

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 UNB.

"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 Hasnat Abdullah has expressed deep shock at the death of Swarupkati thana Awami League President Noor Mohammad Hawladar, reports UNB.

In a condolence message yesterday, the chief whip said late Hawladar 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 Swarupkati residence on Thursday, said an official handout.

Tahsin third in Business Studies group

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 Mahzabeen 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 cricket 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 Australia cricket teams, but hopes that Pakistan will win the championship in the World Cup.

His hobby is painting and he claimed that he is able to use all medium. He also likes to enjoy *gajal* and Jagjit 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 Abdur 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 Afsar Uddin Ahmed Khan MP, Ms Meher Afroze Chumki MP and Barrister Mohammad Amirul 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.



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 UNB.

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	67	73
Sylhet	34.0	25.3	75	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.

Eight 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 as the other European nations. 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

and gender, who are eagerly awaiting the jubilation.

Bangladesh Prime Minister is expected to attend the mass opening celebration, which will be termed "Dhaka comes to London," said Hunt.

She said her organisation has planned a series of programmes, defined by broad diversity, towards presenting Bangladesh to Britain. The programmes include concert (The Heart of Bangladesh) at Queen Elizabeth Hall, music and dances featured by Baul and folk songs.

A part of the festival will be dedicated to the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam as a tribute to his memory on the centenary of his birth. A celebration of Rabindranath Tagore, a storytelling (palagan and patuagan), weekend film focus (Jesus of 71. Chaka, Mukti Gaan), arts exhibitions, photo exhibitions on "water and life in Bangladesh", workshops and guided tours would be part of the festival, she explained.

The Arts Worldwide organised the seven previous festivals featuring the cultural heritage of Pakistan, South India, Iran, Thailand, China, East Africa, Yemen.

Adnaan wants to be diplomat

By Staff Correspondent Adnaan Ahsan Khondakar, 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.

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.

Nasim opens new hospital building in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, June 18: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim laid the foundation stone of a new Police Hospital Building at Dampara Police Line at a function here yesterday, reports BSS.

The Police Hospital established in 1915 at Dampara would be renovated at a cost of Taka 2.40 crore.

The function held with Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner ATA Ahmadul Huq in the Chair was also addressed by Labour and Employment Minister M A Mannan, Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs Shafiur Rahman, IGP, AYB Siddiqui and DIG of Chittagong Range Nazrul Islam.

Nasim speaking on the occasion said that the government had planned to develop one police hospital at the divisional headquarters in order to render better health services to the police force. He said that the members of the police force needed better medicare services as they were frequently meeting with accidents while discharging their responsibilities.

He said it is our policy to expand health care facilities for police force side by side with increasing general medicare services for the people.

Labour and Employment Minister MA Mannan called upon political leaders irrespective of party affiliation to extend their cooperation towards development activities of the country.

The Dampara Police Hospital when renovated will be able to render better medicare services including X-ray, pathology, ECG etc.

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 the 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 Shaheda Obaed as its president and Quazi Raquibul Islam as Secretary General, says a press release.

The aims and objectives of the organisation are to protect and execute the human rights and to 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 Sultana, M Manjural Islam, Md Afzal Hossain, Faisal Mahmud Faizee, Md Salauddin Dolon, Maheda Islam, Zahurul Haq, Abu Taher, Abdur Rahman Nanna, and Nazrul Islam Khan.



Dhaka Sheraton Management warmly welcomed Allan Stewart Levine, a renowned actor, model and goodwill ambassador of WHO, on Thursday to the hotel. Present on the occasion were KS Alam, Executive Assistant Manager, Rashida Muhiuddin Director PR of the hotel and WHO chief Dr Hardjotonojo.

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 UNB.

This was stated by Chief Executive Officer of the Council Jatindra Prasad Tanchangya here yesterday.

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 Benu Gopal Dey, a deputy secretary of the Bangladesh government, and Bhika 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 Wasi-ur-Rahman Rabin, a student of Udayan Bidalaya 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 Sultana, 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 it has a negative impact on study. He blamed the political parties for using the students to fulfil their petty political interests.

