

What's on today....

Opening ceremony: Inaugural ceremony of Desh General Insurance Company Ltd will be held. Chief guest: Minister for Finance Shah AMS Kibria. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9.30 am.

Seminar: Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran will hold a seminar on "The Message and Analytical Study of the Movement of Imam Hussain (A)". Venue: Centre premises at House No 54, Rd No 8/A, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 4.30 pm.

Cultural evening: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will hold the 2nd day of its cultural programme. Singers Shubir Nandi and Farida Parvin will present songs. Venue: Begum Sufia Kamal auditorium of National Museum, Shahbag. Time: 6.30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Inauguration: Arena Multimedia Centre at Gulshan will be inaugurated. Chief guest: Minister for Science and Technology Lt Gen Noor Uddin Khan psc (Retd). Venue: 121/C Gulshan Avenue. Time: 9.00 am.

Workshop: The 1st national workshop on improved flood warning dissemination will be held. Organiser: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and office of the National Project Director Consolidation and Strengthening of Flood Forecasting and Warning Services. Venue: Hotel Abakash, Mohakhali. Time: 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

Launching ceremony: Agrobased Industries and Technology Development Project AIDP, a project of Ministry of Agriculture supported by USAID and NELCO Foods Ltd, will hold a launching ceremony for its new Frozen French Fries (FFF) production line. Venue: Prantik 246/1, C-17, West Agargaon. Time: 4.00 pm.

Bonsai exhibition: Russian Cultural Centre presents a solo exhibition by Bonsai artist Nazmul Haque titled "Wonder world of Bonsai and Saiker". Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi Rd No 7. Time: 5.30 pm.

Poetry Night: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka in association with Eternal (an English recitation group) will hold a poetry night. Venue: Conference Room of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26 Mirpur Road. Time: 6.30 pm.

Weather

Dry weather forecast

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind are likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions and the regions of Jessore and Kushtia in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period and dry temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, M+ Office said. The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 36.4 degree Celsius at Jessore and the lowest 19.9 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.22 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.33 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	33.6	21.3	67	58
Chittagong	32.5	20.8	66	68
Rajshahi	33.6	21.2	77	70
Khulna	34.7	24.8	61	75
Barisal	34.0	20.5	61	59
Sylhet	32.8	19.9	70	59
Cox's Bazar	34.3	24.4	67	55

HERE and THERE

FBCCI

By Staff Correspondent
The Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) has expressed relief over withdrawal of the transport strike by Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation.

The FBCCI in a statement yesterday, however, expressed concern over the prevailing mismanagement in the traffic system of the country. The mismanagement in traffic system has crippled the total economy of the country, it said.

It observed that mismanagement of traffic system has become a threat to the government and the society as well. The business community will provide all out support if the government takes any steps to bring discipline in the transport sector.

The federation also felt that the government should strictly apply traffic rules laws and strengthen the police patrolling system.

DCTS

By DU Correspondent
An opinion exchange and cultural function of Dhaka College Tourism Society (DCTS) was held at the college auditorium yesterday.

Principal of the college Jahanara Begum was the chief guest on the occasion while vice principal Dr Shamsul Alam attended the function as special guest.

Hemophilia Society of Bangladesh

The 6th Annual General Meeting '99 of the Hemophilia Society of Bangladesh was held recently, says a press release. Different aspects of hemophilia were discussed at the meeting.

A new Executive Council was also elected for next two years in the meeting.

The new committee is as follows: Muhammad Habiburahman (president), Md Nurul Islam (vice-president), Parimal Chandra Debnath (general secy), Nani Gopal Dasgupta (treasurer), Md Abdul Halim (organising secy) and Naser Mustafiz Russel, Md Alauddin Ahmed, Ulla Nawrin, Md Mizanur Rahman Akond, Md Nazrul Islam Hriday and Md Habibur Haque (members).

