

What's on today....

Dialogue: South-South Centre, Bangladesh will hold a dialogue on 'Adolescent Reproductive Health: A Challenge'. Chief guest: Prof Zinatunnesa Talukdar, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs. Venue: BRAC auditorium, BRAC Centre Inn, 75, Mohakhali. Time: 9:30 am.

Talk: Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) will hold a talk on 'Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World'. Moderator: Mahfuz Anam, Editor, The Daily Star. Venue: BISS auditorium. Time: 3:30 pm.

Cultural programme: Cultural Affairs Ministry holds the second day's programme of a 2-day event to celebrate Rabindranath Tagore's birthday. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time: 4:30 pm.

Satyajit Ray retrospective: *Shatranj Ke Khilari* (The Chess Players) by Satyajit Ray will be screened. Organiser: Zahir Raihan Film Society. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Rd No-2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:15 pm.

Discussion: A discussion meeting on 'Rabindranath and Mother Language' will be held as part of a two-day programme to mark the 139th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. Venue: Bangladesh National Museum auditorium. Time: 4:30 pm.

Meeting: Democratic Lawyers' Association will hold a meeting and bring out procession demanding separation of judiciary from administration for establishing rule of law. Venue: Auditorium No. 2 of Supreme Court Bar Association Building. Time: 4:30 pm.

Gold Medal awarding: The government will honour a total of 250 working nurses with gold medals in recognition of their commendable services to the patients. Health and Family Welfare Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim will distribute the medals. Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall. Time: 9:45 am.

Discussion, film show: The Cultural Department, Embassy of Russian Federation in Bangladesh has organised a discussion meeting and film show to mark the 55th anniversary of Victory over Fascism. The Great Battle will be screened after discussion meeting. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre auditorium, House No 510, Road No 7, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Dialogue: Democracywatch and ActionAid, Bangladesh have jointly organised a dialogue on 'Impact of hartal on poor community' between leaders of the ruling and opposition parties, parliament members, economists, lawyers, journalists and representatives of the poor community. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, Chamel House. Time: 10:30 am.

Film show: As part of the Satyajit Ray Retrospective, *Gharay Bairey* (Home and the World) will be screened. Organiser: Zahir Raihan Film Society. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Road No: 2, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:15 pm.

Seminar: Bangladesh Press Institute will hold a seminar on 'Fifty Years of Newspaper in Dhaka' and a week-long 'Newspaper Exhibition'. Prof Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Information, will inaugurate the 'Newspaper Exhibition'. Venue: Seminar Room of PIB. Time: 10 am.

Workshop: A day-long workshop on 'PeBANK', a banking software, jointly organised by Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) and LEADS Corporation Limited will be held. Chief guest: Dr M Faruquddin, Governor, Bangladesh Bank. Venue: BIBM Seminar Hall. Time: 12:00 noon.

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Barisal, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Khulna division during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, the Met Office predicted.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna and the lowest 21.2 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:31 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:18 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
Dhaka	32.1	24.7
Chittagong	31.0	23.5
Rajshahi	34.3	23.6
Khulna	35.5	24.6
Barisal	33.5	25.3
Sylhet	32.3	25.3
Cox's Bazar	32.2	24.6

HERE and THERE

Rokeya Bitarka Angan

The 'Third Debate Workshop', organised by Rokeya Bitarka Angan, concluded on Sunday with different debating clubs of Dhaka University participating in the 'friendship debates', reports BSS.

Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam attended the function as the chief guest while journalist and columnist Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury was present as special guest.

Presided over by Provost of Rokeya Hall Prof Shamima Chowdhury, the concluding session was also addressed by moderator of the Debate Club Selina Chowdhury and President of the Club Sabrina Shahnam Rabbi.

The session was followed by two different friendship debate competitions in which Rokeya Bitarka Angan, Suryans Bitarka Dhara and S M Hall Debating Club participated.

HSBC

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) Chittagong branch has organised a blood donation programme jointly with Red Crescent Society of Chittagong yesterday, says a press release.

Eighteen staff of the bank donated blood in the camp. HSBC has been operating their business in Chittagong since February 1999. Manager of Chittagong Branch, Matt Bosrock, on behalf of HSBC, handed over a cheque to the City Red Crescent Society for the disaster fund and said 'This is a small token of HSBC's commitment to the social responsibility for the people of Bangladesh'.

IUB

Students of Marketing in the School of Business and Division of Students Affairs (DoSA) of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) jointly organised a Food Festival on Sunday on the campus, says a press release.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof Bazul M Chowdhury inaugurated the festival at 12:30 pm. Teachers, officials, students, and guardians were present in the festival. The objective of the festival was to relate the theory of marketing and its application in a real business situation.

