

Air force to be modernised

PM reiterates at Winter Graduation Parade 2003

UNB, Jessore

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated to continue the government efforts for modernising the air force providing it with modern aircraft and other equipment.

She was addressing the Winter Graduation Parade 2003 at Bangladesh Air Force Academy here in the morning, marking the commissioning of the cadets of 48 GDP Course and 51 Ground Branch Course Training.

A total of 29 cadets, including 16 flight cadets of 48 GDP Course and 13 flight cadets, including two female cadets, of 51 Ground Branch Course were commissioned yesterday.

The prime minister appreciated the role of airforce in safeguarding national security, facing natural calamities, in UN peacekeeping missions and economic development through sending remittance.

Khaleda Zia in her speech appreciated the contributions of women commissioned officers, working in the airforce with competence. She especially congratulated the two women cadets commissioned today.

She reminded the graduating cadets that they would have to safeguard the independence with honesty, dedication and sincerity, and urged them to take part in the national development.

Terming the graduating cadets as the 'Future Leader of Air Force', she asked them to properly groom themselves for the future leadership.

Khaleda Zia emphasised on education, training and practice for grooming skilled cadets and officers, and urged them to develop their professional skill through practice.

The prime minister reviewed a smartly turned out parade and took salute at the impressive march past.

She also distributed trophies and awards to the outstanding cadets.

Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer



PHOTO: ISPR
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presents the 'Sword of Honour' to Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Md Mehedi Hasan for best all-round performance at the Winter Graduation Ceremony 2003 at the BAF Academy in Jessore yesterday.

Md Mehedi Hasan of 48 GDP course was awarded with the coveted Sword of Honor for best all-round performance. He also received Osmani Gold Medal for his performance in academic training and Commandant's Trophy for best performance in general services training.

Flight Cadet Sergeant Shamimara Nasrin received the Chief of Air Staff Trophy for best all-round performance in 51 Ground Branch training.

The prime minister presented Academy Colour Number One Squadron to the Bangladesh Airforce Academy in recognition of its invaluable services to the nation producing airforce officers of high professional competence.

She also witnessed a spectacular fly past by different types of BAF aircraft.

Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Azam received the prime minister on her arrival at the Parade Square.

Ministers, MPs, diplomats, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, senior civil and military officials, local elite and guardians of the passing out cadets witnessed the parade.

DUTA polls today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Election to the 15-member executive committee of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) will be held today.

The polling will be held from 10:00am to 2:00pm at the DUTA Club without any break, with Prof. Syed Fazley Elahi as election commissioner.

The major contenders are BNP-Jamaat-backed 'White panel' and pro-Awami League 'Blue panel'. The left-leaning 'Pink panel' is not contesting the polls separately, but three of its candidates are placed on the 'Blue panel'.

The candidates were busy with their last-minute campaign yesterday.

Teachers of the White panel vowed to work together to beat their rivals at a meeting at the residence of the Vice-Chancellor Prof. SMA Faiz on Monday night.

The Blue panel teachers were going door-to-door to woo the voters.

In its election manifesto, the Blue panel has pledged to uphold the spirit of the liberation war and the DU ordinance of 1973, restore discipline in appointment of teachers and check irregularities and harassment of teachers.

On the other hand, White panel has placed eight-point pledges including construction of a 50-flat teacher's tower and more dormitories for female students, renovation of all residential halls and buildings and academic buildings, setting up of computer lab in each faculty, and increasing the number of Ph.D. scholarships.

Prof. AAMS Arefin Siddique of

Blue panel and Prof. Sirajul Islam Khan of White panel are vying for the post of president while Prof. Md Aktheruzzaman of Blue panel and Tahmina Akther Tofi of White panel are running for general secretary.

The candidates for the posts of vice-president, joint secretary and treasurer are Prof. SM Mahfuzur Rahman, Dr. Md Harunar Rashid Khan and Prof. Shafique Uz Jaman from the Blue panel and Prof. Mohammad Nurul Amin Bepari, Dr. ABM Obaidul Islam and Prof. M Farid Ahmed from the white panel.

The member candidates from the Blue panel are Prof. RIM Aminur Rashid, Prof. AZM Nowsher Ali Khan, Prof. Kazi Shahidullah, Prof. Fakhru Alam, Prof. Nilufar Nahar, Prof. Mezba Uddin Ahmed, Prof. Md Aminul Haque Bhuiyan, Prof. Md Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury, Prof. Md Hossain Mansur and Prof. Sharifullah Bhuiyan.

And the White panel candidates are Prof. Abu Ahmed, Prof. Abdul Aziz, Prof. Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan, Prof. PK Md Motiur Rahman, Dr. Nayema Haque, Prof. Habiba Khatun, Prof. Md Abdur Rashid, Prof. Md Sirajul Islam, Prof. Sadru Amin and Prof. Saiyad Shalehin Qadri.