BILS

A five day long seminar on "Trade Union and Media Communication" began yesterday at BIM under the auspices of BILS/LO-FTF Project, says a press release.

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan inaugurated the seminar. The inaugural session was addressed by Project Manager Hans Kasrup Andersen and Executive Director of Massline Media Centre Kamrul Hasan Monju.

A total of 18 participants nominated by the National Trade Union Federations are attending the seminar.



Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and Water Resources Planning Organisation (ARPO) signed an MOU regarding exchange of data related to National Water Management Plan and National Water Resources Database. The MOU was signed by Mowar Hossain Chowdhury, Chief Engineer, LGED, and Touhidul Anwar Khan, Director General, WARO, yesterday.



National Professor Kabir Chowdhury unveiling the plaque of a new building named after Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam at Narayanganj Government Tolaram College yesterday. —Star photo

3 factories gutted in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Apr 18: Three factories were gutted in two separate incidents of fire in Patiya and the Chittagong Export Processing Zone today, reports BSS.

Fire Service sources said machinery and cotton-rolls were destroyed in a fire that broke out at Gary-Fabe Textile Mills in the CEPZ.

In another fire a salt factory and a firewood factory were totally gutted in Indarpole, five kilometers from Patiya thana.

PDB

From Page 1
works at its own risk and has served the site contractor's interest," said a source. "But it would not serve the project's interest because the main issues with AES remain unresolved. If PDB later spends additional finances for the remedial work, it would be a huge waste of public money."

100 pc benefit for pvt teachers under scrutiny

The government has been scrutinising the feasibility of paying 100 per cent salary and allowances to good standard non-government teachers, Education Minister ASHK Sadek said yesterday, reports BSS.

"So they need not go for any movement on the issue," he said, while addressing a seminar on "The role of secondary teachers in creating skilled manpower" at the national convention of Bangladesh Shikshak Samity (BSS) here. Chaired by Samity President Mohammad Azizul Islam, the seminar was addressed, among others, by Secretary General of Bangladesh Shikshak Samity Federation Qazi Faruq Ahmed, Director General of Technical Education Directorate Prof M Ziaur Rahman, and Chairman of Technical Education Board Saiful Huq.

The Education Minister said if the teachers are sincere to their responsibilities, adoption of unfair means in the examinations would be stopped by 80 per cent.

He said in order to effect reform in the manpower structure of non-government educational institutions, the present government has decided to raise the strength of sections from 80 during the previous government to 120.

The government has already taken a decision to provide medical allowance and increments under the new pay-scale to non-government teachers and employees, Sadek said, adding that service book would be opened for them so that they can get the benefit of gratuity and provident fund.

The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took all these decisions not with any political motive or for cheap popularity," Sadek said adding despite protests by some teachers' associations, the government has opened Teachers Welfare Trust and non-government teachers have already started getting the benefit.



Yasuhiko Tanaka, Director, Information and Cultural Section, Embassy of Japan, handed over 403 documentary and educational TV programmes to Syed Salahuddin Zaki, Director General of the Bangladesh Television, at a ceremony held at Bangladesh Television Bhaban, Rampura, yesterday.

Hearing of writ challenging caretaker govt adjourned

The hearing of the writ petition challenging the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution (Caretaker Government) before a High Court Division Bench was adjourned for a week yesterday, reports BSS.

The bench, comprising Justice Mohammad Gholam Rabbani and Justice Muhammad Latifur Rahman, granted the adjournment at the request of Deputy Attorney General Syed Mahmud Hossain.

Mohammad Saleemullah, advocate of the Supreme Court, filed the writ petition challenging the Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Act 1996 (Act No 1 of 1996) as ultravires to the constitution and having no legal effect.

Ramganj clash

From Page 1
Sadar Hospital with gun shot wounds. Zakir, 18, was sent to the Ramganj thana health complex with similar injuries. Ismail, 25, Swapon, 26, Monir, 21, Sirajul, 19, and Rahman, 21, were taken to the Comilla Medical College Hospital.

