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**UN Human Rights Day today**

The United Nations Human Rights Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere across the world today, reports BSS.

On this day in 1948, member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at a conference in Paris.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Bangladesh President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion.

In his message, Kofi Annan said the governments should work closely with the non-government organisations to establish human rights.

**Khaleda hosts iftar for businessmen**

Opposition leader Khaleda Zia will sit with business leaders after Eid for open discussion on politics and economics, reports UNB.

She gave the consent in a post-iftar meeting she had with country's leading businesspeople at her Minto Road official residence yesterday evening.

Former FBCCI President Abdul Awal Minto, DCCI President Atifur Rahman, BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha, Mosharraf Hossain and Mahabubur Rahman, were among others present.

The opposition leader hosted the iftar party for about 500 industrialists and businessmen.

Sohel F Rahman, Mostofa Golam Quddus, Kashem Haider, Redwan Ahmed, Rashid Maksud Khan, Manjur Ahmed, Ataur Rahman Angur, Abdus Sattar and Nazrul Islam, also attended the party.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Shamsul Islam and Lutfurzzaman Babar were also present.

**Towhid Samad new president of Dhaka Club**

By Staff Correspondent

An 11-member executive committee of Dhaka Club for the year 2000-2001 was elected yesterday with Towhid Samad as its president.

Samad defeated his lone rival for the post of president, Engineer Mohammad Nasimuddin. There were 16 contestants for the 10 posts of executive member.

About 1000 members of the club cast votes. Samad polled 759 votes and his rival Nasimuddin 229 votes.

The newly elected executive members are: Jafar Osman, A S M Farook, Aiyub Ali, Syed Sahed Reza, Ashfarul Islam, Niaz Mahmud Khan, Akbar Hossain, Mainul Haq, Firoz N Khan and Imran Ali Baig.

**TK 7.5 lakh gold seized at ZIA**

By Staff Correspondent

The Customs Surveillance Team at the Zia International Airport yesterday recovered 120 grams of gold worth about Tk 7.5 lakh from a passenger.

Following his suspicious movement and inconsistent talks, customs personnel checked Mohammad Abdur Rahim with metal detector and recovered 12 gold bars which were pasted with his body.

Rahim came from Singapore at 10:30 pm on Friday.

Customs sources said he was caught also last year and gold bars were recovered from his rectum.

Rahim is the son of one Abid Ali, a resident of city's Free School Street area.

**Women are 'not so safe' at home**  
Study reveals 63pc serious incidents of violence

By Staff Correspondent.

In a sharp contrast to the belief that women are safe at home, case histories collected from hospitals reveal that 63 per cent of violence-related injuries requiring hospitalisation occur at home.

The findings also revealed that girls aged 11-15 years are more vulnerable to abduction, rape, trafficking and acid throwing, speakers said at a seminar in the city yesterday.

The seminar on 'Pilot Study on Violence Against Women in Bangladesh' was organised by the Naripokkha, a woman's rights organisation. Its President Rubi Gaznavi chaired the seminar while its Executive Member Safia Azim presented the study report.

The study was undertaken as a post-Beijing project, with data collected from November 1996 to November 1998 from four police stations, one urban hospital and two special courts in the country, Rubi said.

Naripokkha carried out a survey covering 835

**Hand recount starts to find undervotes**  
Bush campaign files fresh objection

JACKSONVILLE, Dec 9: Election officials in Florida began combing tens of thousands of disputed ballots today in a court-ordered hand recount to determine the state's 25 electoral votes and the next president, reports AP.



Al Gore

The Bush campaign immediately objected.

In Orange County, election workers began sorting through 275,000 ballots in search of 966 in which a presidential choice was not picked up in the machine counts.

Other counties faced a similar sorting task before the actual hand recount began. However, many of the 64 counties had already separated the undercounted ballots from those in which a presidential choice was picked up in the machine counts.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration filed new objections to the recount proceeding as ordered Friday by a circuit judge upon instructions from Florida's Supreme Court.

"It's extremely difficult. It's not as simple as the courts make it sound," said Gene Crist, assistant supervisor of elections in Bay County, where 529 undervotes are hidden within a total 59,591 ballots.

A state judge set a 2 pm Sunday (1900 GMT) deadline for the new tallying to be finished so state election officials would have enough time to prepare to certify

Sunday morning.

"Counting the 111 undervotes isn't the big deal; sorting through 112,000 ballots to find them is a big deal," said Bob Sweat, Manatee County's elections supervisor.

Despite delays, Democrats' hopes were lifted by the prospect of new hand counts.

"It's an exciting opportunity. It is going to allow us to count all the votes," said Mike Langton, chairman of Vice President Al Gore's campaign in Northeast Florida. "This will give us a firm decision on who won. If it shows that [Republican George W.] Bush won, I say, God bless him, and if we win, I would hope that he would do the same."

Gore had sought to force a recount of the undervote in Miami-Dade. But the justices went a step further, ordering that every canvassing board count the ballots missed by machine counts.

The court order will require the examination of undervotes in 64 Florida counties. The order doesn't affect Palm Beach, Broward and Volusia counties, where the undervotes already have been examined.

