

DHAKA
TODAY**Mehendi festival**

On the occasion of ensuing Eid-ul-Azha, Amra Dhakabasi organises a mehendi festival and a national mehendi competition. Venue: Bhaskar Novera auditorium, National Museum. Time: 3.00pm.

CD launch

Bengal Foundation organises the launching ceremony of a CD titled 'Chiro-bandhu Chironirbar' (Tagore songs) by Mita Haque. Venue: Bengal Shilpalay, House-275/F, Road-27, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film from Brazil titled 'City of God'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Drama

As part of a week-long drama festival organised by Dhaka Theatre Mancha, Aranyak will stage a drama titled 'Sangkranti'. Venue: Mohila Samity auditorium. Time: 6.30pm.

Discussion

Save The Youth Forum will hold a discussion on 'Child repression: Existing laws and their application'. It will be followed by prize distribution and cultural function. Venue: Bangladesh Railway Officers' Rest House, Kamalapur. Time: 10.00am.

Science workshop

British Council organises a workshop for teachers and students on Science Theatre for teaching science. Venue: West Dhanmondi School. The theatre is open to all.

Ekushey discussion

Bangla Academy will hold a discussion on the preparation of Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela (Book Fair). Venue: Seminar room of the academy. Time: 12.00 noon.

Zia discussion

Jatiyatabadi Peshajibi Parishad organises a discussion to mark the 68th birth anniversary of former president Ziaur Rahman. Venue: National Press Club VIP Lounge. Time: 3.00pm.

Opinion sharing meet

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will hold an opinion sharing meeting with the leaders of indigenous people. Venue: House-51/A, Road-3/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm.

Citizens' meet

Liberation War Museum organises a meeting of eminent citizens of the country. Venue: Museum auditorium, Segun Bagicha. Time: 4.30pm.

Conference

The 8th national conference of Bangladesh Railway Diploma Engineers Association will be held with Communications Minister Nazmul Huda as chief guest. Venue: Bangladesh Railway Officers' Rest House, Kamalapur. Time: 10.00am.

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Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at the extended meeting of the Bangladesh Chhatra League at the auditorium of Engineers' Institute in the city yesterday.

Ensure security of women

President tells Rokeya Padak award ceremony

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday urged all to make united efforts to raise the women's status by ensuring their education and economic self-reliance.

He made the call while giving away Begum Rokeya Padak-2003 at a function organised by the Women and Children Affairs Ministry at Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

The president noted that women are to face "unwanted situation at times at and outside home" for various socio-economic

reasons.

"The government should ensure security of the women to make the ongoing women's development programme a success," he said.

He said there is no alternative to education for ensuring overall empowerment of women alongside making them self-reliant.

The recipients of the awards are Begum Taiyaba Majumder and Alhaj Maleka Ashraf.

Welcoming the awardees, he said the nation would always

remember their praiseworthy initiatives and contributions to women's education and development.

Mentioning various efforts made by Begum Rokeya for women's development and their education, Dr Iajuddin said Rokeya had dreamt of a society free from discrimination between man and woman. The government is striving to materialise her dream, he added.

Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque and Secretary of the Ministry AM Reza-e-Rabbi also spoke.

BSF opens fire along border in Dinajpur**BSS, Sundara, Dinajpur**

Border Security Forces (BSF) of India opened three rounds of automatic gunfire along Sundara border under Sadar upazila of Dinajpur in the early hours of yesterday.

However, there were no reports of casualties, official sources said.

According to BDR sources, troops of Hamijapur BSF camp opened fire at about 1:40am yesterday about 300 yards inside India from the zero line.

The BDR was trying to know the details of the firing incident till filing of this report at 5:45pm. The BDR has put its personnel on alert along the border following the incident.

Major Asaduzzaman of BDR Dinajpur sector told BSS that they were yet to receive information about any casualties.

Meanwhile, the locals said the sound of BSF firing created a panic among the villagers. The BDR jawans of Sundara BOP rushed to the spot area soon and intensified their vigil.

The BSF might have opened fire at Indian smugglers as it happened several times there in recent months, they said.



Students of Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University offer prayers during the Saraswati Puja, a Hindu religious festival, at the hall yesterday.

Plastic materials pose health hazards**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for raising awareness about harmful effects of plastic materials on human life and environment.

They said excessive use of plastic containers for preserving foods has an adverse impact on human health.

The speakers said the chemi-

cals, that are used for making plastic, are also harmful for human body.

Besides, the recycling of plastic materials also affects the environment adversely, they added.

The seminar on 'Limit the use of plastic materials: Effects on environment and health' was organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA) in the city.

Former chief engineer of Dhaka WASA Quazi Mohammad Sish presented a keynote paper.

He said not only the people engaged in the production of plastic materials but also the users may be affected equally.

"So, we should minimise the use of plastic materials in our daily use as low as possible considering its negative impact on health."

Sish suggested using of more ceramic and metal containers for preserving foods instead of plastic containers.

Executive Director of Nari Pragati Sangha Rokeya Kabir said plastic containers are being produced to earn maximum profit at the cost of human life and environment.

"Like polybags, plastic also destroys the fertility of the soil," said BAPA General Secretary Abu Naser Khan.

BAPA Vice-President ASM Shahjahan said we have to stop the use of plastic materials like polybags for an environment-friendly world.

Nine get death penalty for murder**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

A Bagerhat court has sentenced nine people to death in a murder case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Golam Rabbani handed down the verdict on Sunday.

The convicts are Amir Hossain Shaikh, Eskander Shaikh, Hemayet Shaikh, Abul Shaikh, Nazrul Islam Shaikh, Moti Howlader, Ansar Ali, Sultan Shaikh and Adhir Das but four of them are still at large.

They were convicted of the murder of Monirul Islam Khan, son of Haji Majid Khan of Bhomra Kandi village in Chindia upazila of Comilla district.

According to the prosecution story, Monirul Islam was hacked to death by his colleague Amir Hossain Shaikh and his accomplices at Raghudattakati village under Kachua upazila, Bagerhat, on March 13, 1995. Both of them worked as a transport agency in Dhaka.

The previous day, Monir went to Amir's village home at Chomra village at Morrelganj upazila, Bagerhat, with Tk 1,40,000 after a Amir told him to bring the money

DU journalism dept institutes Shahidul Huq Award**BSS, Dhaka**

The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University has instituted an award in memory of its former faculty and renowned journalist late Shahidul Huq.

The introduction of the award coincided with his 15th death anniversary.

The Shahidul Huq Memorial Award will be given every year to a student of Master's degree of the department who will secure the highest marks on 'advanced reporting'.

Sponsored by the family of the late journalist, the award carries Tk 10,000 and a certificate.

Late Shahidul Huq, an adjunct teacher, is regarded as a trend-setter in English journalism of the country.

He was the editor of now-defunct the Bangladesh Times and director general of the Press Institute of Bangladesh.

for his visa. Monir needed visa as he wanted to go abroad.

Kachua thana police recovered the body of Monir on the day and an FIR was filed on April 21, 1995. The charge sheet was submitted on January 25, 1996.

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Meanwhile, the locals said the sound of BSF firing created a panic among the villagers. The BDR jawans of Sundara BOP rushed to the spot area soon and intensified their vigil.

The BSF might have opened fire at Indian smugglers as it happened several times there in recent months, they said.

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