Others were admitted to Ramganj thana health complex, Laxmipur Sadar Hospital and local clinics.

Trouble started at about 8.30 pm and died out at about 2.30 am after police from the district headquarters intervened.

Police arrested Abdul Wadud, Tajul Islam, Faruq Ahmed and Sunon at the scene, which looked like a battlefield.

Officer-in-Charge of Ramganj thana Mohammad Hossen, the officer-in-charge of Ramganj thana, said the situation was beyond the control of just five policemen of the nearby camp.

"Besides, it is a political clash, which is a regular feature nowadays... we are helpless here."

AL to continue

From Page 1
Judge People who will put you in the dock have awoken), was played from the dais at the Paltan Maidan.

Addressing the rally as chief guest, Sajeda Chowdhury alleged that trial of Bangabandhu's killers was being delayed by the higher judiciary so that they could be set free when AL would not be in power.

"We will spread our protests across the country to raise the conscience of the people up to the grassroots level... We do not want judges who are not accountable to people," she said.

Sajeda called upon the people to rise again with the spirit of 1971.



Film artiste Keshab dead

Keshab Chattopadhyay, a renowned film, television and drama artiste, died at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital today. He was 80, says a press release.

Son of Jamini Chattopadhyay, Keshab was born in Jhalakathi district under Barisal division in 1920.

He also wrote scripts for several films.

An active cultural activist, Keshab was involved with several organisations. He was one of the founder of Chandradwip cultural organisation.

Home Minister Nasim called the protest 'unique' as such protest was never seen before in the country's political history.

"We could have opted for trial of the Bangabandhu murder case in a special tribunal to have the killers tried and punished in only three months. But we preferred the normal course of trial... But why the process of trial is being delayed?"

Referring to the role of the higher judiciary in the case, he said, "We are respectful to the higher judiciary... But why are they delaying the process? They would not be able to ensure justice. People want justice through fair trial."

Nasim quoted the Chief Justice to justify his criticism of the higher judiciary.

Maya said the AL movement was against the judges who felt embarrassed. "We will never retreat from the demand for hanging of the killers."

Other AL leaders who spoke on the occasion include parliament members Maqbul Hossain, Ahsanullah Master, Kamal Ahmed Majumdar and Habibur Rahman Mollah, and central leaders Mozaffar Hossain Paltu and Abdul Mannan.

Torture for dowry

Ema's husband remanded

By Court Correspondent

Ataul Haq Khaled, accused of assaulting his wife Nabila Haq Ema for dowry was taken on a one-day fresh remand by the Detective Branch of police yesterday.

Khaled arrested by the Tejgaon police on April 12 was earlier placed on a three-day remand in two stages — first by the Tejgaon police and then by the DB police.

Ema's father filed a case on April 11 accusing Khaled of torturing Ema and demanding Tk 10 lakh as dowry.

Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam Arts Building inaugurated

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 18: A new building of Narayanganj Government Tolaram College, named after Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam, was inaugurated this morning.

National professor Kabir Chowdhury inaugurated the 'Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam Arts Building' and a memorial to all martyrs.

Some 25 intellectuals and noted personalities were present on the occasion.

They are journalist Abed Khan, Director General of National Museum Shamsuzzaman Khan, Syed Hasan Imam, Panna Katsar MP, Muntasir Mamun, Aly Jaker, Asaduzzaman Nur, Golam Mustafa, Lalla Hasan, Hashem Khan, Hasan Arif, Mofidul Haque, Prof Golam Mostafa, Shamol Nasrin Chowdhury, Shamsunnahar Siddiq, Abul Kalam Azad, Rowsan Jahan Sathi, Faiz Ahmed, Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam, Dr Anisuzzaman, Justice KM Sobhan, Ahad Chowdhury, Shahriar Kabir, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, and local MP Shamim Osman.

The programme was organised under the banner of students union.

