

What's on today

Sales conference: Eskayef Bangladesh Limited will hold its Annual Marketing and Sales Conference. Venue: Ball Room of Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9:00am.

Reception: Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) will accord a reception to US Senator Paul Simon. Venue: IUB Campus No 6 at Bashundhara. Time: 10:30 am.

DUJ meeting: Dhaka Union of Journalists will hold a meeting of its executive committee. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 11:00 am.

Rally: The Civil Society for Women's Empowerment will hold a rally in support for its demand for immediate arrest of all fatwabaj. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 2:30pm.

Discussion meeting: Muktijoddha Samannay Parishad will hold a discussion meeting on "Razakarmukta Parliament Chai" (A Razakar free parliament wanted). Venue: VIP Lounge of National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Opinion exchange meet: Sammilita Muktijoddha Front (SMF) will hold an opinion exchange meeting with leaders of different professions. Venue: TSC cafeteria on DU campus. Time: 3:00 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Discussion: A discussion in observance of Homecoming Day of the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be held. Venue: Auditorium of Engineer Institution. Time: 3 pm.

Rally: Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote will hold a rally in observance of Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day. Venue: From Ramna Park Gate to National Press Club. Time: 11:30am.

FEMA: A meeting of Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) national committee will be held. Venue: FEMA National Secretariat, House No 9, Rd No 17, Block C Banani. Time: 4:00 pm. Sales conference: Eskayef Bangladesh Limited will hold its Annual Marketing and Sales Conference. Venue: Ball Room of Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9:00am.

Weather**Dry weather likely**

Weather may remain dry over the country during next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Mild cold wave may continue over northern and central parts of the country and the regions of Sathkira and Rangamati during the period, Met Office said.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country, it added.

Little rise in night temperature is expected over the country, Met Office predicted.

The country's highest temperature 26.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar, Sitakunda and Mongla and the lowest 0.6 degree at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:29 pm and rises on Wednesday at 6:43 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	
Dhaka	23.4	11.3	66	52
Chittagong	25.5	10.3	85	65
Rajshahi	23.2	8.5	82	69
Khulna	25.0	9.6	87	74
Barisal	25.0	8.6	97	79
Sylhet	24.5	10.4	66	69
Cox's Bazar	26.0	12.2	71	67

Land deed or death

From page 1 Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Rangpur Mohammad Hossain said he was not aware of what had happened in Panca.

"If there was a murder, the police must have taken punitive measures," he said. "The problem between the landless and the influential landowners always existed in the country."

He cited several similar cases where local landowners drove away the landless farmers even after he had handed over the khas land to them.

Superintendent of Police Naim Ahmed said he had visited Panca following the incident and his forces were doing their best to apprehend the culprits. He added that the police were waiting for the autopsy report.

"We will submit the charge case

From page 12 fabricated and vague," they claimed.

The prosecution side opposed it and prayed for cancellation of the trial of the accused.

After hearing both the sides, the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Abul Kashem granted bail to two accused and ordered to send the complainant to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Local people have demanded that the government immediately rehabilitate the landless farmers and direct the local administration to monitor implementation of the ongoing scheme.

In Panca village, at least six more similar cases involving those of landless peasants have remained unresolved for years. Local people fear more clashes if the farmers claim the land they have been allotted under the government scheme.

Local people have demanded that the government immediately rehabilitate the landless farmers and direct the local administration to monitor implementation of the ongoing scheme.

An agreement was signed in 1966 when both sides agreed to refrain from construction or infringements to the Naf, which separates the two countries. Bangladesh and Myanmar (formerly Burma) share a border of around 500 kilometres.

The Myanmarese embassy in Dhaka was "yet to receive any feedback from our headquarters," said a senior official when contacted at 4:30pm.

"We want to have a border-line of peace and tranquillity with our neighbours including Bangladesh," he, however, added.

According to reports, a BDR patrol detected ongoing construction of an embankment on the Naf on the Myanmarese side of the border on January 4. The embankment, being erected within 100 yards of the zero line, is against Bangladesh's interests, as it might lead to diversion of the river flow, causing flooding and erosion in her territory. A large number of shrimp farms would be destroyed, if the embankment were built.

The BDR immediately asked for a flag meeting but the Myanmarese forces did not respond. Later, the Bangladeshi border forces also proposed a battalion-level meeting. Nasaka

Fatwa

From page 12 uttering the word 'talak'.

The moulvis and a section of village leaders prevailed and threatened to isolate the couple from the society.

Some of the village leaders who are aware of the High Court's recent verdict against fatwa on talak' counseled Haq to consult lawyers.

He along with Shahida came to Nilphamari on January 7 and discussed the matter with some lawyers. On their suggestion, they went to the office of a Notary Public. There Haq and Shahida signed an accord making solemn pledge that there had been no divorce and that they wanted to live together as husband and wife.

The document was certified by the Notary Public and the couple is quite happy with the solution.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took part in the Akheri Munajat at Biswah Ijtema yesterday. Lakhs of devotees attended the final prayers yesterday at Tongi.

--PID photo

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia and senior presidium member of Jatiya Party Begum Roushan Ershad participating in the Akheri Munajat at Biswah Ijtema.

--Star photo

10 Maoist rebels shot dead in Jharkhand

RANCHI (India), Jan 8: Indian paramilitary police have shot dead 10 left-wing guerrillas, while losing one of their own men, in a fierce gunbattle in the eastern Indian state of Jharkhand, police said today, reports AFP.

A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) patrol raided Semri Banjary village in the Garhwa district of Jharkhand on Sunday after a tip-off that Maoist rebels belonging to the People's War Group (PWG) were hiding in the village.

