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Bangabandhu's 78th birth anniversary today

By Staff Correspondent
The 78th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be observed in the country today.
The day will also be observed as the 'National Children's Day'.
Sheikh Mujib was born this day in 1920 at Tungipara in Gopalganj.
He led the nation to independence through a nine-month bloody war against the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971. He was killed in a military putsch on August 15, 1975.
The day has been declared a public holiday for the first time this year.
The government as well as various political and socio-cultural organisations have taken up elaborate programmes.
See Page 12 Col 5

Bangabandhu Nat'l Award giving ceremony today

President Shahabuddin Ahmed will distribute Bangabandhu National Awards among renowned agriculturists today for their outstanding contributions in the field of agriculture, reports UNB.
The award giving ceremony will be held at the Osmani Memorial Hall, marking the birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
The Ministry of Agriculture will organise the programme. Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury will be present as special guest, said an official handout yesterday.
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman introduced the award in 1973 to encourage the agricultural experts to put their extra efforts in the development of the country's agricultural sector.

Misappropriation Case accusing 6 staff at Rupali Bank branch

By Staff Correspondent
Tension prevailed in the Sadarghat branch of Rupali Bank throughout yesterday over alleged discrepancy in record keeping of deposits, according to police and witnesses.
Several account holders rushed to the branch to verify their accounts in the branch after a cheque of a customer reportedly bounced.
A customer, Delwar Hussain Dhali, lodged a General Diary with the Kotwali thana yesterday alleging that his cheque of Tk five lakh bounced even after he had sufficient funds in the account.
Dhali challenged the branch management and found that the ledger did not carry all the money he had deposited.
The bank officials were found closeted in the branch when this correspondent visited the bank at 10 pm yesterday.

Kotwali police late at 11:30 pm informed that a DGM of Rupali Bank filed a case with the thana accusing six of its staff of misappropriating money. None was arrested till the filing of this report.
Rupali Bank officials at the head office were not available for comment.

HOLIDAY
The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birthday.
Therefore, there will be no issue of the paper tomorrow.

Inside Today Article
Remembering Sheikh Mujib—a Young and Dynamic Minister
by M Matul Islam
Democracy—the Nepalese Way
Column: Frankly Speaking...
by Faruq Chowdhury
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Supplement
Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a three-page special supplement on the 78th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Pages 7-9

Conspiracies on to discredit govt: PM



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other party leaders at a discussion meeting held at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday marking the 78th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. —Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has reiterated her pledge to free the nation from the curse of poverty and steer it towards the 21st century.
"We are working for the economic emancipation and our goal is to mitigate the suffering of general masses," she said while presiding over a discussion meeting in the city yesterday.
Awami League organised the discussion at Paltan Maidan in observance of the 79th birthday of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
Discussions at the meeting paid rich tributes to Bangabandhu and called for concerted efforts to materialise his unfinished tasks.
Recalling the fateful night of August 15, 1975 when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated, Sheikh Hasina said over the years the new generation was denied their right to know the 'true history' of the Liberation War.
Turning to the Jatiya Sangsad, the Prime Minister regretted that despite BNP's return to parliament, the Leader of the Opposition remained absent from attending the House.
"People of the country are witnessing over Television how the BNP-men are telling lies in parliament," said Hasina, adding that she sometimes wondered how often BNP lawmakers came up with 'fresh lies'.
She referred to some BNP MPs' statements that a famine-like situation is prevailing in

Cabinet okays CHT Regional Council Act, telecom policy

The Cabinet yesterday approved the National Telecommunications Policy, 1998, reports UNB.
It also okayed the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Act to give legal shape of the CHT peace accord.
The approvals were given at a meeting of the Cabinet with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.
The Cabinet endorsed in principle the proposals to amend the Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council Act, 1989, the Khagrachhari Hill District Local Government Council Act, 1989 and Bandarban Hill District Local Government Council Act, 1989.