Comteq '99 pulls decent crowd on first day

By Staff Correspondent

Visitors thronged the computer, telecommunication and office equipment exposition Comteq '99 which began at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday.

Minister for Science and Technology Lt. Gen. Noor Uddin Khan (rtd) inaugurated the three-day show which is organised by the Conference & Exhibition Management Services (CEMS).

Visitors at the fair mostly crowded the stalls of computer accessories, which exhibited various latest model computers.

Flora Limited and International Office Machines Ltd offered some attractive models of laptop and mini-laptop computers between the price range of Tk 1,50,000 and Tk 75,000.

Some Internet Service Providers were also offering their services at attractive rates and concessions. The ISPs include Access Telecom (BD) Ltd, BDCOM Online Ltd, BRAC BD-Mail Network Ltd, Gramen Cybernet Ltd and Information Services Ltd.

Transcom Limited and TEA Holdings Ltd exhibited their telephone network and data network products and services.

RA Siddiqua Popy and Shahanaz Rahman, officials of CEMS, told the Daily Star that consumers would be able to purchase products and services from the fair at very competitive prices.

The fair will remain open for the visitors from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Major Abedin

From Page 12

international airport on a flight from the United States on April 11, was remanded for five days.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Dhaka granted another two days when he appeared in court yesterday.

Police said they have collected important information from Chowdhury, although they refused to elaborate. An interrogation cell will question Chowdhury as per the instructions of the Home Ministry.

Defence lawyers argued that Chowdhury was arrested mistakenly by the police, since his name is similar to that of another wanted man from a different district. The court rejected the bail petition submitted on Chowdhury's behalf.

Give cash

From Page 1

mills, finished fabric producers and readymade garments exporters. If any one of the parties get the cash incentive, the two others will be able to negotiate on price.

Exporters will feel encouraged by locally produced raw materials if those are available at lower prices or if they get cash incentives against their exports.

The joint meeting observed that the government should take some urgent measures for development of backward linkage industries for survival of the textile sector.

The meeting suggested amendments to the existing process of giving cash incentive because it is not encouraging use of local raw materials. Government funds are being misused as it is given to garments produced with imported raw materials, the meeting said.

The government allocated Tk 561 crore for giving cash incentives in the last budget.

There were also allegations that certain companies got cash incentive while enjoying duty drawback facility, the meeting noted.

The meeting suggested that the cash incentive should not be given to exporters of grey fabric outside Export Processing Zones.

The cash incentives should be given on the basis of PRC (Proceed Realisation Certificate) to be issued by the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, in which the source of raw materials would also be mentioned.

Electoral law reforms

From Page 1

important for the EC to have its own officials with proper status at every level of the administration, the Gano Forum leader said. "Well, the country has to think whether it can financially afford to implement the idea."

Political Parties Registration

Dr Hossain says 'democratisation of political parties, making those accountable to the activists, auditing party funds etc. are some essential pre-requisites for a sound democratic system'. "A legislation must be made, creating certain authorities to look into these things."

"Any private limited company is legally obliged to get its balance sheet audited every year, place it before the annual general meeting, elect directors regularly and secure mandate of shareholders to implement certain programmes," Kamal Hossain said. "Then why not legal provisions to oblige political parties to hold annual conference, elect party leaders through vote, take mandate of party members to implement certain programmes and ensure transparency in the process of their income and expenditure?"

He maintains that 'political parties have to get registered with a legally created body having authority to cancel registration of a party in case it fails to meet certain conditions'. "The authorities should also have the power to see whether a party goes by its manifesto."

"Such authority could be vested in the Election Commission or a new body could be created for this purpose, he said replying to a question.

Asked whether retired government officials should be allowed to contest elections immediately after their retirement,

Dr Hossain replied in the negative. "We need a legal provision barring public servants from contesting polls within five years of retirement."

Dr Hossain welcomed the EC idea of raising the limit of election expenses to Tk five lakh from Tk three lakh now. "But what is more important is to make sure that a candidate has no scope to spend more than the legally fixed amount."

