaulters' list was pub-

lished in different dailies recently.

"The way the list of loan defaulters was made public in the Jatiya Sangsad on March 4 and it was published in newspapers, for last few days will not do any good for the country's economy," the FBCCI said in a statement.

After holding discussion on the issue of loan defaulters, the FBCCI said all defaulters should not be considered on a same balance.

The Federation said that loan defaulters should be classified for its proper solution. "There are some branded fraud defaulters who have taken loans through fraudulence and forgery in collusion with a section of bank officials."

On the other hand, there are many defaulters who have taken loans legally after fulfill-

## Sonia named Cong president: Kesri says, 'I won't resign'

NEW DELHI, Mar 14: Sonia Gandhi has been made the new Congress president, report agencies.

The Congress Working Committee today also decided to convene an All India Congress Committee (AICC) session here on April 4 to ratify the appointment of Sonia Gandhi as party president.

The announcement was made by CWC member Ghulam Nabi Azad after the CWC meeting, presided over by Sonia Gandhi.

Two CWC members, includ-

ing Orissa Chief Minister J B Patnaik, faxed letters supporting Sonia Gandhi as party president.

Azad said the meeting also passed a resolution lauding the role of Sitaram Kesri.

But Kesri today said he would not resign from the post of Congress president and the scheduled takeover of the post by Sonia was illegal.

Addressing a press conference shortly after the appointment of Sonia as president, Kesri said the CWC decision was unconstitutional and he would

take the issue to the people's court.

"This takeover by Sonia Gandhi is illegal," Kesri said. "I'm still president. I am not going to resign."

Kesri acknowledged there was little he could do to challenge the decision of Congress's powerful Working Committee. But his criticism left Congress looking divided and directionless, problems it had hoped Sonia Gandhi would help resolve.

"I will try my best to live up

## Prepare for DCC Mayor polls: B Chy

Deputy leader of the Opposition in parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday called upon the city dwellers to prepare themselves for the next election of DCC Mayor scheduled for early next year, reports UNB.

Addressing a public meeting at Mirpur, the BNP leader cautioned the people that their miseries will increase if they repeat the mistake in choosing the city father by casting vote for 'boat'.

Referring to the price hike of essentials, Chowdhury said the ruling party talks high about realising the rights to food and clothes. But they have taken away the rights of the people.

He said the government did not hesitate to hand over the sovereignty of one-tenth of the country's territory to tribal insurgents and destroy peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The past and present Awami League governments have



This big ditch at Ahmedbagh in the city filled up with garbage is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. —Star photo

## City BNP gheraoes CMM's court today

Dhaka city unit has planned to gherao the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court today demanding immediate arrest and trial of the culprit involved in Tuesday's violation of minor girl Tania inside the court building, reports UNB.

City BNP convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka MP has called upon the party activists and the city dwellers to assemble at the party's Nayabazar Yusuf Market office at 10 am today to join the gherao programme.

## One killed in gunfight at Badda

By Staff Correspondent  
A young man was killed when two rival gangs exchanged gunfire at South Badda under Gulshan thana in the city yesterday afternoon.

Police identified the dead as Shujon alias Telu, 25, son of Kamal Pasha, a resident of Arhispur in Tongi. The actual reason behind the clash could not be ascertained immediately.

Witnesses said the gunfight began after both the groups chased each other near the Jhlpur at about 4 pm.

At one stage the feuding groups started trading gunshots for about half-an-hour. Shujon died on the spot as a bullet hit

## Jayalalitha's support rekindles BJP hope

NEW DELHI, Mar 14: Bharatiya Janata Party today received grudging support from a powerful regional politician, which could clear the way for it to form India's next government, reports AP.

Party president L K Advani said that now that his Hindu nationalist party had a commitment from J Jayalalitha's All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagan, he expected the president to soon call on them to form a governing coalition.

"We fell gratified at the development," Advani said. "Now that the hurdle has been overcome, it is for the president to take action. We will respond ac-

## One killed in gunfight at Badda

cordingly."

AIADMK and its allies having 17 members in Lok Sabha, today submitted to President K R Narayanan letters extending their "unconditional support" to a BJP led government.

With Jayalalitha's support, the BJP-led coalition commands 267 seats, just short of an outright majority. But another southern regional party has said it would abstain during a vote of confidence, and the BJP would have the support of a majority of those voting.

Jayalalitha had reportedly demanded the BJP give her supporters cabinet posts, creating

## Nari Samaj urges govt not to place 6-yr-old girl in police custody

By Staff Correspondent  
The Sammilita Nari Samaj yesterday urged the government not to place the six-year-old girl who was raped at the CMM's court building on Tuesday, in police custody after she is released from the hospital.

The women's forum demanded that the victim, Maria (not her real name), should be placed under the care of the human rights organisation which was looking after the girl since she was raped inside the police control room at the CMM's court building.

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## Tk one lakh reward for information on rapist

By Staff Correspondent  
The Home Ministry has announced a reward of Tk one lakh for information leading to the identification and arrest of the persons involved in the rape of the six-year-old girl inside a police control room at the CMM's court building on Tuesday.

The announcement came in a press release issued by the Police Headquarters last night.

Meanwhile, the CID has taken up investigation of the case from Kotwal police yesterday. ASP Mujibur Rahman has started working on the case as Investigating Officer with a group of CID officials assisting him.

## Indian diplomat expelled from Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Mar 14: Pakistan today expelled an Indian diplomat accusing him of "espionage and subversion," the state-run news agency said, reports AP.

