

BUY NOW PAY LATER



Whirlpool
HOME APPLIANCES USA
Gas Cooker
Transcom Electronics Limited
Authorized distributor in Bangladesh for Whirlpool Appliances, USA

The Daily Star

Canon Camera
THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE CAMERA

RANGS GROUP

VOL. IX NO. 17 REGD. NO. DA 781

INTERNET: <http://www.dailystarnews.com>

MAGH 21 1405 BS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 3, 1999

SHAWAL 16, 1419 HIJRI

16 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00



Street drama at Shaheed Minar

By DU Correspondent
Three street dramas were staged at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday on the occasion of the Amar Ekushey.

Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation organised the programme to commemorate the martyrs of the language movement.

Three drama groups - Sattik Natya Sampradaya, Anonito Sahitya Sangskritik Goshti

See Page 12 Col 1

Inside Today

Article

Reforms Can Help Strengthen Madrassah Education

Column : The Outside Story
by Sabir Mustafa
Page 4

Prayer Timings
February 3

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:24	5:28
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:10	4:20
Maghrib	5:42	5:45
Esha	7:10	7:20

Source: Islamic Foundation

Announcement

POLITICAL PROTEST: SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES

JOIN OUR PUBLIC DIALOGUE TODAY

The Daily Star has consistently written against hartal since its very inception. We strongly condemned the Awami League for calling hartals while in opposition, and we condemn the BNP when it does the same.

Our position is — "we are too poor, too hungry, too uneducated ... generally too undeveloped" to indulge in this self-destructive luxury.

We think it is urgently necessary to devise alternative ways of public protest. With that goal in mind, The Daily Star and the Centre for Alternatives of Dhaka University are organising a PUBLIC DIALOGUE on

POLITICAL PROTEST: SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES

DATE : Today (Wednesday), Feb 3, 1999
VENUE : NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
Time : 2:30 PM

Our esteemed readers are invited to participate and share their suggestions with us.

Alleged remarks on judiciary by PM SC to hear contempt petition today

By Special Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court will hear a contempt petition filed by the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today, court sources said.

The Appellate Division notified the Attorney General to remain present at today's hearing at 9 a.m. The Bar president has also been notified in this regard.

Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, President of the Bar Association, on Monday moved a petition before the Appellate Division praying for drawing contempt proceedings against the prime minister for her alleged remarks against the judiciary.

Quoting some newspaper re-

ports he alleged that it was a contempt of the court on part of the prime minister because of her remarks at a January 29 news conference on bail granted by the High Court and questioned its justification.

The prime minister reportedly made her comments on the basis of newspaper reports that said 1200 persons were granted bail in various cases in two days in August.

"Take notice that the Hon'ble Chief Justice has been pleased to pass an order for serving notice alongwith a copy of letter filed by Mr. Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, President of Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association regarding the statement of Sheikh Hasina

Wazed, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh, published in the 'Daily News Papers' upon you to remain present at the time of the hearing of the matter," read the notice by the Appellate Division.

This is for the first time that the country's highest court is going to hear a complaint against an incumbent Prime Minister.

Asked, Attorney General Mahmudul Islam declined to comment on the matter.

But sources close to him said that he had consulted a number of colleagues, taking their advice yesterday evening in preparing the defence.

Bhuiyan was not available for comment.

Tk 1.34 lakh of GMG Airlines snatched from inside a bank

By Staff Correspondent

A mugger allegedly robbed Tk 1.34 lakh of GMG Airlines Ltd, a private airline, from inside a bank in the city's Motijheel commercial area yesterday.

Police quoting the FIR said last night that the incident took place when Rafiqul Islam and Nabi Hossain, officials of GMG, went to deposit the money with Sonali Bank, there at about 11 am.

When they were about to hand over the money in a bag to the cashier, suddenly the mugger snatched the bag and ran away. The two GMG officials and others around chased the snatcher but failed to catch him, according to the FIR.

None, however, was arrested in this regard till filing of this report last night.