Shahana 8th in Humanities group

Shahana Hossain secured 8th position on the combined merit list of Humanities Group in this year's SSC examinations under Dhaka Board, says a press release.

A student of Viquearunnisa Noon School, she also became third among the girls.

Daughter of M Shahfayez Hossain, Shahana intends to become a social scientist.

She is very much interested in going abroad for higher study.

She is fond of music, reading and cricket.

Akram

By Staff Correspondent Akram Hossain, a student of Ideal School and College, secured 8th position on the combined merit list of the Business Studies group in this year's SSC exams under the Dhaka Board.

He secured 874 marks.

He is a student of Viquearunnisa Noon School, she also became third among the girls.

Daughter of M Shahfayez Hossain, Akram intends to become a social scientist.

He is very much interested in going abroad for higher study.

He is fond of music, reading and cricket.

What's on today

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

AGM of BLF: The Annual General Meeting of the Bangladesh Lions Foundation will be held. Venue: Lions Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 5 pm.

Rotary Meeting: The regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club Ltd. Time: 1:30 pm.

Condolence Meeting: A condolence meeting in memory of Prof MD Mofazzal Haq will be held. Prof Haq died on June 14. Venue: TSC Seminar Room. Time: 5 pm.

Beyond the boundary

From Page 1

A classic example of the Proteas' insistence on going by the reins was their obsession of batting the skipper in exactly the same position where he had been failing for the last two matches. The reluctance of the captain to send Klusener ahead of Pollock, actually cost them the match. That was another of the typical dogmatic set patterns of the team, not meant to be readjusted under any circumstances.

Cricket is a fluid game, it ebbs and flows with every passing hour. It changes course with the changing nature of the wicket, the age of the ball and the abilities of the protagonists involved, to come to terms with the implications of the outcome of the match itself. They have to rise above all these factors, if the side is to achieve the only result that counts. Motivations come from self assessment, which in turn is a grey area only discernible on the field of play. There has to be a leader of men who is able to feel the pulse of his team by himself, and not through the elongated entrails of a stethoscope snaking out from the dressing room. Steve Waugh was the man in the middle who got the vibes right. Cronje did not. He had been spoon-fed for so long that he had lost his powers of sensing the signs.

Perhaps, with Bob Woolmer out of the way now, South Africa may be able to start afresh. In a situation of unadorned dictates of the old fashioned dictators of the game will be back in fashion for the time being. Thanks to all the ancient and modern deities of the game, the final will be played at Lord's by two teams who, to their eternal credit, still play the game the way it should be played. What a relief.

BGMEA

By Staff Correspondent BGMEA has developed in the sector and a section of traders are involved in quota business which is not approved by law" one official said.

A recent survey on the textile sector done by the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) also found that the live per cent free quota was being "misused", the official alleged.

The BGMEA leader claimed that a section of government officials and garment traders were involve in the "quota business".

Quota is an export limit for Bangladesh, fixed by the US and Canadian governments every year. The government distributes the quota among garment exporters. Under the free quota system, five per cent of the total quota is reserved for "potential exporters".

A high official of the commerce ministry however said, "This quota is transferable amicably but one can not trade on it in exchange of money".

"Quota exchange system is in practice in almost every country which has a good garments business," Shikder claimed. "There is a formal quota exchange market in Hong Kong".

He informed that the BGMEA was also thinking of setting up a system for quota exchange in its office to help garment exporters.

Shikder noted that around fifty per cent of garments factories export their products to non-quota countries including those in Europe. "If free quota system does not exist, they will never feel encouraged to expand the garments market. The system should continue for expansion of Bangladesh's garments market".

Opposition

By Staff Correspondent Bhuiyan said it would be very difficult to protect the independence and sovereignty of the country if the government continues to remain in power. He urged the people to launch massive movement to dislodge the regime.

Announcing demonstrations and rallies at thana headquarters from June 21 to 29 and public meeting in Dhaka on July 5, he called the people to join all programmes of BNP and expedite the fall of the government.

Later, leaders and activists of BNP and its different front organisations brought out a procession that ended at Kakrail crossing.

Jatiya Party held a rally at Muktagang with city unit president Saifur Rahman in the chair. It was addressed by Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Maidul Islam, Taibur Rahman and Abu Hossain Babla.