Prof. AAMS Arefin Siddique, also a DUTA member, said that the teachers should choose their leaders carefully as they are very much conscious about their rights.

Prof. Abul Khaer, DUTA president and leader of the White panel, said, "We consider this year's election most important in perspective of national politics."

ntv starts 24-hr transmission from tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's fourth private television channel ntv (International Television Channel Limited) kicks off round the clock transmission from January 1, said a top official of the channel at a press conference in the city yesterday.

"We have completed all preparations and from the first day of the new year we will go for a 24-hour telecast presenting more quality programmes with the coverage of all parties and opinions," said M Enayetur Rahman, managing director of the ntv.

"From our very beginning, we are strongly committed to present news objectively and neutrally without showing any partisanship to any party and we will continue such professionalism in future too," he said, adding that news-based programmes will get more importance in the coming days along with entertaining and educational programmes.

According to the new programme schedule, the ntv will telecast news on current events for four times daily.

The first news bulletin will go on air at 7.30am, the second at 2.00pm, the third at 7.30pm and the last one at 10.30pm. The news bulletin of 10.30pm will be re-telecast at 1.00am and 4.00am.

Besides, news headlines will be aired for five times in between 10.00am and 9.45pm.

"Viewers prefer ntv programmes as these are prepared keeping their choices in mind and promoting national culture," said Enayetur Rahman.

Executive Director of ntv Hasnain Khurshed, directors Mohammad Yunus and Mostafa Kamal Syed and Chief News Editor Rashid-un-Nabi were present at the press conference.

The TV channel began its journey on July 3 this year with an eight-hour transmission daily.



PHOTO: STAR
State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman speaks at a press conference on 10th Dhaka Book Fair in the city yesterday. Organised by the Jatiya Grantha Kendra, the fair will start on January 1.

WEATHER
T O D A Y

Mild cold wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather will prevail over the country till 6pm today.

Met office said mild cold wave may continue over the regions of Ishurdi, Rajshahi, Srimongal, Jessore and Chuadanga and it may spread over the regions of Faridpur, Madaripur and Satkhira.

Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the river basins of the country during the early morning.

Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country.

Highest temperature 25.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and the lowest 9.2 degree at Chuadanga.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:22pm today and rises at 6:41am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature In Celsius	Max	Min	Humidity in percentage	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	24.0	13.2	77	68		
Chittagong	24.0	13.6	76	49		
Rajshahi	20.7	11.0	94	87		
Khulna	23.2	11.5	91	75		
Barisal	23.0	10.6	94			
Sylhet	24.6	10.5	100	68		
Cox's Bazar	24.3	14.2	89	82		

DHAKA
T O D A Y

Prize giving ceremony

The prize giving ceremony of the children's art competition, which was organised by Bangladesh National Museum to mark the Victory Day, will be held with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman as chief guest. Venue: Poet Sufia Kamal auditorium of the museum. Time: 4.00pm.

Conference

The opening session of the second national conference on Neem will be held with Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan as chief guest. The theme of the conference is 'Neem in poverty alleviation.' Venue: IFST seminar room of the BCSIR. Time: 10.00am.

Meeting

INCIDIN Bangladesh will hold an advisory meeting on the improvement of services for street children. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium. Time: 3.00pm.

Jubo League meeting

A meeting of the central committee of Bangladesh Awami Jubo League will be held. Venue: 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 10.00am.

Closing ceremony

The closing ceremony of month-long programme of Dhaka Metropolitan Committee of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad will be held. Venue: Sufia Kamal Bhaban, 10/B/ 1, Segun Bagicha. Time: 3.00pm.

Public meeting

Dhaka Metropolitan Unit of the Oikya Procheta will hold a public meeting with eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Mir Hazari Bagh New Road. Time: 3.00pm.

JMC discussion

Jatiya Mukti Council (JMC) organises a discussion titled 'Peoples' struggle for overall emancipation and 1971.' Venue: Seminar room of the TSC of Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm.

Writers' Day

The opening ceremony of the International Writers' Day Programme, drawn up by Bangladesh Writers Club, will be held. Venue: Central Shaheed

DHAKA
T O M O R R O W

Book fair

The inaugural ceremony of the 10th Dhaka Book Fair 2004 will be held with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia as chief guest. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Sher-e-Banglanagar. Time: 4.00pm. The exhibition will remain open till January 15.

Seminar

A seminar on the 'Demand of the new century and the role of Ulamaye Keram', organised by Madrassah Darur Rashad, will be held. Venue: Islamic Foundation auditorium, Baitul Mokarram. Time: 9.00am.



