

Weather

Temperature may fall

Weather will remain dry over the country with partly cloudy sky over Rajshahi division during the evening today, reports UNB. Night temperature may fall by 1 to 3 degree Celsius over the country, said the Met Office. Mild cold wave may sweep over Rajshahi division and the region of Jessore, Satkhira and Srimangal during the next 15 hours commencing 6 pm yesterday. Yesterday's highest temperature of 31.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Teknaf and the lowest 10.2 degree Celsius at Sayedpur. The sun sets in the capital today at 5.54 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.31 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 | 25.2 | 16.2 | 54 | 35 |
| Chittagong | 29.4 | 17.8 | 65 | 47 |
| Rajshahi | 25.4 | 11.4 | 61 | 50 |
| Khulna | 26.5 | 13.8 | 60 | 55 |
| Barisal | 26.5 | 14.0 | 60 | 58 |
| Sylhet | 27.6 | 14.6 | 77 | 65 |
| Cox's Bazar | 30.0 | 20.4 | 63 | 56 |

HERE and THERE

BETA
Eid reunion of Bangladesh English Teachers' Association (BETA) was held at Officers' Club 'Khelaghar' here recently, reports BSS. Prof Ahsanul Haque of the Department of English of Dhaka University attended the reunion as the chief guest. President of the association and Principal of Kabi Nazrul Government College Prof Md Anisur Rahman presided over the function. A large number of English teachers of government, non-government institutions and universities attended the function. In the meeting the speakers discussed problems of English teaching at different levels and suggested some measures to improve the standard of English language and literature in Bangladesh. The meeting also felt the necessity of the acceptance of both British and American English in all public examinations and also felt the need for establishing a separate academy for improvement of English and American language and teaching.

The members also highly appreciated the positive attitude of the Minister for Education A S H K Sadique towards the development of English language and literature at dif-

Death anniversary of Osmany today

The 16th death anniversary of Commander-in-Chief of Bangladesh Liberation Forces General Mohammad Ataul Gani Osmany will be observed today, reports BSS. Jatiya Janata Party (JJP), founded by Osmany, will observe the day through different functions. The JJP will lower the party and national flags to half-mast, arrange day-long *Qurankhuani* and *milad mahfil*, and hold discussions at 4 pm at party office.

Nation to remember Osmany for his uncompromising character

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday said General M A G Osmany, the Supreme Commander of the Liberation War, would ever be remembered by the nation for his uncompromising character, honesty and respect for parliamentary democracy, reports BSS. In a message on the occasion of the 16th death anniversary of General M A G Osmany, the President said the provisional government (Mujibnagar government) which was formed on April 10 in 1971 appointed General Osmany as the Commander-in-Chief of the Mukti Bahini for organising and steering the Liberation War. General Osmany performed his duty efficiently and because of that he was promoted to the rank General and included in the Cabinet, he added. The President prayed for peace of the departed soul of Osmany.



Shamsul Huda

Exhibition of art works on Shapona

A two-day exhibition of art works on Shapona+2000 will be held at now defunct Jojon Samakalin Chitrashala (74, Central Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka) Thursday evening, said a press release. The exhibition by Kazi Raqib, Dhali Al Mamun and Enamul Karim Nirjar has been organized as a symbolic protest against instability of recent times and insecurity of future, it said. The exhibition will be inaugurated at 7 pm Thursday which will be followed by night long discussion, it added.

Shamsul Huda

hailed from Muktighachha, Mymensingh, obtained Bachelor's degree from Calcutta Presidency College and MA LLB from Aligarh University. He was the first Bengalee to be elected Vice President of Aligarh Students Union and President of Bengal Muslim Students League.

Anniversary of death of Motahar Hossain Siddiqui today

The first death anniversary of noted journalist and former editor of The Dainik Millat, The New Nation and the publisher of The Ittefaq will be observed today, says a press release. A *milad mahfil* will be held today at his residence in the city while another *milad mahfil* and *doa* have been arranged at his village home at Bahadurpur in Shibbar.

Death anniversary

The 5th death anniversary of Md Abu Taher, a philanthropist and social worker of Tongi, Gazipur, will be observed today, says a press release. *Qurankhuani, Doa* and *milad mahfil* will be held at his 33, Lovely Villa, East Arichpur under Tongi in Gazipur district to commemorate the day. His son, Nasir Uddin Bulbul, is a Sub-editor of the Daily Al Amin.

