



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia pose with the performers of a cultural show at the World Trade Centre at Kunming on Friday. The government of Yunnan province organised the cultural show in honour of the PM during her visit to China.

China to play vital role for peace in S Asia: Bhuiyan

BSS, Dhaka

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday hoped that China would play a vital role in maintaining peace in the South Asian region which faces more potent dangers than ever before -- the nuclearisation.

"The regional conflicts in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and especially in our region have intensified and posed potent dangers to their peoples now more than ever before," he said.

The minister was addressing the inaugural session of a seminar on South Asian Security and Sino-Bangladesh Relations, jointly organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International Strategic Studies (BISS) and Asia-Africa Development Research Institute of the Development Research Centre of the State Council of China.

Bhuiyan said, "The recent nuclearisation of South Asia's two mighty neighbours, India and Pakistan, has not only aggravated the situation further, but brought the danger closer to reality and to their doorsteps by mutual viuperation and threats and counter-threats."

Any escalation of the perennial conflicts between the two countries holds in it the potentials of widespread armed conflicts and even the possibility of a nuclear war, the minister said pointing out that this will cause terrible loss of life and great devastation as well as untold miseries and deprivations for the survivors.

He observed that China had been consistent in playing its policy of peace, cooperation and development to govern its relations with other countries.

Bhuiyan said the Chinese policy towards South Asia has been consistent over the past decades. Though ostensibly one tends to think that China has been a great friend of Pakistan as compared to its arch-rival, India, it may be recalled that China also professed friendship with India and has taken steps to settle the outstanding issues with it, he added.

The minister said China wants peace in various regions of the world. "It is, therefore, obvious that China, as a friend of South Asian countries, would like peace to prevail in its neighbouring region, South Asia."

Referring to the bilateral relations between China and Bangladesh, the minister said the visit to China of the high level Bangladesh delegation, led by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, further strengthened

the solid foundation on which the edifice of the excellent ties between the two countries is based.

Laying emphasis on the seminar, Bhuiyan said the dialogue on security of our country and the region in the context of Bangladesh-China relations is not only timely but also of paramount interest.

"It is timely, because the international situation at present is in turmoil, it may give rise to an armed and terrible conflict among nations in the foreseeable future."

The minister said the fight against terrorism, both at home and abroad, is an issue that is agitating the minds of people and to which Bangladesh is committed.

But the world community, he said, must proceed and act with caution and try to keep it within the bounds of control and circumspection.

"Otherwise, the situation would escalate, and distress and devastation of the people at large would be limitless and intense."

The inaugural session of the seminar was presided over by the chairman of board of governors of BISS Mofleh R Osmani, while BISS Director General Maj Gen SM Shahabuddin Ahmed delivered the welcome address.

Use of children as camel jockeys banned: UAE embassy

BSS, Dhaka

The use of children under 15 as jockeys in the popular sport of camel-racing has been banned in the United Arab Emirates, said a spokesman for the UAE Embassy in the city yesterday.

Referring to a campaign launched by 'Anjiker Bangladesh' to protest against the use of children in the sport, the spokesman said the ban was ordered by Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Emirates Camel Racing Federation, ECRF, and UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

"The use of children as jockeys in camel-racing was banned in the United Arab Emirates earlier this year, and strong measures are being taken by the federation, and by police and other authorities to ensure that there are no breaches of the ban," he said.

"No one is permitted to ride camels in camel-races unless they have a minimum weight to 35 kg, and are not less than fifteen years old, as stated in their passports," he said, adding that "a medical committee examines each candidate to be a jockey to check that the age stated in their passport is correct."

Under the Federation's rules,

the owners of UAE camel-racing stables are responsible for returning children under fifteen who were formerly employed as jockeys to their home countries, the spokesman said.

"A number of children under 15, from several countries, including Bangladesh, were formerly employed as camel jockeys by some camel-owners in violation of the rules of the camel racing federation," he said, adding that, "the rules have been tightened up and strict penalties are being applied to anyone breaching them."

"Many of those children were illegally smuggled into the UAE by unscrupulous middle-men from their countries of origin. The activities of these middle-men were a major part of the problem."

"The authorities at the UAE ports and airports are doing their best to stamp out the smuggling of children, but collaboration from the authorities at airports and ports in their countries of origin is essential," he said.

"In camel-racing, as in horse-racing and many other sports, there have been occasional accidents and casualties, one of the reasons for implementing the strict ban on the employment of children as camel jockeys is to ensure that such unfortunate inci-

dents no longer occur," the spokesman said.

He added that the UAE Embassy in Dhaka would be pleased to receive any information about individual cases, and about attempts to smuggle children illegally to the UAE.

BRTC introduces 10 more buses on Mirpur route

UNB, Dhaka

The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) introduced 10 more buses on Gulistan-Mirpur route in the city yesterday to ease commuters' problem.

BRTC chairman advocate Taimur Alam Khandaker inaugurated the service aimed at fulfilling the growing demand for public transports in the capital.

