

What's on today....

BCB procession: Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will bring out a procession to celebrate Bangladesh's Test status. Venue: Dhaka Stadium. Time 8.30 am.

Weather

Moderate rainfall likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at many places over Dhaka, Barisal and Khulna divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions till 6 pm yesterday, reports UNB.

Day temperature may rise by 1 to 2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, Met office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 33.8 degree Celsius at Jessore and the lowest 21.3 degree Celsius at Barisal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.14 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	32.4	24.0
Chittagong	32.5	24.7
Rajshahi	31.8	24.6
Khulna	33.5	23.4
Barisal	33.0	21.3
Sylhet	27.5	24.3
Cox's Bazar	32.6	24.0

HERE and THERE

BNP city unit

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka city BNP yesterday organised a *milad mahfil* and discussion meeting in memory of late BNP leader Ismail Hossain Mia.

Held at the BNP central office, it was addressed by BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP and Abdus Salam.

Paying tribute to the late leader, Bhuiyan said that Ismail Hossain Mia's commitment to the party was unquestionable and he had become popular within a very short time through his active participation in all programmes of the party.

BNP leaders Abdul Matin Chowdhury, M K Anwar MP, Ashraf Hossain, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Alamgir Kabir MP, Moazzem Hossain Alal, Jatiya Party leader Saifur Rahman and a large number of leaders and activists attended the milad.

FEMA

The Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) organised a discussion meeting with the representatives of some leading NGOs in the country at FEMA Office yesterday, says a press release.

The meeting discussed different aspects of the ongoing advocacy programme on electoral law reform recommendation pertaining to the election to parliament formulated by FEMA.

The representatives of the NGOs expressed their solidarity and said that they will extend their support and cooperation to make the advocacy programme a success.

Acting Chairperson of FEMA Abul Ahsan presided over the meeting. Among others, Munira Khan, Ataur Rahman, Dr Shaukat Ara Hossain, H. M. Nazrul Islam, Mostafa Soheli of FEMA and the representative of ADAB, PROSHIKA,

CCDB, VHSS, CDF, BRAC, CARITAS and Dhaka Ahsania Mission were present at the meeting.

BAF

Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) has joined the national tree plantation campaign initiated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina a few days ago, reports BSS.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed inaugurated the tree plantation programme by planting a *Krishna Chura* sapling at the Air Headquarters yesterday. Senior BAF officers were present on the occasion.

Bangladesh Air Force has taken up an elaborate programme for tree plantation this year.

Prerona

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed has said the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expanded the development activities to ensure welfare of the people, reports BSS.

The State Minister was addressing a cultural programme jointly organised by Prerona, a voluntary organisation and the National Museum on Sunday.

The disabled people rendered songs at the function.

He said the Prime Minister has established National Foundation for the Handicapped (NFH) and adopted a policy for the betterment of the disabled.

He urged the non-government organisations to help the government implement the policy.

Presided over by Director General of Shilpakala Academy Azad Rahman, the function was addressed, among others, by Rozina Begum, Prerona president Dalia Nawshin, actor Shahid Islam Sachu, and NFH general secretary Sultana Zaman.



Zaker Party held a grand rally at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Clash with police

10 arrested from MMCH

MYMENSINGH, June 26: Police today arrested 10 people from Myemensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) who were admitted there after receiving injuries in Sunday's clash with police, reports UNB.

The arrested are Jalal, 35, Hafizuddin, 15, Abdul Khaleq, 25, Iman Ali, 60, Shafiqul Islam, 25, Rafiqul Islam, 26, Abu Bakar Siddiq, 20, Taher Ali, 15, Majibar, 25 and Soleman, 20. They sustained bullet wounds during the clash.

Meanwhile, injured police inspector Zahurul Huq and constables Haran, Chandra Chakrabarti and Sukkur Mahmud were shifted to the MMCH from the thana health complex.

Two people were killed and 50 others, including 10 policemen, injured in the clash between police and mob at Santoshpur in Fulpur-Modhpur area over stealing of pineapple.