CMC wins Prothom Alo-SKF Debate Competition

From CU Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Feb 15: Chittagong Medical College (CMC) has become the champion and Rajshahi Medical College (RMC) runners up in the Prothom Alo-SKF Inter Medical Debate Competition. The final round of the competition last night Chittagong Medical College (Falgun team) beat Rajshahi Medical College debate team at the CMC auditorium. Prof Dr Shuvagato Chowdhury, Principal of Chittagong Medical College distributed prizes among the winners. Abul Momen, residential editor of the Daily Prothom Alo, Prof Dr MA Zaher, A K M Zahurul Hossain, VP of CMCCSU and Mahbabul Alam, GS of CMCCSU were present, among others, at the prize awarding ceremony. A cultural programme presented by the students of Sir Salimullah Medical College was also held at the CMC auditorium.

Death condoled

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday condoled the death of Majeda Begum, 67, mother of MAH Selim who is BNP central leader and president of Bagerhat district unit of the party, said a press release.

Obaidullah Khan hospitalised

By Staff Correspondent Abu Zafar Mohammad Obaidullah Khan, a former secretary and agriculture minister was admitted to the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He is suffering from viral hepatitis, his family said. Obaidullah Khan, a former deputy director general of FAO and a regular columnist of The Daily Star is also a well-known poet in the country.

An artiste presenting songs at a function organised by Sammilite Sangskritik Jote as part of its Ekushey programmes at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

—Star photo

Hartal: 70 injured

From page 1 of tear gas shells and resorted to lathicharge when pickets were preparing to bring out a procession at 12 noon at Tikatuli. Police also entered lanes and bylanes of Tikatuli and Shapla Chattar areas and allegedly beaten up many passers-by. More than 10 people were injured during the incident. The law enforcers swooped on a BNP procession at North-South Road at about 11 am and beat up the activists. Seven people were arrested from the spot. Police throughout the day didn't allow the hartal activists to bring out any procession in Kotowal thana areas. Police chased a procession of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal which was brought out from Jagannath University College at 11 am. Police chased a BNP procession and arrested one Sramik Dal activist from Khilgaon rail gate at about 10:30 am.

BNP at a press briefing alleged that Awami League terrorists exploded three powerful bombs at the Shamoly and party MP Akhter Hamid Siddique at 10 am. Police said they arrested only one activist on charge of bomb explosion in the city while the BNP claimed that police picked up at least 25 party-men. Jamaat also claimed that police arrested four party activists from a procession at Mohakhali in the morning. Autorickshaws, some minibuses and BRTC buses were pined on some city roads, including the VIP roads. Movement of rickshaws was almost normal. Movement of vehicles in long-route remained stopped, but train service was almost normal. All trains and launches ran on schedule. Educational institutions, business establishments, shop and private offices remained closed. Attendance in government offices, including Bangladesh Secretariat, was thin.

CEC goes to NY for treatment

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena left for New York yesterday for post-operation treatment, reports UNB. The medical board formed for his treatment has advised him to go abroad for better treatment. Abu Hena has been suffering from various complications after his operation in Bangkok in December. He was undergoing treatment in Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka. During his absence Mushtaq Ahmed Chowdhury will act as the Chief Election Commissioner, said a press release.

Hartal ignored in 3 districts

The dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the opposition alliance was not observed at least in three districts yesterday, reports UNB. Correspondents from Meherpur, Rajbari and Munsiganj reported that all shops, educational institutions and offices in the districts remained open during hartal hours. Vehicular movement was also normal although it was less than normal in the long routes. Munsiganj correspondent said production in mills and factories in the industrial areas was as usual.