Kamaluzzaman, General Manager (Admin) of GMG Airlines Ltd lodged a case with Motijheel thana in connection with the incident.

Moral erosion in edn instts Stern punishment only remedy: President

By Staff Correspondent

President Shahabuddin Ahmed, lamenting the extreme moral degradation in academic institutions, yesterday said stern punishment, not mere advice, is the remedy for the unfortunate malady, reports UNB.

"Moral erosion can't be stopped by sermon or advice, stern punishment is the only treatment," he said, mentioning a few recent cases of misdeeds by the college and university teachers.

The President was inaugurating the National Education Conference, organised by the Ministry of Education on the occasion of National Education Week '98, at the Osmani Auditorium in the morning.

The theme of the conference is, "Timely Education."

Shahabuddin mentioned an incident in a reputed govern-

ment college, widely published in newspapers, that the teachers of the college were locked in clash over the sharing of illegal tolls.

He said the headline of one newspaper read "Clash between professors over distribution of tolls — principal's office ransacked."

Recounting the fact briefly, the President said money collected from students of the government college as tuition, admission fee etc. will have to be deposited with the government fund. "Except specific fees, tuition etc. no other money should be collected."

"But the clash took place when the honourable teachers were sharing the money collected in excess from the examinations of the college over and over again."

See page 11

Opposition firm to go ahead with hartals

By Rezaul Karim

The BNP-led opposition parties are going ahead with their plan for a 48-hour nationwide hartal on February 9 and 10, rejecting an appeal from the US ambassador to defer the programme.

Ambassador John Holzman made the appeal to BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Khaleda Zia on Sunday as the planned hartals coincided with the visits of two US delegations, scheduled for February 6-14 and February 6-11.

The liaison committee of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote has planned the 48-hour hartal to press home its four-point demand. The demands include resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner. It has also planned a 96-hour hartal during February 22-25 to resist the municipal elections due for February 23-25.

According to liaison committee sources, the four parties are likely to announce the 48-hour shutdown simultaneously on Thursday while the one for 96 hours on February 16 from separate public rallies.

"As of now, we have no plan to reschedule our agitation pro-

grammes," said BNP leader M Shamsul Islam MP yesterday evening.

"Though we didn't sit today, but we discussed our plan by telephone. We are still unanimous and firm not to go for any change in the plan," JP representative in the liaison body Kazi Firoz Rashid told The Daily Star last night.

He said the liaison committee members had turned down the US Ambassador's request. "The government has further intensified its repression on opposition activists, leaving no room for us to rethink our plan for agitation," he said.

Citing a number of recent incidents, the JP leader ruled out any possibility of postponing their plans for hartals.

"Instead of rescheduling the planned programmes," said another liaison member, "We'll continue hartals if the ruling party tries to foil our already-planned hartals."

Sources in the liaison committee said they were also chalking out more action programmes to follow the planned ones.

The committee is expected to sit today.

See Page 12 Col 8



A little girl appreciates bottle gourds as do many in the city's wet markets these days. It has never been in such abundance and so cheap in many years.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Former army chief likely to join BNP

By Staff Correspondent

Former army chief Mahbub Rahman is likely to join BNP soon, sources said.

The former lieutenant general, who went on retirement about a year ago, had a closed-door meeting with BNP chairperson and leader of the opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia at her 29 Minto Road official residence yesterday evening.

He was made chief of the army staff following the turbulent events on May 19-20 in 1996.

After the May 1996 incident, a number of senior army officials, including the then army chief Lt General Mohammad Nasim, were sacked by President Abdur Rahman Biswas.

BNP sources said this was General Mahbub's first visit to Minto Road since his retirement. There was no briefing after the tête-à-tête that lasted about an hour.

A close aide of the BNP chief told The Daily Star that Khaleda Zia had asked him not to allow anyone in her office room as long as the ex-army chief was in.

