



Ali awarded star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

US boxing legend Muhammad Ali was awarded Friday with a star on the fabled Hollywood Walk of Fame, but unlike other celebrities honoured there, Ali's star will be placed in the foyer of the new Kodak Theater.

Breaking with Tinseltown tradition, Ali's star will be placed there instead of in the sidewalk, after the former Cassius Clay said he didn't want his name walked on by people who "don't have no respect for me."

The theater also hosted a gala event yesterday to mark Ali's 60th birthday, which is on January 17. His birthday has been proclaimed "Muhammad Ali Day" in the city of Los Angeles.

New estimate puts gas reserve at 20 TCF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fresh assessment of the country's gas reserve puts the proven amount of gas at 20.4 Trillion Cubic Feet (TCF) and the potential reserve at up to 63.7 TCF.

The new assessment jointly conducted by the Hydrocarbon Unit of the Energy Ministry and Norway Petroleum Directorate (NPD) was formally released in Dhaka yesterday.

The assessment, which was initiated in 1998 but kick-started in February last year, was prepared with the assistance of Norwegian experts.

The official estimate puts the quantity of proven gas reserve in the country at around 11 TCF.

The new study echoes the projections made by Petrobangla and United States Geological Survey (USGS) last year. The USGS-Petrobangla study however did not give estimate of the existing gas reserve.

The latest study claimed that the amount of probable reserve of gas in Bangladesh is at least 18.5 TCF. It said

the total amount of proven, probable and potential gas reserve in the country can be as high as 63.7 TCF.

The last scientific study of the proven gas reserve was held in 1991. It is often argued now that the existing proven gas reserve estimate of 11.23 TCF would go much higher if current technologies including 3D surveys are used.

The USGS-Petrobangla study presented in February last year in Dhaka suggested that the average potential gas reserve in Bangladesh is 32.1 TCF in the next 30 years, while the range of this potential fluctuates between 8.4 TCF (95 per cent possibility) and 65.7 TCF (5 per cent possibility).

When the NPD-Bangladesh study began in 1998, the then energy secretary was more interested in the USGS study and the collaboration with Norway was very slow. After the USGS study was presented in February in Dhaka, the NPD-Bangladesh study started to get a new impetus.

Withdraw false cases against AL leaders, workers: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Protesting the arrest of former MP Haji Mohammad Selim, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the 'fascist character of the government has been unmasked through its repressive acts.

In a statement, she demanded unconditional release of all arrested party leaders and workers, and withdrawal of the false cases filed against them.

Asking the government to stop repressive acts, she warned that the government must shoulder any consequences if it does not stop its 'fascist' activities.

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Hasnat Abdullah, Rafiqul get anticipatory bail

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail for 3 months to former Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah and former State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Rafiqul Islam, accused in criminal cases.

Jubo Dal leader Sentu filed two criminal cases on January 6 with Kotwali police of Barisal accusing Abul Hasnat Abdullah of ransacking his house and damaging property by his musclemen.

Hasnat and Rafiq appeared in person before the division bench comprising Justice A K M Badrul Huq and Justice Montazuddin Ahmed, which granted the bail after hearing both sides.

Rafiqul Islam was accused in a corruption case for awarding tender by abusing his official powers for

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Kamal Majumder granted bail

UNB, Dhaka

Former Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder was yesterday granted bail for three months by the High Court.

The division bench comprising Justice Amirul Kabir and Justice M Nizamul Huq granted the bail on appeal against the rejection of bail by the lower court.

Kamal was arrested following a criminal case filed by Yasmin accusing him and his associates of attempting to violate her.

Advocate Abul Baset Majumder appeared for the petitioner.



PHOTO: STAR

Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina called on Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday afternoon.

Hasina, Zhu for strengthening Dhaka-Beijing cooperation

UNB, Dhaka

Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji and Bangladesh's ex-premier Sheikh Hasina yesterday hoped the two countries would work together to the mutual benefit in an impeccable cooperation in various sectors, including economy, trade and infrastructure.

The two leaders also underscored the need for strengthening the existing bond of friendship between Dhaka and Beijing.

They expressed the identical sentiments when Sheikh Hasina leading a 15-member Awami League

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PHOTOS: STAR

Former home minister Mohammad Nasim, former agriculture minister Motia Chowdhury and former deputy minister Saber Hossain (top) go to the High Court to seek bails; former AL chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah (bottom left) on way to the court to seek bail; and ex-AL lawmaker Haji Mohammad Selim (right) being taken to the court after his arrest.

Lashkar, Jaish banned Kashmir policy will never change: Musharraf

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan will never change its policy towards Kashmir but will not allow any organisation to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir, President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday.

"Kashmir runs in our blood," Musharraf said in his address to the nation.

"We will never budge an inch from our principled stand on Kashmir," he said. The problem needs to be solved by peaceful means.

"No organisation will be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir," he said.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf warned India that any attempt to cross its border would be

met with "full force."