NU honours exam

8 students file writ petition

Some 8 examinees of Honours Part-III under the National University in a writ petition in the High Court yesterday sought directive upon the authority to defer the examination scheduled to begin on July 29, reports UNB.

The division bench comprising Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Mozammel Hossain adjourned till Thursday the hearing on the question of issuance of rule.

The petitioners seeking to defer the examination contended that the course has not been completed.

The court asked the counsel for the petitioners to submit authenticated documents from the National University whether the session for 1996-97 in question has been completed in last three years or not.

Tk 75cr Dutch grant to BRAC edn programme

The government of the Netherlands will provide 35 million guilder equivalent to Tk 75 crores as grant to BRAC for its Non-Formal Primary Education Programme Phase-III, says a press release.

An agreement in this regard was signed by the Ambassador of the Netherlands D.C.B den Haas and the Founder Executive Director of BRAC Fazeel Hasan Abed at the BRAC Centre yesterday. This brings the Dutch government's contribution to BRAC's education programme to Tk 170 crores.

The government of the Netherlands, a long-time development partner, has over the years contributed Tk 216 crore to BRAC's Rural Development and Education Programmes. In addition, over the last two decades, the government and the people of the Netherlands, through a Dutch civil society organisation NOVIB, have contributed more than Tk 210 crore to BRAC in pursuing its poverty alleviation goals.

BRAC is running 34,000 non-formal primary schools throughout the country where 1.1 million poor children are receiving primary education. Over 1.6 million have already graduated from these schools and most of them are pursuing their studies in higher classes in high schools and colleges. BRAC also reaches more than 40 million people through its health services and poverty alleviation programmes.

Ambassador of the Netherlands D.C.B den Haas (right) and Founder Executive Director of BRAC Fazeel Hasan Abed shaking hands after they signed an agreement on Dutch grant of Tk 75 crore for BRAC's Non-Formal Primary Education Programme yesterday.

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Paksey Bridge

RHD opens offers of three bidders today

Star Report

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) today opens the financial offers of three bidders for Paksey bridge project amid allegations of foul play, sources concerned said.

Six companies participated in the re-tender for the 200 million dollar project late last year.

Previously, RHD had floated tender but the process stopped due to allegations of foul play and lack of participation.

Now one of the bidders, disqualified in the first phase of evaluation or technical evaluation, alleges that RHD has accepted a Chinese contractor — Major Bridge Engineering Bureau (MBEB) — as technically qualified though there were major deficiencies in its proposal.

Sources said technical evaluation had listed nine "Key Criteria" and in case a bidder failed in any one, he was to be declared "non-conforming" and his bid was to be rejected.

One of the "Key Criteria" is the "Bank Commitment Letter".

But MBEB had provided its bank commitment in terms of Chinese currency, instead of US dollar as was required.

However, after the opening of technical bids, the authorities violating their own rules, gave MBEB an opportunity to change that and give commitment in terms of US dollar.

The tender terms clearly stated that no "material deviation" can be corrected in to make a "non-conforming" bid a "conforming" bid.

An official noted that since MBEB had submitted dollar-based Bank Commitment Letter to pre-qualify and when they changed the same during the bidding, legally their pre-qualification should have been cancelled.

"A political lobby was influencing the project's consultant and RHD to award the contract to the Chinese bidder," one source said seeking anonymity.

The 1.8 km bridge is being constructed under a Japanese credit scheme.

President, PM hail

From page 1

torious performance of the Bangladesh team in the world of cricket in the days ahead.

Prime Minister Hasina said: "I can't express my joy and feelings in words at this happiest hour of the nation. It is the fulfillment of my long cherished dream," she told waiting newsmen in her instant reaction to the ICC decision taken at the Lord's.

The prime minister conveyed her heartfelt congratulations to the countrymen on their greatest achievement in the international sports arena and those countries who supported Bangladesh for gaining the Test status.

Immediately after Cabinet meeting, the Prime Minister came out of her office to spell out her joy and emotion to the journalists.

