



Anniversary of Nazrul's death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tributes will be paid to National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam on his 26th death anniversary today.

The poems, short stories, novels and songs of Kazi Nazrul serve as an eternal source of inspiration to the people of Bangladesh. His revolutionary poems and songs, especially the poem 'Bidrohi' inspired the people during the War of Independence.

He became the idol for the poets of later period for his immense contribution in all genres of Bangla literature in the post-Rabindra phase.

Different organisations have taken up a variety of programmes to mark the occasion.

The Nazrul Academy will kick off its weeklong programme by placing wreath at the poet's grave. LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will inaugurate the programme as chief guest at the National Museum auditorium.

A discussion meeting will be held in the evening, which will be followed by a musical programme.

The Bangladesh Shilpakala

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Dark episode at DU comes to light

Policemen assaulted Shamsunnahar Hall students, judicial commission finds; report submission today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The judicial probe commission has concluded that both male and female police personnel stormed into the Shamsunnahar Hall, beat up and hurled abuses at students and arrested some of them during the July 24 raid, sources said.

Justice Tafazzul Islam, who heads the commission, said yesterday that all formalities were complete and the 150-page report would be submitted to the home ministry today.

The commission, which was formed on July 27 and began taking depositions the next day, recorded the statements of 67 people including the ex-

vice-chancellor of the university and the inspector general of police.

The report is learnt to have recommended appointment of a non-partisan, highly qualified and efficient person as the vice-chancellor of the university.

The commission has suggested that some amendments should be made to the Dhaka University Act, 1973 in this regard, without compromising the institution's autonomy.

As regards the July 24 raid on the Shamsunnahar Hall, the commission has found the police statement self-contradictory and inadequate to explain the situation, sources said.

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Gas export only after new discoveries

Committees place reports to PM today

STAR REPORT

National gas committees submit reports to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia today, with the conclusion that limited gas can be exported only after new discoveries and supply saturation.

The committees -- National Committee on Gas Utilisation and National Committee on Gas Reserve Assessment -- prepared reports eight months after their formation.

The utilisation committee suggested that all gas discoveries by

Petrobangla and international oil companies (IOCs) be kept aside for domestic consumption.

The committee also found that the country could pay for the IOC gas without much difficulty, and the payment for gas purchase will give incentives to the IOCs' investment, the committee noted.

Contrary to donors' assessment, the committee believes that export of pipeline gas will marginally improve the balance-of-payment scenario.

The utilisation report has projected that if 200 million square cubic

metres a day (mmcf) is exported at a wellhead price of US\$2.8 a unit, there will be a cash flow of US\$4.09 billion in 20 years. If 500 mmcf is exported, the cash flow will stand at \$10.2 billion.

However, under any export formula, the production sharing contracts (PSCs) with foreign oil companies must be renegotiated and new deals involving the possible buyer should be signed.

An analysis shows that until 2020,

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Alamgir's bail order stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday stayed the bail order of former state minister for planning and Awami League (AL) leader Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir till September 3.

Earlier, Dr. Alamgir was granted bail in all the six cases against him. The stay order came at a time when there was a possibility of his release.

Chamber Judge KM Hasan stayed his bail order in the seditious case and fixed August 28 (tomorrow) for the hearing following a prayer from the office of the attorney general.

Barrister Amir-ul-Islam, counsel for the detained AL leader, yesterday

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PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

Fish traders sell banned hilsha fry (jatka), each at Tk 8 to 10 at Swari Ghat in the city yesterday. The catch of the fry smaller than 10 inches has created a dearth of hilshas across the country.

C'wealth for democracy: McKinnon

BSS, Dhaka

Visiting Commonwealth Secretary General Donald C. McKinnon yesterday said Commonwealth will remain engaged in strengthening democracy in the countries of the forum.

McKinnon, who is on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, expressed the determination during his courtesy call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office.

Khaleda and the secretary general agreed that "democracy and development go together and one strengthens the other".

During the meeting, he profusely praised the holding of free and fair polls in Bangladesh in October last year, describing it as "exemplary".