Law & order

Inspector General of Police and senior police officials, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Magistrates and senior officials of the Home Ministry attended the meeting.

'Crimes could be reduced only through strengthening coordination between police and magistracy,' a senior police official was quoted to have told the meeting indicating to the widening gap between the two.

The meeting also recognised increasing trend of crime across the country over the last few weeks.

Describing the situation as 'alarming', Home Secretary M M Reza advised the police officials to bring the situation under control in the capital at any cost.

'Crime incidents in the capital as well as across the country must be controlled strictly at any cost,' Home Secretary was quoted to have told the meeting.

The meeting observed that although incidents of robbery, snatching and repression on women have reduced, some incidents of murder have created panic among the city dwellers.



Artists presenting songs at a cultural function organised by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs at the National Museum in observance of the birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore yesterday. — Star photo

Rabindra Joyantee celebrated

The nation yesterday celebrated the 'Rabindra Joyantee', the 139th anniversary of birth of Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, reports UNB.

Different socio-cultural organisations drew up elaborate programmes to celebrate the birthday of *Kabiguru*, the most illustrious Bengalee.

The day's programmes included holding of musical soiree, recitation of Tagore's poem, discussion and other cultural function.

The day, the 25th of Baishakh, was celebrated throughout the country with festivities and a renewed call to uphold Tagore's sense of humanity and Bengali literature, which was enriched by the world famous poet.

Rabindranath, the composer of Bangladesh's national anthem, was the first Bengalee to receive the prestigious Nobel Prize in 1913 for his unique literary works.

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages paid glowing tribute to memory of Tagore recalling his immense contributions in Bengali literature and song.

Bangladesh Betar and Television put up special programmes while national dailies published special supplements highlighting the life and works of Rabindranath Tagore.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the two-day national programmes at the National Museum in the city.

Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil, State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Prof Rafiqul Islam and State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed were present at other programmes at Patishar, Shilaidaha and Shahjapur respectively.

Rabindra Mela begins at Shahjapur

SHAHJAPUR, Sirajganj, May 8: A three-day Rabindra Mela began here today in celebration of the 139th birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore, reports BSS.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed inaugurated the mela (fair) at Rabindra Kacharibari premises as the chief guest.

Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore had spent some time in this historic Kacharibari during 1891-1896 and used to look after the *Jamindari* of the local 'Pargana' from this house. Tagore's grandfather Prince Darkanath Thakur bought the *Jamindari* by only 13 Taka and 10 Anas from Rani Bhabani of Natore in 1840.

The Archeological Department in 1969 carried out some renovations of this beautiful house and turned it into a 'Rabindra Memorial Museum'.

Different articles used by Rabindranath Tagore are being preserved in the museum. Thousands of enthusiastic fans of Rabindranath Tagore today visited the mela premises and different galleries of the museum. The whole mela ground, where hundreds of stalls have been set up, turned into a human sea.

The inaugural session of the fair was also attended, among others, by local parliament member Chayon Islam, Mirza Abdul Latif, MP, Prof Zannatul Ferdous, MP, and local Awami League leader Advocate Abdur Rahman while the Deputy Commissioner of Sirajganj A F M Saiful Islam was in the chair.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Abu Sayeed said Rabindranath was the 'poet of humanity and equality.' He said the Bengali nation at the time of its different crisis periods were inspired by the works of Tagore.



A dustbin on the middle of the road at Dhanmondi Road No 7A, causing inconvenience to the residents as well as the pedestrians. — Star photo

Work on Tk 750 cr container terminal in Ctg to begin soon

CHITTAGONG, May 8: Work on construction of a container terminal at New Mooring at a cost of Tk 750 crore will begin soon and the Chittagong Port Authority has started initial activities for it, reports UNB.

The government approved the project on April 27 this year.

Port sources said the government has approved the appointment of 'Bisiyom', a French firm, as consultant for the construction work of the container terminal.

Bisiyom will supervise the overall activities of the gigantic project including design, drawing and preparing of tender documents.

A senior official of the Port said a container-yard with 90,000 TUS container handling capacity was constructed in 1992 at a cost of Tk 450 crore.

The demand for container service has recorded a sharp increase from local and foreign ships. Congestion at the port is now a regular phenomenon in the absence of adequate container handling facility.

In 1999 the Port handled 3.66 lakh TUS and the quantum is expected to reach at 4 lakh TUS during the current year.

The Port Authority, importers and exporters have been incurring a huge loss every year for congestion at the terminal.

Foreign ships have been losing interest in calling at Chittagong Port because of inordinate delay.

To overcome the problem, the CPA took a project to construct a 1000-meter long jetty with hinder land facility at a cost of Tk 737 crore from its own source. But it suffered a setback in the absence of government approval.