"It's a day of celebration... I must thank our boys, the cricketers who have been able to lift cricket to international standards and bring laurels for the country," Hasina said.

Moreover, government ministers and political, sports and professional leaders termed yesterday the country's earning of cricket Test status as the greatest sporting achievement by far, saying it added boosted the country's image to a great deal.

Those who hailed the achievement include DCC Mayor Mohammed Hanif, State Minister for Shipping and Dhaka City Awami League general secretary Mofazzul Hossain Chowdhury Maya, founding general secretary of BCB and Awami League central leader

US Peace Corps, presently engaged in providing English language training to primary school teachers in Bangladesh, may expand its programmes to other sectors in future, reports BSS.

Margaret Goodman, Country Director of US Peace Corps in Dhaka, told BSS about this possibility saying that in addition to the education sector, the Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) have been working in different countries of the world in health care, computer education, environment and agriculture development sectors.

In 1997, Bangladesh invited the Peace Corps to develop a programme that would "supplement the government's efforts" to uplift the socio-economic conditions of its people.

Peace Corps in its turn after discussion with Bangladesh officials decided to take up training of English teachers as its first programme.

Goodman said that the first batch of 17 PCVs arrived in Bangladesh one and a half year back to work as English language training instructors for primary school teachers for a period of 2 years. Prior to joining their work, they underwent three-month long competency based training, she said adding that with the latest arrivals of PCVs, their total numbers now stands at 49.

A minister in the then Pakistan, Adeluddin was president of Faridpur district Awami League for ten years in the 60's.

Death anniversary

The 19th death anniversary of Advocate Adel Uddin Ahmed, a noted lawyer, politician and social worker, was observed yesterday, says a press release.

A *doo mahfil* was held after Asr prayers at his Faridpur residence to mark the occasion.

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50 hurt, over 100 houses damaged as tornado hits Gournadi

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 27: At least 50 people were injured, over 100 houses damaged and many trees uprooted when a tornado hit 13 villages at Gournadi upazila of the district yesterday afternoon.

Of the injured, 17 were admitted to the Barisal Medical College Hospital (BMCH).

The injured were identified as Ganesh, 60, Gouranga Das, 53, Sabita Rani, 24, Belayet, 42, Sabuj, 25, Lalju, 15, Asma, 18, Zahurul, 5, Mahidul, 5, Anis, 56, Rasheda, 22, Kamala Rani, 20, Sahid, 12, Hossain Ali, 52, Adam Ali, 46, Sohag, 14 and Rabeya, 37.

Condition of Lalju was stated to be critical.

The worst affected villages are East and South Hossnabad, Sarikal, Kandapasha, Nalchira and Bishar Kandi where two schools, and four *madrasahs* were severely damaged, UNO of Gournadi said.

Several dangerous armed groups styled 'five star force, seven star force, killer group, rapist group etc., sheltered by the rulers, have created a reign of terror and made life of the city dwellers miserable.

The office of Dhaka City Corporation has become a 'fortress' of killers, terrorists and such other criminals patronised by the Mayor, Khoka alleged.

Quoting press reports, the APAC Convenor said some 500 professional killers in 10 groups equipped with sophisticated weapons are engaged in all sorts of criminal activities in the city. Killers involved in sensational murders are yet to be arrested and the prevailing situation can be compared with that during AL rule in 1972-75.

The crime wave in the city is now being controlled by the ruling party's VIP terrorists," he alleged.

Quoting a press report, the BNP leader said five sons of five MPs of the ruling AL have established 'dark world' in five areas of the city and are looting people's wealth, property and grabbing their lands and houses.

At least 140 people were killed in the city from January 1 to May 5 this year and on an average, one person is killed per day, he said.

The law and order has further deteriorated since the introduction of the 'black' Public Safety Act as 'terrorists' belonging to AL have intensified their activities.

Referring to frequent looting and acute crisis of electricity, Khoka said the crime wave in the city is now being controlled by the ruling party's VIP terrorists," he alleged.

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