BNP submits list of 700 'political cases' against partymen

By Staff Correspondent
BNP has submitted a list of some 700 'political cases' filed against its leaders and workers across the country since the Awami League came to power 20 months ago, one of the party lawmakers involved in the process said.
The list has been submitted as per the March 2 AL-BNP agreement that said all 'political cases' against the main opposition partymen will be withdrawn by March 31. The agreement, covering some other BNP demands, also facilitated its return to the Jatiya Sangsad

Launch capsized Seven more bodies recovered

From Our Correspondent
SATHKHIRA, Mar 16: Seven more bodies of victims of Friday's launch capsized in Kholpetua river in Assasuni thana were recovered today.
Six bodies were handed over to their relatives, the TNO of Assasuni said. The body of a boy aged about 8 could not be identified.
Earlier, 17 more bodies were handed over to the relatives of the victims Monday.
The six bodies are of Moslema Khatun, 60, Abdul Aziz Gazi, 55, Rima Bibi, 22, a two year old girl of Samu Bibi, Abdus Salam, 5 and Paritosh, 35.
The TNO told this correspondent that the seven bodies were recovered from different areas of the river. Search for the missing passengers will continue for two more days. He said each victims family was given Tk 500.



BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia speaking at a reception accorded to JCD leaders and workers released from jail recently, at Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday. —Star photo

Sonia elected CPP leader

NEW DELHI, Mar 16: The Italian-born widow of former Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi was elected today as parliamentary leader of India's Congress Party, official said, reports AFP.
The move, which completed Sonia Gandhi's strangle hold over the party, means she could one day hold the post of Indian Prime Minister.
PTI says, Sonia today virtually contested the remarks in the Rashtrapati Bhavan communique that the party was not staking claim to form the government and said she had sought from President K R Narayanan time till March 17.

Public meet at Manik Mia Avenue to be allowed

By Staff Correspondent
The government has decided to allow holding of public meetings at Manik Mia Avenue in the city.
However, a formal announcement from the government would come in a day or two, Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star last night.
As per a two-point agreement reached between Awami League and BNP on March 2, the government has agreed to allow one of the two streets in the city — either Manik Mia or Panthapath — for holding public meetings.
The government is supposed to make the announcement within 15 days of signing of the accord.

Jamaat returns to JS next week

By Staff Correspondent
Jamaat-e-Islami, which has been abstaining from attending parliament proceedings from early December, will return to the House some time next week.
This was settled at a luncheon meeting attended by representatives of the ruling Awami League and the Jamaat yesterday. Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury hosted the lunch at his parliament office.
Jamaat, which has three lawmakers, is not attending the proceedings protesting signing of the CHT accord.
According to yesterday's 'settlement', the CHT accord will be 'thoroughly' discussed in the House and if any of its clause is found inconsistent with the Constitution, the government will amend it.
Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim represented the AL, while Delwar Hossain Sayeedi and Gazi Shamsur Rahman represented the Jamaat at the meeting.
Emerging from the meeting, Mohammad Nasim told waiting newsmen that they reached a negotiated settlement over Jamaat's contentions about the accord. "We have assured Jamaat that the CHT accord will be discussed in the House. Jamaat leaders have assured us that they will return to Parliament during the current session." See Page 12 Col 2

Heated debate in House over 'genuineness' of point of order

By Staff Correspondent
The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday witnessed a heated debate for nearly an hour on the question of raising point of order during scheduled business in the House.
Participating in the debate, members of both the Treasury and Opposition benches blamed each other for violating the relevant rules while Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury regretted that he did not find any 'genuine' point of order from either side during his one and a half hours in the Chair.
Rising on a point of order, Abdul Mannan of BNP said that the Speaker should entertain only those requests for point of order. See Page 12 Col 1

Prepare for long march toward CHT: Khaleda

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the people to prepare for a vigorous movement to safeguard the country's territorial integrity and the dignity of women, reports UNB.
"A long march toward Chittagong Hill Tracts may be called after the Eid-ul Azha", Begum Zia told a big rally of JCD leaders and workers at the Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday afternoon.
Jatiyatabdhi Chhatra Dal city unit organised the rally for Eid-reunion and reception to the JCD leaders freed from jail recently.
Begum Zia said woman community are not secure under this government. Minor girls are being raped and harassed and the offenders are going without punishment.
How the government can safeguard the interest of the country when it failed to safeguard the teenage girls, questioned the Opposition Leader.
Begum Zia alleged that the government has totally failed to nab the culprit who violated the chastity of six-year old Tania. But it has been ordering arrest of political adversaries without any reason.
The BNP Chairperson said the ruling party is mobilising money through the terrorists. That is why it is reluctant to arrest them.
"It is now proved that Awami League means famine, terrorism and misappropriation relief goods", Begum Zia told the rally. "People do no longer want them in power to increase the misery."
She said the government has nothing to give the nation except. See Page 12 Col 3

Woman gangraped in front of her children

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Mar 16: A woman aged about 32 was gangraped on Sunday midnight in presence of her four children at her house at Gopinathpur village under Sathkira Sadar thana.
Police said three unidentified armed miscreants entered into the house, tied her husband to a tree and raped her. Akbar is a worker of Sathkira Sundarban Textile Mills.
A case has been lodged with Sathkira Sadar thana.