After four years ECNEC approved the project on May 12, 1999. The project suffered another setback by the delay in approval of appointment of consultants, which the government did on April 27 last.

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Injunction on journalists' housing assoc election

An Assistant Judge Court in Dhaka yesterday imposed temporary injunction against the election of Dhaka Sangbadik Grihasangsthan Samabaya Samity limited till the disposal of the original suit, reports BSS.

Judge Mizanur Rahman imposed the injunction in an order yesterday who heard from both the sides on May 2.

Plaintiffs Ziaul Haque and others filed the suit on April 26 before the court against Ruhul Amin Gazi and others of the Ad-hoc Committee and Mofakkharul Anam and others of the Election Commission of the association for their election on April 28, seeking permanent injunction.

On the other hand, the judge allowed the petition for functioning the activities of the Ad-hoc Committee till the disposal of the suit and allowed the prayer for additional parties regarding the suit which were submitted by the defendants.

Advocate Shamsuddin Babul, Nurul Islam Mollah, Habibur Rahman, Nazrul Islam and Prakash Ranjan Biswas moved on behalf of the plaintiffs, while Advocate K M Zabir and Afzal Hossain moved for the defendants.

Digital phones in Barisal to be restored in week

The telephone under Barisal Italtel Digital Exchange which were disordered in a fire last week will be restored within seven days, Bangladesh T&T Board said yesterday, reports UNB.

Some 800 out of the total 5,000 disordered telephone lines were restored till Sunday last and the rest will be reconnected within a week.

8 envoys: Corruption

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Head of Delegation of the EC Antonio De Souza Menezes.

Earlier DRU President M Anwarul Haq briefed the envoys about the activities of the organisation and its General Secretary Monowarul Islam welcomed the diplomats.

The public appearance of all the EU envoys together in Dhaka on the eve of Europe Day symbolised unity of the EU countries.

On the issue of gas export, the envoys said Bangladesh government is sovereign to decide what it wants to do, but stressed quantifying the actual reserve of natural gas.

Replying to a question, British envoy Dr David Carter said for investment, one needs to see transparent atmosphere, less bureaucratic knots and less corruption.

'There has been some progress. But there is still a long way to go,' the newly appointed British High Commissioner said.

On poverty alleviation, the European envoys said the country achieved 'some developments, but still there are far more to do'.

Charge d'Affaires of the Netherlands Jan A Mass said the major concern is that the rate of poverty decreased in percentage, but the number of people below the poverty line is not decreasing.

Poverty is declining by one per cent every year and with this trend, it will take 50 years to totally eradicate poverty from Bangladesh, he said. 'By that time the population will be doubled.'

Replying to questions about the present political situation in the country, German Ambassador Uwe Schramm said the statement made by the European Commission in Dhaka

March last year is still valid. 'There is nothing to be added or nothing to be taken away.'

In the statement, the EC had expressed concern over confrontational politics in the country and requested political parties to resolve disputes through dialogue.

When his attention was drawn to the fact that opposition political parties are now concentrating on next general election avoiding hartal, the German envoy said any positive development in the political arena would be welcomed.

Head of EC Delegation, Ambassador Antonio De Souza Menezes, said Bangladesh and EU are going to sign a new Co-operation Agreement in Brussels in May 22. Focusing more on poverty alleviation, it will open up scope for wider cooperation and strengthen future interaction between two sides, he said.

Menezes said the new agreement will be guided by a policy based on three criterion - development cooperation and financial assistance to directly benefit the poor, intensified political dialogue and smooth and gradual integration of developing countries into the global economy through trade and economic cooperation.

Replying to a question about Bangladesh's present economic situation, Danish envoy Finn Thilsted said the macro economic situation is 'good except in a few areas, but the micro economy is fragile'.

Charge d'Affaires of France J G de Wagny, who is the current President of European countries in Dhaka, said EU is the biggest development partner of Bangladesh, taking nearly 45 per cent of its export.

BNP: Hena

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duct and polls-related rules through discussion with all parties and others concerned to ensure free, fair and neutral polls in future.

Replying to a question, Bhuiyan said BNP will not propose any name right now for the post of CEC. 'The party will propose a name at the right place when discussion will take place.'

To another query, he said BNP will participate if the President takes initiative for dialogue prior to appointment of a new CEC.

Asked if there will be a constitutional vacuum, Mannan Bhuiyan said the question does not arise because he (Hena) was absent from office for about last six months and the Acting CEC discharged the responsibilities.

Jamaat-e-Islami central leader Abdul Qader Mollah said it would have been wise for the 'gentleman' (CEC) to quit much earlier in the face of people's demand because he miserably failed to prove any of the polls held under him free and fair.