Passengers using this route have been facing much trouble as the plying of rickshaws from Gabtoli to Russell Square on the Mirpur Road was banned last week.

Also, a total ban on two-stroke three-wheeleders will come into effect on January 1 that might multiply the sufferings of the commuters.

In a press release yesterday, the BRTC said the corporation would introduce bus services on other new routes to cope with the situation.

15 listed criminals arrested

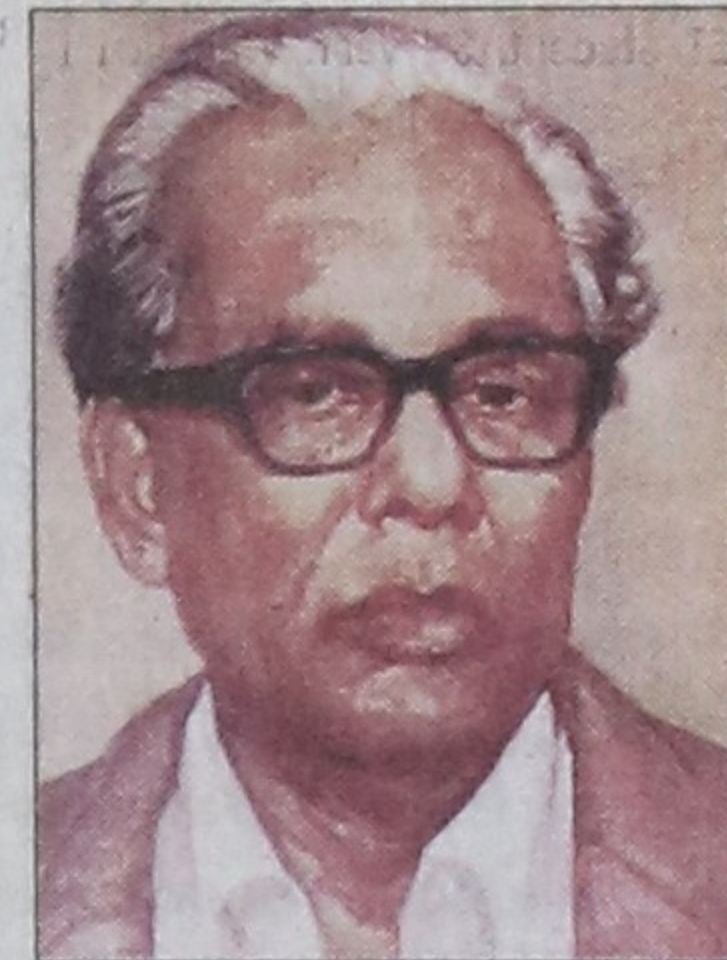
UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,258 people, including 15 listed criminals, from different parts of the country in 24 hours ending at 6.00am yesterday.

They also seized four firearms, four other weapons and two bullets during the period and filed three cases against seven people under the Arms Act, said a police press release.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at the party's presidium meeting at its Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday.



Birth anniversary of Zainul Abedin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 88th birth anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin.

Different educational institutions and socio-cultural organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to observe the day in a befitting manner.

The Institute of Fine Arts of Dhaka University (DU) will organise a discussion meeting at noon today. DU Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz will attend the function as chief guest.

Prof Md Abdus Sattar, director of the institute, will preside over the meeting to be attended by noted artist Mohammad Kibria as special guest.

The institute also organises a children's art competition at 9:00am to be followed by a prize giving ceremony and cultural function at 4:00pm.

Wreaths will also be placed at the graveyard of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin at 9:30am.

Meanwhile, the Central Kachi-Kachar Mela has chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the 88th birth anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, 100th birth anniversary of poet Jasmuddin and 73rd birth anniversary of scientist Abdullah Al-Muti.

The six-day programmes starting from today include children's drawing competition, poetry recitation and science fair.

Artist Qaium Chowdhury will inaugurate the drawing competition to be held at 9:00am today.

Poet Belal Chowdhury will inaugurate the poetry recitation competition at 9:30am on January 1.

Dr Ali Asgor will inaugurate the Al-Muti science fair at 3:00pm on January 1.

Dr Serajul Islam Chowdhury will distribute prizes among the winners at a function to be presided over by Khandaker Ibrahim Khaled, director of the Kachi-Kachar Mela.

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♦ Bachelor of Computer Science (BSc in CS) : Cr-135	
Master Degree Programs :	Minimum Qualification for Admission :
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The speech will be followed by dinner.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country during the next 24 hours till 6.00pm today.

Met office said moderate to dense fog may occur over north-western part and river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country from midnight to morning.

Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country, it added.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 27.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Chittagong and the lowest of 10.0 degree at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:21pm today and rises at 6:40 am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	24.0	13.0	86	62
Chittagong	27.0	14.5	79	66
Rajshahi	23.7	10.0	100	74
Khulna	26.0	13.3	92	72
Barisal	24.8	12.4	90	78
Sylhet	24.9	13.2	94	93
Cox's Bazar	26.4	14.8	77	67

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