BSMMU prison wing

From page 1 long. At this moment we are helpless as BSMMU only has the authority to discharge them," said a jail official. Asked about the allegations, Professor M A Kaderi, vice-chancellor of the University, said, "I will not say anything about the allegation that a number of doctors are involved in the incident at the prison wing," without elaborating further. Jail officials named four prisoners who have been staying at the prison wing for "suspiciously long period." Of them, Captain (ret.) Nurul Huda, an accused in Srimat murder case, has been staying at the wing for about two and a half years. Syed Sajjad Mahiuddin Hasan, an accused in the Shazneen murder and rape cases, has been at the wing for more than a year. Aziz Ahmed Michel alias Titu, a notorious criminal accused in a number of murder cases, has been at the wing for the last eight months. Rentu, an accused in a case filed with Singair thana, has been there for seven months, jail sources added. However, Nurul Huda's case is a bit different. He was shifted to the prison wing on August 27, 1997 following a High Court order, said a jail official of prison department. A medical board informed the court about one and half years ago that Nurul Huda no longer needed to stay at the wing. BSMMU Hospital authorities again formed a medical board a few months ago and it was also of the same opinion. The hospital and the jail authorities are now waiting for the court order, the official added. But the others cases are absolutely dubious, said a jail official. Hasan, a charge-sheeted accused in the Shazneen murder case, was shifted to the prison wing of the hospital on January 7 of 1999 after jail doctors recommended that he had been suffering from "PUD (peptic ulcer disease) with chest pain with general pain." While recommending that Hasan be shifted to the prison wing, the jail doctors also mentioned that there had been "loss of sensation at some parts of his left thigh," said a jail official. Jail officials categorised the problems, created by these prisoners at the wing, into two groups. Firstly, jail authorities can not shift a sick prisoner to the prison wing as there are only 12 beds in the wing. "If half the beds are occupied by some prisoners for months, then we can not send a prisoner who is genuinely sick to the wing unless the bed is available," said a jail official. Secondly, when a criminal stays at the wing for long it becomes a security threat, as only 18 unarmed wardens under a head warden discharge their duty at the three floors of the wing, the official continued.

Marks manipulated

From page 1 would be submitted to the DU Syndicate shortly. The Syndicate will take decision regarding the incident. Asked what action would be taken if any university teacher is found involved in the irregularities, he declined to elaborate, only saying, "This is not the right moment to comment on such an issue." A top university official on condition of anonymity however said that the teacher found responsible for such a heinous crime would be temporarily expelled from the university. Meanwhile, students of the law faculty have demanded that Bari be removed.

Hajj flights

From page 12 Aviation Minister Mosharraf Hossain. State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam, State Minister for Textile AKM Jahangir Hossain, Secretary, Civil Aviation and Tourism CM Mohsin, Secretary Religious Affairs, Mahfuzuz Sobhan, Chairman Civil Aviation Air Commodore Iqbal Hossain, Biman's MD Air Commodore Rafiqul Islam were present. A Munajat was offered before the flight took off.

First case

From page 1 the country. "Police officials have been ordered to take action against offenders on the basis of the PSA," Khan added. Some top police officials claimed that the Act would also help reduce hartal-related violence. Violence during yesterday's hartal was much less than that during earlier hartals. They further said the number of offenders involved in exploding bombs and damaging property, vehicles and other things would now go down. "The Act would have a psychological effect on all concerned," one official added.

BB board

From page 1 gation revealed that the group imported cement but sold it on the market without making payments. Bank officials helped the group in this case. The board identified the officials and inspection engineers responsible for the irregularities.

UZ polls

From page 1 by all concerned, including those belonging to the opposition camps," a top EC official said. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said at a function in the city on Monday that her party was ready to hold the Zilla Parishad and Upazilla Parishad elections but she did not know why the Election Commission is not announcing the polls schedules. Earlier, in the first week of this month, the Local Government Ministry wrote to the EC Secretariat expressing concern over the delay in holding the elections. Replying to a query, Chowdhury the acting CEO said yesterday, "I do not see any possibility that an ideal political situation would be created in the near future. We cannot wait for an indefinite period to announce the polls, although the authority of a date for the Upazilla polls lies with the Election Commission." Asked whether the Prime Minister's public comment on the issue would influence the Commission in taking a decision about the polls, he said, "Certainly not. She has said what she had to say. I don't want to comment on her statement."

Monitoring

From page 1 not been done properly. Rahman contended that such a law was needed for quick trial of criminals who are making lives of people miserable and that the objective of the law would be fulfilled if the accused could be tried at the earliest.