'Although the Chief Election Commissioner resigned late, I thank him as he quit admitting immense failures,' he added.

Islamic Oikya Jote Secretary General Fazlul Haq Amin said the Opposition had been demanding resignation of the CEC for his 'partisan and bias' role.

'It is certainly a victory of our movement... We are happy at his resignation but we will continue our movement till resignation of the government'.

Meanwhile, the Central Liaison Committee of the BNP-led opposition alliance is likely to sit today to discuss the resignation. It may issue a joint statement, sources said.

PDB-AES row

From Page 1

James Hogg said in a letter.

Sources said the Meghnath land site problem stems from the conflict of interest between the land site developer and the project consultant - both of which are directly and indirectly connected to Syed Abul Hossain of SAHCO as the local agent.

PDB chairman Quamrul Islam Siddique admitted to the Daily Star late last month that Syed Abul Hossain was the local agent of CWHEC and was indirectly connected to Mott McDonald.

The consultant allegedly tried to protect the interest of CWHEC, and AES, on the other hand, did not take into confidence the consultant's report on CWHEC's work at the project site.

Tk 141 crore budget and it was supposed to deliver the land last July. But it delayed the works citing different reasons and tried to blame the government for its failure. It also made financial claims for taka devaluation against dollar although the whole project is designed and financed by the government in local currency. Mott McDonald upheld its claims.

The 450 MW Meghnath power project offers one of the world's lowest power tariff. If implemented on time, the project will start power supply from 2002.

The officials and leaders assured of necessary cooperation to end the crisis and resume immediately academic activities in the university.

concern at the incidents over the naming of different buildings and dormitories. It was resolved that cases filed against the APAC activists during the last few months withdrawn.

The meetings also condoned the death of Abdul Munim Belal, a madrassah student, during a clash between the APAC activists and the law enforcing agencies on December 25 last year.

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PM: Tagore

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stormy protests.

'Rabindra Culture is now free in Bangladesh. With the spread of education, Rabindra culture is also expanding its horizon,' she added.

'Rabindranath is blended in Bengali tradition, culture and thought... Rabindranath is the eternal source of our identity,' the Prime Minister said adding that his song 'Amar Sonar Bangla Ami Tonal Bhalobashi' inspired the freedom fighters to fight against the Pakistani military in 1971.

State Minister for Sports and Culture Obaidul Qader, president of National Museum Prof Mostafa Nurul Islam and Rabindra Researcher Ahmad Rihq spoke at the function.

Kajol

From Page 1

flare-up of the violence as police force and enraged people remained stationed outside the residence of Kajol, who returned home from India recently.

People who invested money with Farooque Ahmed Kajol and his agents got agitated today after waiting for months to get their money back.

Locals said that Kajol and his men used to receive deposits from people and refund the money with 12 per cent interest per month. He had started the business a couple of years ago.

The lucrative interest rate attracted a large number of people to 'invest' their money with Kajol but as and when the total size of the deposit crossed Tk. 1000 crore level, Kajol left the country for India. He, however, returned home a few days ago.

Ctg varsity

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BCL as part of the move to re-open the university, the sources said.

Tight security was maintained in an around the campus with the deployment of additional police force.

BCL supporters staged a demonstration outside the campus to press their demand as the moratorium on political activities on campus announced by CU syndicate was in force.

Feni Jubo Dal

From Page 1

clared him dead. Before murder, Mannan was brutally tortured, police said.

The body was sent to the morgue but till 12 pm today none of his relatives came to the hospital.

Police said there were five cases against Mannan who hailed from Gobindapur in Sadar thana.

District Jubo Dal president Syed Mizanur Rahman in a statement blamed ruling party terrorists for the killing.

UNB adds: Elder brother of the victim Abul Hossain Mia filed an FIR with Sadar Thana charging 39 persons, including Joyntal Hazari MP. But police said they could not record the case for 'technical reasons'.

Top leaders

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any decision but he hinted that there was no possibility of hartal before Parliament went into the budget session in June.

He also said a combined meeting of the opposition leaders would be held in Sylhet shortly but the date has not yet been finalised.

Presided over by BNP vice-chairman Shamsul Islam, the meeting was attended by Anwar Zahid of BNP, AMM Golam Mostafa, Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar and Mostafa Zamil Haider of JP, Mohammad Quamruzzaman and Abdul Kader Molla of Jamaat and Fazlul Huq Amine and ARM Abdul Matin of IOJ.



Children's Congress, a forum of the disadvantaged children, held a press conference yesterday at the National Press Club to press for their various demands. Resource Bangladesh and Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) jointly organised the press conference.

Children's Congress demands shelter for street children

Children's Congress, a forum of the disadvantaged children, yesterday urged the government and NGOs to establish shelter or home for street children, reports BSS.