In addition to the 9,000 undervotes in Miami-Dade County specifically cited by the court, Hillsborough County had 5,531; Duval, 4,967; Pinellas, 4,226; Marion, 2,445; Collier, 1,102; Lee, 2,017; Sarasota, 1,809; Pasco, 1,776; and Indian River, 1,058.

the votes before Florida's electors are picked Tuesday.

Undervotes are ballots on which no vote for president was registered by machines during the mechanical vote. Punchcard ballots, used in some Florida counties, are particularly susceptible to undervoting because a voter can punch the card but fail to push the chad all the way out.

Duval County elections officials had to delay the count until they could acquire computer software necessary to separate 4,967 undervotes out of the 291,000 ballots cast Nov. 7, pushing the start of the count to



A rare homage to the legendary lady: All of them students of Rokeya, who are now around 70, celebrated Rokeya Day at a unique function yesterday at Dhanmondi in the city. - Star photo by Anisur Rahman

**Disciples gather to remember Rokeya**

By Staff Correspondent

It was really a rare and unique occasion when some 20 illustrious women of our country, who were students of Begum Rokeya at the Sakhawat Memorial Girls School, gathered to commemorate the contributions of the legendary lady to Muslim women's education.

The women, all around 70, gathered at a house at Dhanmondi on the Rokeya Day. They discussed, recited poems and displayed mime show.

Sakhawat Memorial Girls High School Alumni Association organised the programme. Though the function was arranged to celebrate the Rokeya Day, it was a great opportunity for aged ladies for a get-together.

While discussing the life, philosophy and works of Begum Rokeya, they demanded of the government to declare December 9 as Rokeya Day and its celebration in all schools in a befitting way.

Rokeya Day should be observed in all schools through holding discussions on the life and works of Begum Rokeya, cultural programme, painting and drawing exhibition, recitation and staging drama.

At the function, Prof Latifa Akhand, Editor of weekly Begum Nurjahan Begum and Prof Sultana Zaman spoke on the Sakhawat Memorial Girls School. Prof Hotsna Banu Khanam presided over the function.

Later, Tahmin Sultana Papri displayed a mime show on Rokeya's life. Sayema Chowdhury recited her self-composed poem on the glorified life of Begum Rokeya.

The function was also attended by, among others, Bilkis Nasiruddin, Nurunnahar Faizunnessa, Nawshaba Khatun, Kulsum Huda, Roushan Ara Rahman, Feroza Khatun, Jotsna Jahan, Faima Chowdhury and Sarke Afza.



All-Party Action Council (APAC) took out a procession in the city yesterday protesting killing of four workers in police firing at Mongla Port on December 6. - Star photo

**Opposition's call at city rally**  
Prepare for oust-govt movement

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the four-party opposition alliance and its allies at a rally in the city yesterday vowed to intensify the oust-government movement immediately after the Ramadan and called upon all to prepare for it.

The movement after the Ramadan will be aimed at its 'final victory' and opposition activists will leave the streets only after ousting the 'fascist' Awami League from power, they said.

BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote and some smaller parties jointly organised the rally to protest the killing of four workers in police firing at Mongla Port on December 6.

Secretaries general of the four parties were due to attend the rally at Muktangan but they did not.

Speakers at the rally strongly condemned and protested the police firing on workers, killing four and wounding 50.

Terming the AL government "inhuman and fascist", they said this government has no regard for human life as evident from the killing of workers even during the holy Ramadan.

They called for toppling this "anti-Islamic" regime to protect the rights of the people.

The leaders said a murder case under the Public Safety Act should be filed against the home minister for the killing of workers at Mongla.

BNP leader ZA Khan said the AL government wants to stick to power. See page 11 col 4

**DUTA polls today**

Election of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) will be held today, reports UNB.

Some 1100 teachers of the university are expected to cast their votes in the election to be held at the University Club from 10 am to 2 pm.

Campus sources said Pro-Awami League Blue panel and BNP-Jamaat-backed White Panel are contesting for 15 executive posts. Left-leaning Pink Panel is also in the race.

In the last year's election held on December 21, Blue and White panels shared the posts. Blue Panel got eight posts, including president and joint-secretary, while White Panel bagged seven posts, including general secretary, treasurer and vice-president.

**Rising piracy at Chittagong Port**  
Ansars, coastguards to be deployed in ships

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 9: In a bid to combat piracy, Ansars and coastguards will be deployed in ships after their arrival at Chittagong Port.

This was disclosed by the Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority Commodore Golam Rabbani at a press conference at Port Rest House this afternoon.

As a part of anti-piracy measure, Chittagong port authority imposed a restriction on fishing at the outer anchorage, the chairman said.

Such a measure was taken as the people engaged in fishing at the outer anchorage were suspected for their alleged involvement in piracy, he added.

Deputy conservator of Chittagong port captain Amrul Islam, who also spoke at the press conference said that 32 incidents of piracy were recorded in the past 11 months till November 2000.

Besides, 63 attempts of piracy were also recorded at Chittagong port during the same period, Islam added.

He also total the press conference that four acres of land were already allocated for installation of a base for the coastguards to facilitate their operational activities.

"However, it has become a matter of our concern," Islam said.

Replying to a question, chairman of Chittagong port said that the owner of the vessel Southern Queen that sank at jetty no. 1 after fire incident last week, had sent a salvage association after survey done by a Singapore team.

"It may take four to five months time to remove the See page 11 col 8

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