Pledge to make city mosquito-free was a mistake, says Hanif

By Staff Correspondent
Corporation free from politicalisation and did not raise holding tax.
The Mayor once again emphasised the need for a Metropolitan Government to solve city problems and said, "Let me tell you, today or tomorrow, the concept of Metropolitan Government will come true."
He said, "For the first time in history I was elected by the people of eight constituencies of the city and the people's expectations are high no matter how much limitations I have."
Pleading for the Metropolitan Government, he said that there is no need to give the Mayor the power of a minister if his job is restricted to repairing roads, fixing street lights and maintaining parks.
See Page 12 Col 3



Mayor Hanif

Rape: One arrested from court area

By Staff Correspondent
A CID team investigating the rape of a six-year-old girl was interrogating a young man who was arrested from court area in the old part of the city yesterday afternoon.
Two ASPs and an Inspector of CID was interrogating the man identified as Nabi Hossain, 26. He was arrested by Kotwali police while allegedly trying to lure a four-year-old boy.
However, the investigators could not yet identify the person who raped six-year-old Maria (not her real name) in the police control room on the first floor of the CMM's Court building on March 10.
Nabi Hossain identified himself as a resident of Mirpur Section-1 in the city.
Police suspected that Nabi, a tall and dark complexioned man wearing a lungi, might be involved in child trafficking. He was charged under the Women and Children Repression Act of 1995.

Rangamati College closed sine die: 10 hurt in clashes

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Mar 16: At least 10 people were injured in sporadic clashes between two rival student groups at Rangamati College and at its surrounding areas today.
Of them, a tribal and a non-tribal student were admitted into the Rangamati Hospital with serious wounds.
According to police and local sources, the clash broke out on the college campus following an altercation between a tribal and a non-tribal student over card-playing and smoking at around 1 pm.
The clash soon spread outside the campus as tribal and non-tribal students were locked in a series of clashes till 5 pm using lethal weapons and bricks.
Police rushed to the spot and lobbed tear gas shells and resorted to lathicharge to disperse the clashing groups.
BDR was deployed after 5 pm. See Page 12 Col 8

PW-61 discloses at court Zia had requested for absorbing Aug 15 killers in foreign service

The army officers allegedly involved in the August 15, 1975, killings were absorbed in the Foreign Service on request from the then Chief of Army Staff Major General Ziaur Rahman through official letter, report agencies.
This was stated by Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) of CID Abdul Qahhar Akhand at the trial court while he was making his deposition as the 61st prosecution witness (PW) in the Bangabandhu murder case yesterday.
ASP Akhand also submitted the documentary evidence in this regard before the District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.
Akhand, the investigation officer of the case, said he began investigation a day after the case was filed with Dhanmondi police on October 2, 1996. The charge-sheet of the case was submitted to the court on January 15, 1997.
During the investigation, the police official said, he visited the place of occurrence — Dhanmondi residence of Bangabandhu, Dhaka Cantonment, Ganobhaban, Bangabhaban, Betar Bhaban, Balurghat, Tungipara, Comilla BARD, Dashpara in Daudkandi and some other places and talked to a number of people.
He also prepared some maps of Dhanmondi Road 32 house and the mazar of Bangabandhu at Tungipara.
Akhand said that he seized 32 material evidence from Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, a video cassette of interviews of Farooq and Rashid with Granada Television from Show Time Video at Siddeswari in the city, and personal files of some officers who were deputed to the Foreign Ministry and a letter sent from the Army Headquarters.
He further said that through the Foreign Ministry and Bangladesh missions abroad, he also collected a video copy of the interviews with Granada Television and copies of interviews of some accused persons with foreign newspapers, including one of Farooq with the Sunday Times.
The IO submitted to the court another video copy of the television authenticated by Granada Television, Manchester, London and Bangladesh High Commission in the UK and attested by a notary public. He also submitted authentic. See Page 12 Col 4

অর্থনৈতিক মুক্তির লক্ষ্যে
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প্রয়াসে আমরাও অংশীদার।

স্বল্পকালীন জন্মদিনে আমরা অংশীদার।

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