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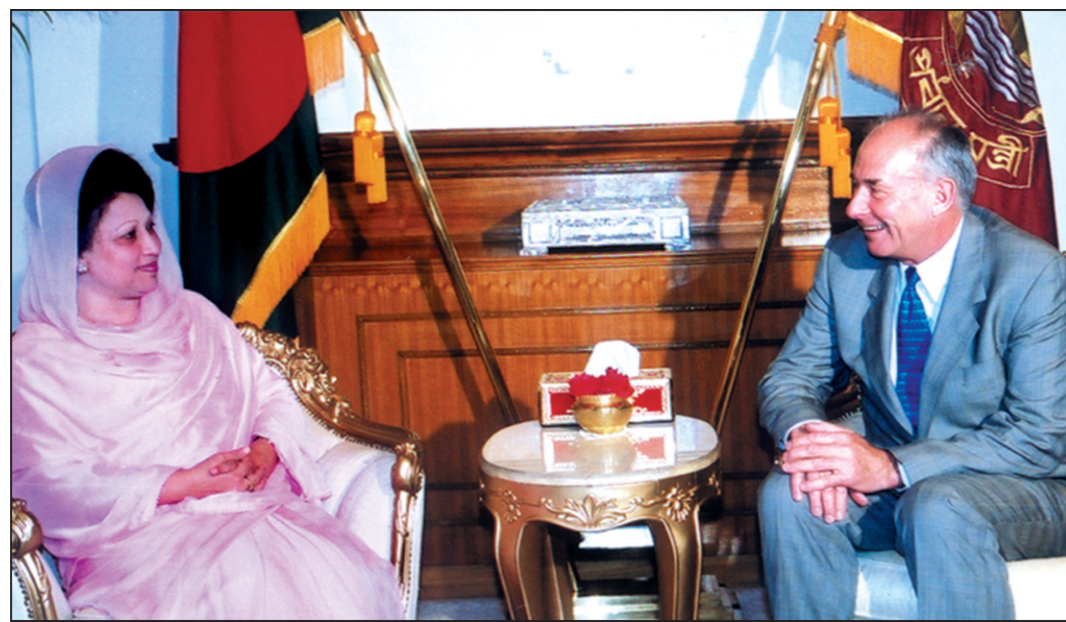


PHOTO: PID

Commonwealth Secretary General Donald C McKinnon talks to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office during his courtesy call yesterday.

WHEATGATE SCAM

Lobbying on as probe body awaits chemical report

REAZ AHMAD

The one-man secretarial committee, probing into the alleged wheat procurement scam, hopes to submit its report once it receives the results of the chemical tests done on 30 wheat samples it collected from different government granaries.

The test, carried out at the Dinajpur-based Wheat Research Centre for the first time since allegations of procurement irregularities surfaced, will ascertain the origin of the wheat (homegrown or imported)

bought at the end of the government's food-grain collection drive.

Earlier tests, done for the food ministry probe committee, were restricted to quality determination of the procured wheat, sources said.

The secretarial committee, headed by Civil Aviation Secretary-in-charge Shafiqul Islam, was scheduled to submit its findings August 25.

The WRC is now examining gluten contents of the wheat samples from granaries at Pabna, Bogra, Mymensingh and Satkhira.

Wheat varieties (i.e. Kanchan, Akbar and Sonalika) generally grown in Bangladesh contain higher gluten contents than those cultivated in India, experts said.

Meanwhile, as the committee waits for the test results, certain quarters have started lobbying with political high-ups to divert attention from the investigations, sources said.

Some food officials, already identified by the food ministry probe body for their involvement in the scam, are trying to contact officials

at the Prime Minister's Office to convince them of their innocence, the sources added.

At least two of the officials drafted part of the government White Paper that focused on alleged irregularities in the food sector during the Awami League regime. They are now trying to cash in on that and portray members of the probe body having inclination to an opposition political party, the sources said.

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ETV case Directive for correction of licence flaws sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counsel for the foreign investors of Ekushey Television (ETV) Dr. Kamal Hossain yesterday urged the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court to make a judgement protecting the interest of all the parties and give direction for correcting the irregularities of the ETV license rather than closing it down.

Dr Kamal was making his arguments on the third day of the hear

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DENGUE ALERT

DCC blamed for sitting on aedes control suggestions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some leading entomologists have claimed that the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) ignored recommendations they set forth in 2000 for aedes mosquito control.

The current dengue prevalence could have been averted, had the DCC acted on their suggestions, they said at a roundtable on "Dengue Vector Control" at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The entomologists put forward a set of 14 recommendations to the DCC for effectively controlling Aedes mosquito population.

But the DCC turned deaf ears to their calls for immediate steps in this regard, they alleged.

"We have had no response from the DCC despite

repeated requests and those were virtually shelved," said one of the entomologists.

The experts team comprised the then president of the Entomological Society of Bangladesh Prof M Ismail Hossain, Manjur A Chowdhury and Touhid Uddin Ahmed. Those were prepared following a study during August-October 2000 and handed over to Chief Health Officer of the DCC Dr Mohammad Ashraf Uddin.

The experts recommended that surveillance activities should be initiated in the DCC wards classified as 'sensitive'. The remaining wards should also be monitored on a routine basis.