Kazi Zafar said the people of the country has rejected outright the proposed budget as it is completely against the interest of commoners. Activists of JP also brought out a procession from Muktagang.

Dhaka city unit of Jamaat held a rally at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram after the Juma prayer and later brought out a procession in the city.

B&H 'Star Search' concert July 16

By DU Correspondent The Benson & Hedges (B&H) 'Star Search' will arrange a musical concert at Sheraton Hotel on July 16 in which 15 young talents will take part.

The event is part of the 'Star Search' competition being organised to encourage and promote the young musical talents from all parts of the country.

The best performer in this programme will be given the opportunity to perform in the next B&H concert and other B&H sponsored musical events. The best one will be selected by a panel of judges including international music figure VJ Sophia of Channel V.

The B&H had offered entry forms for the competition with a couple of English weekend magazines. The forms were also placed in 15 restaurants. And the response was big. Out of approximately 1,000 responses, a total of 100 applications have been selected by the renowned band music personalities of the country.

The 15 performers in the July 16 event will be chosen from the selected 100 band groups who have been invited for live audition before a panel of judges. The judges included Nakib Khan of Renaissance, Shaifin Ahmed of Miles, Partha Barua of Souls, Fany of Feelings, Labu Rahman and Foad Naser Babu of Feedback.

When asked about the rest 85 band groups, Raihan Rahman, Assistant Brand manager of B&H of The Daily Star, "The others would be promoted in another way".

Gas Act

From Page 1

safety in gas related operations. It would also appoint a Chief Metre Examiner.

The Act provides for rigorous prison terms not exceeding five years or fine or both for theft of gas including illegal gas connection, use of gas without meter, boring hole or making other changes in a meter or gas pipeline and for wasting gas.

The draft also says that any amount receivable by gas service providers for use, misuse or theft by any consumer will be recoverable as Public Demands as per the Public Demand Recovery Act, 1913.

Under the Act, the government will monitor gas extraction to ensure that annual extraction does not exceed 7.5 per cent of the proven reserve.

The government may issue regulations in a situation of gas shortage, prohibiting use of gas in specified circumstances or by specified consumers, and allocating gas for use by specified consumers.

The Act also says that the government may establish a Hydro-Carbon Unit but will not interfere in the functions of the Gas Regulatory Commission.

The Hydro-Carbon Unit will consult the Commission on all matters concerning the Commission.

The Commission will also give licence to persons or companies for gas transmission, processing and distribution.

Issuing licensees would require making public all rates, charges and other terms and conditions relating to tariff.

JOP leaders also demanded cancellation of the election, that, except to the extent permitted by the Commission, there will be no cross-subsidy among separately licensed activities, between customers or classes of customers.

Licencees will ensure that the prices they charge for transmission, processing, distribution or supply of gas have been set in accordance with a cost reflective methodology cost agreed with the Commission and have been publicly notified.

But the Commission may set prices which depart from the principles specified in the Act and involve subsidies, provided it is satisfied that the undertaking will be adequately compensated from some other source and that the means for recovering such compensation are specified.

In taking decisions on charges for transmission, distribution, processing and supply of gas, the Commission should also protect consumers from monopolistic prices and encourage efficiency in licencees' operations.

The Commission will also make and modify regulations which define all technical and safety standards in respect of gas industry.

The Commission will establish a Consumer Consultative Council that will disseminate information relevant to the Commission's objectives, promote awareness about issues affecting customers and their entitlement.

Make AL golden jubilee celebration a success: Hanif

Dhaka City Awami League President and Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif yesterday called upon the party workers and well-wishers to make the golden jubilee celebration programme of Awami League a total success, reports BSS.

He was speaking at a meeting of the party workers at Lalbagh yesterday with President of Lalbagh Thana Awami League Alhaj Abul Hasnat in the chair.

Hanif said "we have liberated the country and established the independent and sovereign Bangladesh under the leadership of Bangabandhu".

"Now we all have to work unitedly to protect the hard-earned democracy and achieve the economic emancipation of the people under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, he added.

General Secretary of Dhaka City Awami League and State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya urged the party leaders and workers to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.