Emerging from the meeting, General Mahbub was seen running towards his jeep with its

See Page 12 Col 8

'Scrap Sec 54, provision of safe custody'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for immediate abolition of Section 54 of the CrPc and the provision for safe custody, which they said led to violation of human rights and the fundamental constitutional rights in most cases.

Safe custody never extends safety to anyone and the Section 54 paves the way for police atrocities every now and then, they said.

The so-called safe custody has no legal validity and it is in practice only due to judicial discretion, the discussants said.

Emphasising on the overhauling of the entire judicial system, the discussants also called for an integrated social movement to contain state repression. State is the main oppressor and terrorist while our politicians are associated with all kinds of corruption and illegal practices, one of the speakers told the audience at the British Council auditorium yesterday.

The discussion was arranged on a film titled *Dushshomoy: Seema Chowdhuri Dharshan O Mritu* (Rough Times: Rape and Death of Seema Chowdhury). The discussion followed the screening of the 28-minute

documentary produced and directed by Yeasmin Kabir.

Grameen Trust extended support to the production of the film.

A cross section of people including women's rights activists, lawyers, journalists, human rights activists and academics attended the programme.

Among others, *Prothom Alo* editor Matiar Rahman, Dr Hamida Hossain of Ain O Salish Kendra, Advocate Alena Khan of Manobadhikar Bastobayan Sangstha and Meghna Guhathakurata took part in the discussion.

The documentary video recounts the tragic death of Seema Chowdhury, a 16-year-old garment worker under police custody in February 1997 in Chittagong.

The film tracked down the trails and witnesses of the case. It also relied on interviews with Seema's mother, brother and a wide section of people.

Seema Chowdhury was travelling with her boyfriend Hafiz on October 1996, when police detained them both under Section 54 of the Bangladesh Code of Criminal Procedure.

See Page 12 Col 5

Hartals aimed at saving killers, PM tells JS

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that frequent hartal calls by some opposition parties were aimed at stalling execution of the verdict on Bangabandhu Murder Case.

The Leader of the House said, it was reported in the local press that some fugitive killers of the Father of the Nation rejoined in the United States when these opposition parties "enforced" hartals in the country.

She was replying to questions from lawmakers at the Jatiya Sangsad during the Prime Minister's question-answer time.

Replying to questions from Treasury Bench member Parichand Biswas and Sultan Md Mansur Ahmed, she said "Ziaur Rahman gave legitimacy to the carnage in 1975 and now his party is calling hartals to save the killers."

She suspected that the current phase of the opposition movement was aimed at "toppling the government so that execution of the verdict is stalled."

See page 11

Alleged abductor killed in gunfight with police

By Staff Correspondent

An alleged abductor was killed while four others, including three policemen, were injured yesterday in a gunfight with police at Bashabo under Sabujbagh thana in the city.

The dead was identified as Charley Liton, 22 who received bullet wounds at his waist during the clash.

Of the wounded policemen, one was identified as Sub-inspector Zia while identities of two other constables could not be known immediately. They were admitted to Rajarbagh Police Hospital.

Liton was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at around 5 pm. The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested one of the alleged hoodlums, Guljar, from the spot.

The clash ensued when a

See Page 12 Col 6

Asma may now hope to survive

By Staff Correspondent

Teenager Asma Begum may now hope to survive with a transplanted kidney, donated by her mother.

The kidney was transplanted yesterday in a four-hour operation at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

Poor Asma was languishing at the hospital for over five months, counting her days, after her only functioning kidney was mistakenly removed during an ovarian tumor operation at the DMCH, an incident that spurred a flurry of criticism in the print media.

The transplantation was done by Prof. M A Wahab and Associate Professor M A Salam.

"The operation was successful and both the mother and the daughter (Asma) are doing fine," Prof. Harun-ur-Rashid, Head of Nephrology Department of Bngabandhu Medical University told The Daily Star.

Asma was shifted to the Intensive Care Transplant Unit of

See Page 12 Col 5

-----&-----?

সংবিধিবদ্ধ সতর্কীকরণ : ধূমপান স্বাস্থ্যের জন্য ক্ষতিকর