Bad news

From page 12 ery potato plot there to blot the logged rain-water from other parts of the potato fields. Yet, 'late blight' and 'bacterial wilt' made their ways in attacking the young plants adversely. Abu Sufian, regional sales manager of Novartis Bangladesh, a multinational engaged in crop protection sector, feared that Comilla might experience 20 per cent production loss in the least this season. He said, potato plants were wilting away because of bacterial infection in Comilla. On an average, ten per cent of the potato area has been affected by the bacterial wilt. Late January rainfall had affected potato cultivation in the low-lying areas in particular, where water logged, said Sufian. However, officials at a very good nationwide output of potato this year. According to DAE, out of a total of 1.75 lakh hectares of land for potato cultivation, only 13,100 hectares fall under Comilla district. In Dhaka region, the major potato cultivation area of the country, farmers are upbeat because of an expected bumper production in Munshiganj, the Upazila parcels with the country's potato nucleus, yield will be as high as 400 maunds an acre. In Bogra, the country's second potato hub, potato prospects are also on a high mark. In Bogra region, some 30 to 40 per cent of the potatoes have already been harvested, according to an agriculture bulletin.



Ugandan Minister for Economic Monitoring Kweronda Ruhemba visited the Palli Karma Sahayok Foundation Sunday. He is seen with the official of the NGO.

Padma Oil Co ranks one of world's best jet fuel marketer

By Staff Correspondent World Jet Fuel Report of The Armbrust of Florida, USA has published a jet fuel market survey report recently from a total of 41 airlines reporting annual jet fuel consumption of 35.24 billion gallons or 60.4% of the total world jet fuel demand. Padma Oil Company Aviation Service has ranked 72 position with 3 points out of the world's 83 best aviation fuel marketing companies that were surveyed through the airlines' intelligence network. Petronas of Malaysia and Saudi Aramco have scored 8 points each; while ENO of Dubai MISR of Egypt and AEROFLOT scored 7 points each; Nippon Oil of Japan and Petrol Oil of Turkey scored 6 points each; Petrogal of Portugal scored 4 points, Repsol of Spain scored 3 points in the above survey against Padma Oil has scored 3 points. The Oil Major Air BP has ranked 1st, Shell 2nd, Esso 3rd and Mobil has ranked 4th in the said survey. Of the total number of respondents, 46.3% were cast by North American Airlines, 28.6% from European, 20.7% from Asia/Pacific and 4.2% from Africa/Middle East Airlines. Airlines were asked to rank the best international and regional marketers in 10 categories: (1) best informed, (2) best staff, (3) best organisational structure, (4) most responsive, (5) most innovative, (6) technical expertise, (7) most price competitive, (8) least price competitive (9) most improved and (10) least improved. Points were assigned to each candidate with first place receiving 3 points, second place 2 points and third place 1 point.

831 held, 21 explosives recovered

A total of 831 persons were arrested and nine illegal weapons, 62 bullets and 21 explosives were seized during the 299th day of the countrywide combing operation by police, Bangladesh Rifles and Ansar forces, reports BSS.

Ugandan minister visits PKSF

Ugandan Minister for Economic Monitoring Kweronda Ruhemba Sunday visited the Palli Karma-Sahayok Foundation (PKSF), the apex body for financing the micro-credit programmes in the country, reports UNB. During a meeting with the PKSF Managing Director Salahuddin Ahmed and other senior officials of the foundation, the Ugandan Minister was given a brief account of the activities of the foundation and its partners. Programmes postponed Workshop date changed

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A two-day workshop on "South Asian Workshop on Settlement of the Urban Poor: Challenges in the new Millennium," scheduled for February 17-18, will now be held on February 18-19 due to unavoidable circumstances, says a press release. Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP) and ADAB will jointly organise the regional workshop. The inaugural ceremony of the workshop will be held at the CIRDAP auditorium, Chameli House, 17, Topkhana Road while the second day's session will be held at the IDB Bhaban auditorium, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Bharateswari Homes Guardian's Day date changed

The Guardian's Day of Class VIII IX and Class X-XI students of Bharateswari Homes will now be held on February 18 and 25 instead of February 17 and 24 respectively, says a press release. Liberation War Museum programme postponed

Liberation War Museum programme postponed

The solo musical presentation by Rathindranath Roy, scheduled to be held on February 17 at the Cafe Theatre of the Liberation War Museum, has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances, says a press release.



The ruling party took out many processions yesterday condemning hartal. The photo shows one such procession which totally blocked vehicular movement, forcing traffic to use the opposite lane, thus violating traffic laws. Doesn't the above procession constitute violation of PSA? —Star photo



11 am, Sonargaon Hotel Annex yesterday. Workers with job permits for Saudi Arabia through the locked gate awaiting the Saudi Airlines office to open to collect their air tickets. Most of them travelled overnight and arrived at the airline office early in the morning. —Star photo