Hossain observes that "a new breed of candidates with no political experience or standing purchase nominations by making huge payments to the parties or top party functionaries and are para-dropped into constituencies where they spend millions of taka to get themselves elected". "They bribe voters as well as election officials. They also resort to deployment of armed squads for obtaining votes", he said.

To combat the phenomenon a legal provision could be made requiring disclosure of any contribution by a candidate to a party or its functionaries. If the statement proves false, he would incur penalty and disqualification, and the party would also be criminally liable."

When his attention was drawn to the fact that candidates spend huge amounts of money attributing those to well-wishers, Hossain said, "Expenses by the party, friends and relatives should be treated as election expenses by the candidate."

In this regard, Dr Hossain also said "a limit on expenses of political parties must be imposed". "Besides, political parties must maintain accounts of all their expenses from one month prior to the date of filing nomination papers. Each party must file the return of expenses covering all the expenditure during the polls, disclose every contribution received by it and deposit the contributions in disclosed bank accounts."

For reducing election expenses, Hossain suggested that the Election Commission could go for joint projection meeting of candidates. "The electoral code of conduct should ensure equal access of all parties and candidates to the media and government amenities."

Election Expenses Observer
The Gano Forum leader said the EC proposal for appointment of Election Expenses Observer (EEO) to monitor day-to-day election expenditure by a candidate is a good move. "In fact, the Commission should have an investigation and adjudication division so that it can punish candidates violating electoral laws, rules or the code of conduct."

Liaison body

From Page 12

death reference in the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

It said the comments about the judges by the ministers and the so-called intellectuals were tantamount to interference in the judiciary. The Bangabandhu murder case should be dealt with by the court in accordance with the Constitution. No court could attach special priority to it.

The committee said it hoped the judges would take legal action against those who threatened them and undermined the judiciary.

132 examinees

From Page 1

on the college authorities, but they haven't replied, he said.

The official said the authorities salaries would be frozen due to irregularities.

Mohammad Sahjahan, a parent, said the students will begin their fast on April 20 at the Muktagang to demand the right to participate in this year's exam.

US cops

From Page 1

of serious injuries, and there was comparatively little property damage.

"I think we all appreciate the police working with us to de-escalate the situation," said Patrick Reinsbarough, a protest organizer, "but we wish it had happened earlier in order to prevent some of the violence."

Many of the arrested protesters, including Minnie Bruce Pratt, a 53-year-old teacher and writer from Jersey City, New Jersey, complained that police "violated our constitutional liberties at every step."

As demonstrators dispersed many promised to travel to Philadelphia and Los Angeles in mid-year to rally at the Republican and Democratic political conventions. They also plan to continue their anti-international Monetary Fund theme when the lending agency meets in Prague in September.

"I know people who are organising protests in Philadelphia and in Los Angeles right now. Work is already underway. There are a lot of things planned," said Adam Eidingler, spokesman for the Mobilisation for Global Justice.

Police Chief Charles Ramsey, who estimated the force spent up to \$5 million on its security operation, said there could be problems should the protesters travel to the conventions.

"I would hope that there's no problems in Philadelphia... (and) in Los Angeles. But if the same group of individuals choose to visit either of those two conventions they've got problems," Ramsey told a news briefing.

Eidinger said among the issues likely to be high on the list of issues for activists at the conventions would be the environment, political and campaign finance reform and a "living wage" for menial workers at the conventions — a topic they hope would swell their ranks by attracting labour unions.

Unprecedented security was maintained in and around the meeting venue to avoid any untoward incidents.

Tension ran high at Kalaroa after a faction of Jubo League called a meeting at the same venue today. Jubo League activists called the meeting to protest the arrest of Jamal Siraj, a Jubo League activist, on charge of killing SSC examinee Lipi at Kalaroa Government Centre on March 2.

Kalaroa thana AL President BM Nazrul Islam later withdrew the programme. No untoward incident was reported.