Anti-vector drive should be taken up when dengue outbreak occurs. Localities where dengue cases are

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One dies, 141 infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One person died from dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) while 141 people were hospitalised with dengue and DHF in the city yesterday.

The dead, Mujibur Rahman, 47, died at the BIRDEM Hospital yesterday noon. He was admitted to the hospital the same day.

The latest casualty ups the dengue death toll so far to 36. The total number of people hospitalised stood at 3233 yesterday, according to the dengue control room.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has almost run out of insecticide to kill adult aedes mosquito. According to sources at the DCC, the city authorities have

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Villagers stage protest in Satkhira

Main accused in Minu Ara rape & suicide case still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The main accused in the sensational Minu Ara Rape and Suicide Case, Ebadul Haq and Machhura Khatun, are still at large.

Minu Ara, 14, daughter of Abdur Rahim Sardar of village Parmachkhola in Sadar upazila, allegedly committed suicide after being raped allegedly by Ebadul Haq of the same village, police said.

Sources said Minu was called in Friday morning by accused Machhura Khatun, wife of Abul Kashem of the same village, who confined the unsuspecting girl to a room in her (Machhura's) house. There, Ebadul Haq of the same village, who is reportedly an activist of an outlawed political party, raped Minu repeatedly.

Humiliated and distressed, Minu Ara returned home about two hours later at 10:00am and narrated the whole incident to her family before taking poison in a bid to end her life. At about 12:00 noon, Minu was found unconscious in her room and taken to a village doctor. Minu died the next day.

Minu Ara's suicide has drawn many political leaders, police officials and NGO activists to her native village of Parmachkhola.

DIG of Khulna Range Sirajul Islam, police superintendent Rafiqul Islam and other police officials visited Minu Ara's family at the village and talked to their neighbours yesterday. The DIG promised legal action against the culprits.

Local people brought out a procession yesterday demanding immediate arrest of and exemplary punishment to those involved in Minu's rape leading to her suicide.

The villagers however complained to this correspondent yesterday about the local authorities' dilly-dallying in arresting the culprits.

"If you are really sympathetic to our grief, please make sure that the cul-

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WFP aid for CHT to continue

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The World Food Programme will continue its expanded food assistance (EFA) in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) irrespective of the law and order situation in the region, WFP representative and its operation chief in Bangladesh Douglas Courts said here yesterday.

"WFP will go ahead (with its programme) in any kind of law and order situation to ensure food security and nutritional needs of the most vulnerable people, particularly the women", he said.

He was taking to newsmen during a lunch at the local circuit house after launching of the EFA Phase-II under the Rural Road Maintenance Project.

"The law and order situation in CHT is negligible", he said replying to a question.

The programme will be continued till 2005 and expended if necessary, he said.

About 11400 women heads of households having no land will get three kilograms of rice and Tk 20 daily under the four-year plan, a WFP press release said. Of them, 2700 are in Khagrachhari, 2400 in Bandarban and 4000 in Rangamati districts.

This will benefit about 273600 people in rural and remote areas, it said.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED)

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Dissolution of Sylhet JCD fuels infighting

IQBAL SIDDIQUE, Sylhet

The Sylhet district committee of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has been dissolved following the gunfights among its three factions on Saturday night and Sunday in the city.

The clashes, a sequel to long-drawn rivalry for establishing supremacy in certain city areas, left at least 30 people injured, 10 of them bullet-hit.

Dissolution of the JCD body has

Two expelled: Nine activists held for gunfight

intensified the intra-party feud in the district BNP, with its leaders accusing one another for what they called patronising goons in its student body, resulting in clashes.

The decision to dissolve the JCD body was taken at the instruction of Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on Sunday night. District BNP President MA Haque and General Secretary Ariful Haque Chowdhury

in a joint statement yesterday said the decision was taken at an emergency meeting.

The meeting also expelled two JCD leaders -- Saifulah Khaled and Mashuk Ahmed -- for their involvement in "unwanted and anti-party activities". The meeting also scrapped their primary membership of JCD.

Nine JCD activists have been

arrested for their involvement in the clashes and three separate cases lodged with the Kotwali thana.

Activities of Sylhet district JCD were suspended following a series of clashes months back. Several people were killed in the incidents.

There are allegations that most of activists belonging to all the JCD groups are involved in different unwanted activities. Rival BNP

leaders are patronising the factions.

The faction led by Mizan (district JCD President) is allegedly blessed by district BNP president MA Haque and the Sadeque-Najib faction is blessed by district BNP secretary Ariful Haque Chowdhury. The Khaled-Mashuk faction has the support of BNP's former organising secretary Shamsuzzaman Zaman, expelled from the party months ago for anti-party activities. The faction led by Shahin, district JCD vice-

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