P N Nair, an employee at the Indian High Commission, has been given 72 hours to leave Pakistan, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

No one from the Indian High Commission was immediately available for comment. However, Pakistan and India routinely expel each other's diplomats.

Pakistan in recent days has accused India of masterminding a spate of bombings in the eastern Punjab province.

Pakistan says it has evidence of India's involvement in two bombings of a passenger train earlier this week. The authorities say that it has arrested several men who al-

See Page 12 Col 6

## Tribals from Mizoram flood CHT for 'flying money'

BANDARBAN, Mar 14: Thousands of tribal people have been infiltrating into the district from the neighbouring Indian state of Mizoram in search of 'wealth and fortune' in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region, reports UNB.

"We heard that money is flying over the CHT," said a Tanchangya tribal headman who along with his group recently crossed the border from Theka area of Mizoram where they had been living since 1975.

According to an official estimate, 1700 tribals belonging to 335 families of Tripura, Tanchangya and Chakma communities entered into Bandarban district from the Mizoram state of India in the last one month. UP chairmen and tribal leaders, however, claimed that the number of infiltrators would

cross four thousand.

These tribals have been settling down mostly in the forest areas of Thanchi, Ruma and Rohangchhari thanas of the district and have been engaged in wood-cutting and cultivation.

The district administration, local government leaders and the tribal headmen of the areas do not consider them as Bangladesh citizens although some representatives of the migrants claimed that they had gone over to India in the mid-seventies.

The 70 year-old chairman of Local Government Parishad, Shamvu Kumar Tanchangya told the news agency that he never saw any of these tribesmen live in the area in his lifetime. He said unabated infiltration of outsiders would make

their problem further compounded.

The Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban, Atiqul Islam Choudhury, who visited a slum of the settlers at Ruma on Monday told them that the government would not be able to take responsibility for their rehabilitation in Bangladesh. He advised them to return to their original abode across the borders.

The Deputy Commissioner asked the thana officials to make a list of the infiltrators. He, however, granted a cash relief of Taka ten thousand for them on humanitarian ground. The Local Government Parishad granted ten metric tons of rice for refugees of Ruma thana and one metric ton for those of Rohangchhari thana.

Meanwhile, some top officials in the Directorate General

## CHT agreement implementation body meet on Mar 21 likely

RANGAMATI, Mar 14: The first meeting of the committee for implementing the peace agreement on the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is likely to be held at Khagrachhari on March 21, official sources said here today, reports BSS.

The committee was formed according to the December 2 peace accord between the National Committee on CHT and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) to end the decades old conflicts in the region.

Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah, who led the national committee in the peace negotiation, is the convener of the implementation committee while chairman of the Task Force on refugee affairs Dipankar Talukdar, MP, and PCJSS Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma are its members.

## OPDs in govt hospitals ineffective

By Naimul Haq

The existing system of 'referral' and providing healthcare in the out-patient departments (OPDs) in government hospitals should be changed.

This was suggested by the directors of different medical college hospitals at a meeting recently.

Chaired by the Director of Hospitals, the meeting was attended by directors of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH), Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH), Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH), Sylhet Medical College Hospital (SMCH) and Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH).

The participants expressed the view that primary healthcare at the OPDs was ineffective and it was essential to improve services immediately.

They identified some of the problems in the existing system of responsibilities at OPDs. Some of those are: Defects in referral system, lack of instructions to patients to find relevant services and poor attention to patients.

During the meeting, organised as part of the 'Further Improvement of Medical College Project' (FIMC), a number of recommendations were made, a copy of which was obtained by this correspondent.

The recommendations were

agreed to by the executive steering body of FIMC.

To overcome the problems and improve the services at the OPDs, participants in the meeting recommended that a proper system of guidance for the patients be developed and re-visit appointments are given in 'non-busy hours.'

The participants also suggested that medical officers posted at OPDs are re-designated as primary care doctors and retained in the posts for long and reception clerks are trained in identifying 'emergency patients' and referral cases.

Meanwhile, some top officials in the Directorate General

of Health Services, directors and a number of professors from the medical college hospitals met at a meeting on re-organisation of primary care services in the medical college hospitals recently.

At the meeting, the participants discussed and made some recommendations on the present status of service delivery at OPDs and how primary care fits in with FIMC objectives.

The meetings were arranged as there was no recommendation for improvement of the OPDs during preparation of the 'essential package of service' (ESP) under Fifth Health and Population Programme (HAPP-5).

## Nepali Cong negotiating with rivals to form govt

KATHMANDU, Mar 14: Nepal's largest political party, the Nepali Congress (NC) is negotiating with political rivals to form a government before the winter parliamentary session, an NC Party source said today, reports AP.

NC president Girija Prasad Koirala and senior party colleagues today held talks with Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa of the rightist National Democratic Party (NDP) about transferring power to the NC under an earlier agreement, the source said.

NC general secretary Tara

## Notice

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To ensure realisation of the due amount of revenue in due time, the VAT management often undertakes audit of some activities of some selected taxpayer firms. For this, the firm selected for audit is earlier informed to keep ready such documents of account as may be required for audit. Therefore, it is not possible to complete the audit smoothly & effectively within the prescribed time without sincere cooperation of the authorities of registered firm.

Under Rule 34 of VAT Act 1991 any registered tax-payer firm is bound to produce any kind of document of accounts to the audit officers on demand; otherwise it is considered as punishable offence under Rule 37.

Under the circumstance, all the tax-payer firms registered under VAT Act are requested to actively cooperate in the auditing. The respective firm may ensure, prior to auditing, whether the audit officers are carrying proper ID Card & audit order issued by the Commissioner concerned.

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