There was an encounter and the security forces recovered four bodies from the scene of the gunbattle. But the rebels escaped with the other dead bodies," said Jharkhand director general of police TP Sinha.

"Four civilians, including two women were injured in the shoot-out.

One CRPF member was also killed.

The state of Jharkhand was created in November carved out of 18 of neighbouring Bihar state's 51 districts.

Call to help protect intellectual property rights

as the chief guest. Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam spoke at the function as special guest.

Presided over by Science and Technology Secretary Fazlur Rahman, the inaugural function was also addressed by Joint Secretary of the Science and Technology Ministry Yusuf Jahangir Shikder.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam said the scientists and the inventors have to patent their ideas, as it is the main property of the inventors. Others might steal the ideas if these are not patented in time, he said.

He said many of the ideas of the people of developing countries are being stolen by developed countries. In this context, he gave an example of "Basmoti Rice" and said its patent was stolen and named as "Texmati Rice" in a developed country.

Anam also emphasised the need for increasing allocation for the Science and Technology

existing trademark laws of the country should be amended for protecting the service marks especially in the IT related business.

He also laid emphasis on creating awareness among the scientists, researchers, lawyers, students and others linked with the Intellectual Property Rights.

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Ministry to promote scientific activities in the country.

Placing emphasis on creating awareness among the scientists, and inventors about the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Science and Technology Secretary Fazlur Rahman lamented that to a lack of awareness the full credit of invention of radio went to Marconi as he had registered the patent of his work before scientist Jagadish Chandra Bose.

Four technical papers were presented at the workshop yesterday. At least 90 participants from different universities and business organisations, including information technologists, journalists and four experts of Delhi-based NAM Science and Technology Centre have been participating in the workshop.

One beaten to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

An unidentified man aged about 35 was beaten to death by a mob near Gopibagh rail crossing in the city last night.

Hospital sources said the mob suspected the man to be a mugger and beat him at about 7:30 pm.

Sabujbagh police rescued him in a critical condition and sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead at about 8:15 pm. His body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

When contacted at 9 last night, police could not give details.

Casting votes

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The newspapers described how about 4000 women of 12 villages in Surat Union of Jhenidah district were being "deprived of their fundamental right to vote in any election for about 85 years due to a fatwa by a section of people."

"Inquire into the complaint and submit a comprehensive report urgently," the Election Commission directed the Deputy Election Commissioner, Khulna, and the DC of Jhenidah.

Devotees seek divine

From page 1

not permit women in the congregation, over 5,000 women from the adjoining areas took part in the Akheri Munajat from various residential houses, mills and factories and roads.

All roads leading to the bank of the Turag River were teeming with countless people from all strata just before the Akheri Munajat.

A jemadar of foreign devotees, Maulana MA Hannan, said 4,028 foreigners from 62 countries took part in the Ijtema this year. The highest number of foreign devotees came from neighbouring India.

Apart from severe cold, the devotees faced problems like toll collection, pickpocket and unhygienic environment and food in the Ijtema ground. However, the hurdles could not stop the devotees from joining the Ijtema.

As in the previous years, 90 couples got married without dowry at a mass wedding on

occasions. Maulana Jobayer delivered sermons on marriage. Some 64 people have been hospitalised having diarrhoeal and intestinal diseases and sustaining injuries.

50 organisations have provided medical treatment to the pilgrims.

Meanwhile, water for ablution was sold at Tk 5 per pot and a piece of paper to sit on the ground at Tk 1 before the Akheri Munajat. Poor children and hawkers supplied those.

11 pickpockets were arrested today raising the total to 35 caught during the congregation.

Large number of home-bound people following the munajat created chaotic situations at the rail and bus station.

Serious traffic congestions were created on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

Buses charged exorbitant fares to the returning people.

Trains were jam packed with passengers.

Save Laloni's shrine

From page 12

sation and development.

"If the bauls are ousted from the shrine area and replaced by such a project, it would be like cutting the roots of a tree and then watering it," he said.

Poet Shamsur Rahman, the other convenor of the committee, said that throughout the world Laloni's works are becoming popular.

"Our movement is totally cultural, not political at all. We love our culture and we do not want to destroy it," he said. "But unfortunately we have been informed that during the last Laloni festival a section of people were playing Hindi film songs at the shrine."

"Despite assurances from the authorities," Rahman added, "I was told that the Secretary of Ministry of Works and Housing has continued the construction work of the buildings."

Farida Parvin, a popular singer of Laloni songs, said that traditional Laloni followers preferred to perform under the shade of trees, not inside luxurious buildings.

"The investigative report reveals how the general secretary of the Laloni Academy, Taizel Ali Khan sold out 1.7 acres of land within the shrine area for only Tk 40,000."

Speakers demanded immediate restoration of the shrine area with extensive replantation to make up for the trees felled for the project. They said that the actual shrine area must be converted into a green space and exclusively preserved for the bauls. All the excavations done for construction of the buildings must be filled up before the start of the next festival, they said.

The investigative report said that a section of ruling party men formed alliance with the fundamentalists and physically harassed the protection committee members when they went to the shrine to conduct an investigation last month.

Coup bid in Ivory

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GMT today, state radio, which had earlier gone off the air, began playing the national anthem and a man who did not identify himself read a brief statement.

"At the hour that we speak the country has undergone another page of our history. Radio and television are currently in the hands of the military," he said. "I want to reassure the population that their security is guaranteed. . . I ask all our brothers in arms to align themselves."

"N'Guessan said small groups of soldiers had attacked state broadcasting offices in downtown Abidjan, Ivory Coast's main city, and broadcasting facilities in the exclusive Cocody suburb.

Witnesses earlier said they also heard gunfire near the downtown home