Dr Zafar Iqbal wins Sheltech Award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Zafar Iqbal, a noted science fiction writer and chairman of the department of computer science of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, has been selected for the Sheltech Award 2003.

The award ceremony will be held next month. Instituted in 1998, the award carries Tk 50,000 and a crest.

The noted personalities who received Sheltech Awards in previous years are poet Shamsur Rahman, singer Kalim Sharafi, artist Quayyum Chowdhury, singer Firoza Begum and litterateur Selina Hossain.

DUJ condemns attack on journalists

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday condemned the attacks on journalists in Feni and Pirojpur.

In a statement, DUJ President Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan and General Secretary Omar Faruk demanded punishment to those who attacked Shafiqul Haque Mithu, Pirojpur district correspondent of the Janakantha and Bakhtear Islam Munna, Feni district correspondent of the Ittefaq.

They also expressed concern as the journalists in Jhalakathi, Barisal, Patuakhali and Rajshahi are unable to perform their duties due to lack of security of their lives.

The DUJ leaders urged the government to ensure the security of all journalists for the sake of press freedom.

British troupe to present dance show tomorrow

DU CORRESPONDENT

Akram Khan, a Bangladeshi-born British dancer and choreographer, will present a dance show in the city on January 1 and 2.

His six-member team will present the show titled 'Kaash' at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium at 7.30pm. The British Council and the Lever Brothers Bangladesh Ltd. have sponsored the programme.

The 'Kaash' is a fusion of contemporary dance and Kathak, a South Asian classical dance form.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, Akram Khan said he also conducted a workshop for the local students at the British Council yesterday. Another workshop will be held today.



PHOTO: STAR
Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad speaks at a press conference at a city hotel yesterday, calling for introduction of federal system of government.

Badal Sheikh murder

Two to die, 10 get life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two persons to death and ten to life-term for killing a fruit trader in July in 2001.

Mohammad Sheikh Jahangir Hussain, judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-2, Dhaka Division gave the verdict at a crowded courtroom.

Mohammad Jahangir alias Galkata Jahangir and Alamgir were awarded death penalty while Mamun, Faruq, Hashem, Laviu, Selan, Aslam, Salam, Murad, Musa and kashem got life term. The court also fined those who got life term TK 50,000 each, in default, to suffer one year more imprisonment.

Siddiq, Afjal and Shafiuddin were acquitted as the charges brought against them could not be proved.

Of the convicts, Jahangir, Mamun, Hashem and Salam have been absconding since the murder.

The judge took his seat at 1:30pm and read out the highlights of the 34-page verdicts in 25 minutes.

The punishment of the absconders will be effective from the date of their arrest or surrender, the judgement said.

Those who got death penalty can appeal to the High Court against the verdict within 30 days.

The prosecution story in brief is that Badal Sheikh, a fruit trader at the Haji Shariatullah Market

under Kotwali thana in Faridpur district, was chopped to death by a gang of miscreants led by Galkata Jahangir following a feud over local politics at about 11:00am on July 4, 2001.

Later, victim's wife Rehana Akhter Rumi filed a murder case with Kotwali thana accusing Jahangir and 14 others the same day.

Order to probe occupation of abandoned house in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong district administration yesterday ordered an immediate probe into the feud between Chittagong unit of Jatiya Mahila Sangstha (JMS) and Chittagong Society for the Disabled (CSD) over the occupation of an abandoned house in the city, official sources said.

Additional deputy commissioner (ADC) general, has been asked to investigate into the matter and submit the report immediately.

The feud ensued when the members of both the organisations were locked in a battle to occupy the abandoned house at Mohammad Ali Road on Monday.

Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that both the groups are trying to occupy the house illegally as it was not allotted to any organisation.

Jahangir, a listed criminal, also killed five brothers and two nephews of the victim on different dates for same reasons.

Later, victim's wife Rehana Akhter Rumi filed a murder case with Kotwali thana accusing Jahangir and 14 others the same day.

The investigation officer of the case pressed charges against Jahangir and 14 others on March 12 last year. The court framed charges against them on October 10 the same year.

The case was transferred to the tribunal on September 17 this year. The trial was completed in 37 working days.

Eighteen prosecution witnesses were examined during the trial.

Victim's mother Golapjan Begum and wife Rehana Akhter Rumi were present in the court and they expressed their satisfaction at the verdict.

Special Public Prosecutor Mohammad Moinuddin appeared for the state while advocates Syed Mizanur Rahman and Sultan Ahmed Khan defended the accused.

Meanwhile, Syed Mizanur Rahman, the defence counsel, submitted a petition to the court seeking a protection on publishing the news in the newspapers.

After hearing, the court took the petition on record and did not pass any order on the issue.