"I want to give you a message as commander of the armed forces of Pakistan. Pakistan's armed forces are fully deployed to face any challenge. They will sacrifice their last drop of blood for the defence of the country," Musharraf said in part of his address to the nation which was aimed at Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

"Do not try to cross the border from any area because we will retaliate with full force," Musharraf said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf Saturday banned two Kashmiri militant groups blamed by India for the December 13 attack on its parliament.

"The government bans Lashkar-e-Taib and Jaish-e-Mohammad,"

Musharraf said in his address to the nation.

The two organisations were accused by India of being responsible for the attack on its parliament in New Delhi on December 13.

Pakistan will not hand over any of its citizens included in a list of 20 alleged terrorists wanted by India, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said Saturday.

"The question to hand over any Pakistani does not arise. We will never do it," Musharraf said in his address to the nation.

Meanwhile, Pakistani police said yesterday they had arrested over 350 militants ahead of Musharraf's speech.

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Gold worth Tk 21 lakh seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) recovered 3.5 kgs of gold ornaments worth about Tk 21 lakh from a passenger of a Biman flight late Friday night.

ZIA sources said Delwar Hossain, the passenger of flight BG-075 that landed at the airport at 11:30pm Friday, attempted to cross the green channel without making any prior declaration about carrying the gold ornaments.

On suspicion, customs officials challenged Hossain and searched his luggage and body to find the ornaments wrapped around his waist and legs with scotch tape.

A departmental case was filed in this regard.

PM asks businessmen at DITF opening ceremony Make quality products to survive in competitive world market

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday suggested that business houses make quality products to survive in the competitive world market and overcome the impact of global downturn.

"Today, the developing countries have to face tougher competition and challenge so far as qualitative value of products and their utility are concerned," she said inaugurating a month-long Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF) 2002 at its Sher-e-Bangla Nagar venue yesterday afternoon.

The DITF 2002, jointly organised by the Ministry of Commerce and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), is the eighth such export-promotion exhibition. The first show

was held in 1995.

"The present era of free-market economy has created a tough competition across the world. Qualitative value of products, utility and aesthetic presentation have become very urgent and important," the PM told the businessmen from home and abroad.

Khaleda Zia said that display of quality products and organising of such international trade fairs for advertisement make effective contribution to facing the challenge of promoting market in the prevailing adverse situation.

A great variety of goods of various companies from around the world have brought a massive change in the demand, taste, choice and interest of today's consumers, Khaleda told the inaugural function.

"So it is not the last world to have access of product to the world market," the prime minister said.

Forty-three companies and organisations of 22 countries, including Iran, Japan, Pakistan, China, Denmark, India, the Republic of Korea, Egypt, Germany, France, Hong Kong, UK, USA, UAE, Spain, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, are participating in the trade fair.

From the host country, Bangladesh, 264 business houses are taking part in the DITF 2002 to showcase a plethora of products.

The prime minister expressed her satisfaction over the DITF popularity and the growing competition of participants eager to promote their products.

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Govt urged to frame nat'l arsenic policy 'Shift to surface water without further delay'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international conference on arsenic contamination of ground water concluded in the city yesterday adopting a 9-point Dhaka Declaration and urging the government to formulate a 'national arsenic policy' to fight the endemic problem.

The policy should include effective mitigation programmes and there should be a commitment from the government to implement it, the declaration said.

Experts, journalists and government officials from home and abroad participated in the two-day conference on "Arsenic Contamination in Ground Water: Media Strategy", held at the CIRDP auditorium.

The World Water Forum of Journalists (WWFJ) and the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) jointly organised it.

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an international conference yesterday called for immediate shift to surface water for drinking purposes to avoid groundwater arsenic contamination.

"Bangladesh, in terms of per capita surface water availability, ranks 2nd in the world and yet, we have ignored water natural sources such as ponds and rivers for collection of drinking water," said Professor Mahmudur Rahman of Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH) in his opening speech at the 4th international conference on Arsenic Contamination of Groundwater in Bangladesh: Cause, Effect and Remedy.

Epidemiologists, soil scientists, hydrologists, geologists, medical practitioners, oncologists (cancer expert), dermatologists (skin specialists) and representatives from UN agencies like WHO and Unicef attended the confer

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Shazneen case First prosecution witness cross-examined

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mojibur Rahman, additional SP of CID and first prosecution witness in the Shazneen rape case, was cross-examined in the Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday.

After one and a half hours cross-examination by the lawyer for Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, the main accused in the case, Judge M Shah Alam Miah adjourned the hearing till 10.30 am today.

During the cross-examination

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Villagers clash in Magura: 35 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

At least 35 people were injured, 10 of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at village Rampur in Mohammadpur upazila of the district yesterday.

Local people said, two rival groups -- one led by Motiar Rahman and the other by Solaiman Mian -- equipped with lethal weapons clashed over planting paddy seeds on a disputed land.

The critically injured, identified as Agar Khan, 18, Babu, 35, Mohammad, 50, Farid, 50, Jahur, 40, Harun, 35, Shaheed, 25, Amjad, 40, Omar Ali, 35, and Liton, 22, were admitted to Mohammadpur Upazila Health Complex.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 13		5-31 pm
Jan 14	6-44 am	

Prayer Timings		
Jan 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation