

FM says
Dhaka-Calcutta bus service to strengthen ties

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said the bus service opening between Dhaka and Calcutta would bring the peoples of both Bangladesh and India closer further strengthening bilateral cooperation, reports BSS.

"Now people would visit both the countries in cheaper way," he told journalists on return yesterday from South Africa after attending the investiture of a second President of that apartheid-free country.

Asked if Bangladesh would take any initiative towards mediation to resolve the conflict between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir front, the FM said: "If both the countries voluntarily propose third-party mediation."

He went to Pretoria to attend the oath-taking ceremony of new South African President Thabo Mbeki who took over the presidency from legendary political figure of the century Nelson Mandela.

Representatives of 130 countries, including 30 heads of government and seven presidents, joined the ceremony.

PM plants 40 saplings

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday planted 40 saplings of both fruit bearing and timber trees on Ganobhaban premises, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister planted the trees as part of the ongoing countrywide tree plantation drive.

Chief Whip condoles AL leader's death

BARISAL, June 18: Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah has expressed deep shock at the death of Swarupkhantha Awami League President Noor Mohammad Hawlader, reports BSS.

In a condolence message yesterday, the chief whip said late Hawlader was a dedicated social worker and politician. The country lost a valiant freedom fighter at his death.

He prayed for salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to bereaved family members.

Noor Mohammad died at his Swarupkhantha residence on Thursday, said an official handout.

Tahsin third in Business Studies group

By Staff Correspondent

Tahsin Taher of Ideal School and College obtained third position on the combined merit list of Business Studies group in this year's SSC exams under the Dhaka Board securing 894 marks.

Son of Dr A Taher, and Mahzaeben Afroz, the third boy aspires to study in the IBA of Dhaka University. He is also interested in going abroad for higher study.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said, "I did not follow any particular routine and I used to study around eight hours a day."

He is not interested in student politics.

He opined that all the schools do not have enough qualified teachers and the authorities concerned should introduce internship for the commerce group students at the school level to develop their practical knowledge.

He is a fan of Pakistan and Australian cricket teams, but hopes that Pakistan will win the championship in the World Cup.

His hobby is painting and he said that he is able to use all medium. He also likes to enjoy *gajal* and Jagit Singh is his favourite artist.

Law Minister says Judicial offices to be brought under WAN soon

GAZIPUR, June 18: All judicial offices across Bangladesh will be brought under computerised Wide Area Network (WAN) soon, reports BSS.

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru said this networking (WAN) would be part of the government's massive endeavour for modernising the entire judicial system of the country.

The minister was addressing the newly elected executives of Gazipur district bar association here on Wednesday.

President of the association Advocate Abdul Mannan Pathan chaired the function. Advocate Rahmat Ali MP, Mohammad Akhteruzzaman MP, Mohammad Ahsan Ullah Master MP, Advocate Afzal Uddin Ahmed Khan MP, Ms Meher Afrozeh Chumki MP and Barrister Mohammad Amrul Islam, among others, addressed the ceremony.

The law minister said the government sincerely believes in the freedom and independence of the judiciary and prime objective of the government is to separate the judiciary from the executive branch.

He said the government was actively considering introduction of a separate pay scale and establishment of an independent Judicial Commission to enhance the integrity and dignity of the members of judicial cadre.



Jatiya Party brought out a procession in the city yesterday in protest against the proposed budget. — Star photo

Weather

Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Barisal, Khulna, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports BSS.

No appreciable change in day temperature is expected over the country during the period, Met Office predicted.

Country's highest temperature 34.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and the lowest 24.6 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets today at 6.48 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.11 am.

Maximum and minimum 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	33.2	26.7	92	71
Chittagong	34.2	26.1	72	88
Rajshahi	34.8	26.2	84	75
Khulna	32.0	26.4	70	73
Barisal	33.0	26.0	77	73
Sylhet	34.0	25.3	65	69
Cox's Bazar	31.7	26.0	89	86

Bangladesh festival in London from July 7

LONDON, June 18: A grand festival to project Bangladesh's cultural heritage will begin in England on July 7.

Eighth of its kind, the 19-day festival encompasses art exhibitions, music, film, storytelling, poetry, crafts, photography, free outdoor events, the cuisine of Bangladesh.

The arts Worldwide, a London-based charitable house, is organising the festival.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and British Prime Minister Tony Blair are expected to inaugurate the festival — the largest and most comprehensive celebration of the arts and culture of Bangladesh ever held in Europe.

Over 60 artists from Bangladesh will perform at 20 prestigious venues which is expected to attract at least 100,000 people — both Bangladeshis residing in England and Britons as well the other European nationals. Anne Hunt, the chief executive of the organisation told BSS at her London Office.

After the inaugural ceremony, there will be an opening celebration at Bricklane, known as "Banglatown" on July 11 in presence of hundreds of Bangladeshis irrespective of age.

Adnaan wants to be diplomat

By Staff Correspondent

Adnaan Ahsan Khondaker, a student of Mirzapur Cadet College, obtained first position on the combined merit list of the Humanities group in this year's SSC examinations under Dhaka Board. He secured 890 marks.

Son of Col Kamrul Ahsan and Begum Afroza Ahsan, the first boy used to study seven to eight hours a day. He is the eldest of his three brothers.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said he wants to be a diplomat.

He said a student should read extensively to understand a subject rather than memorising it.

Suggesting a change in the present SSC syllabus, he said the syllabus should be more practical and up-to-date to evaluate the merit of a student.

Commenting on the present student politics, Adnaan said he has no interest in it.

Vice-chairman of the Buddhist religious welfare trust and chairman of Bangladesh Buddhist Association Rakhal Chandra Barua will inaugurate the trust while Venerable Jyotipal Mohather will preside over the function, the press release added.

A two-day programme marking the birth centenary will be held on the premises of Mirjapur Shantidham Vihar, the hermitage of Venerable Motahero who is also an eminent Buddhist litterateur, a press release of the celebration committee said.

The programme included ordination of some 50 new monks, mass prayer, feeding of the Buddhist Monk, discussion meetings on the life and activities of Motahero and inauguration of Shilalankar welfare trust.

He alleged that the political parties were giving firearms to the innocent students and using them in their party interests. He also held the political parties responsible for campus terrorism.

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CHT Council budget may be announced June 26

RANGAMATI, June 18: The first budget of newly formed Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council for fiscal 1999-2000 is expected to be announced on June 26, reports BSS.

This was stated by Chief Executive Officer of the Council Jatindra Prasad Tanchanya here today.

He told reporters that the Council had already sent its budget proposal to the concerned ministry.

Barnali aspires to become computer engineer

By Staff Correspondent

Barnali Dey of Ideal High School and College obtained fifth position on the combined merit list of Science group in this year's SSC examinations under Dhaka Board. She also became first among the girls securing 940 marks.

Daughter of Beno Gopal Dey, a deputy secretary of the Bangladesh government, and Bithika Dey, a housewife, Barnali aspires to become a computer engineer.

Talking to The Daily Star, she said that she used to study at least four hours a day and did not follow any routine.

Her hobby is reading, painting, music and memorising her favourite poems.

Rabin wants to be computer scientist

By DU Correspondent

Wasiur-Rahman Rabin, a student of Udayan Bidyalaya obtained third position on the merit list of the Science Group in this year's SSC examination under Dhaka Board.

Son of businessman M A Mannan and Nigar Sultan, the third boy wants to be a computer scientist. He secured 951 marks in the exams.

Rabin is rather unhappy with the result as he expected to bag the top position.

While talking to The Daily Star, Rabin said he used to study over eight hours a day to prepare for the exams.

Rabin expressed unhappiness over the student politics in the country as its has a negative impact on study. He blamed the political parties for using the students to fulfil their petty political interests.

Tasnuva aspires to become CA

By Staff Correspondent

Tasnuva Ahmed, a student of Ideal School and College, secured fifth position on the combined merit list of the Business Studies group in this year's SSC exams under Dhaka Board. She also became second among the girls securing 874 marks.

Daughter of Ahmed Ali, Additional Commissioner of Tax and Jahanara Ahmed, a housewife, Tasnuva aspires to become a Chartered Accountant. She used to study at least eight hours a day to prepare for the SSC exams.

Commenting on the examination system, she said that the MCQ system compelled all the students to read the book thoroughly, so the system should not be changed.

A fan of the South Africa cricket team, she likes to listen to Hindi music.

New HR body formed

The Muslim Unity for Human Rights (MUHR), a human rights organisation, has been formed recently with Prof Shadra Obaid as its president and Quazi Raquib Islam as Secretary General. The Super Six workshops and guided tours will be part of the festival, she explained.

Commenting on the examination system, she said that the MCQ system compelled all the students to read the book thoroughly, so the system should not be changed.

The aims and objectives of the organisation are to protect and foster the relationship of peace and amity between the people of the world belonging to different creed, cast and religion.

The other members of the central executive council are Humayun Kabir Bulbul, M A Gaffur Mazumder, Shamsul Alam, Shirin Sultan, M Manjurul Islam, Md Afzal Hossain, Faisal Mahmud Faizee, Md Salauddin Dolon, Mahed Islam, Zahidul Haq, Abu Taher, Abdur Rahman Nanna, and Nazrul Islam Khan.

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● What's on today . . .

Seminar: A seminar on "Microfinance in Bangladesh and Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis of International Mechanism" will be held. Shabbir Hossain, programme office (training) of CIRDAP will present a research outline while Dr Salauddin Ahmed, Managing Director of Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation will preside. Venue: Lecture Theatre Seminar Room of Dhaka University. Time: 4:30 pm.

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