



Awami Secchhasebak League took out a procession in the city yesterday in support of today's hartal.

Reverse southward flow of information

Tariqul urges Saarc electronic media people

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday urged the electronic media of South Asian countries to reverse the existing 'southward flow' of information by maximising the use of information technology to protect and uphold the values and culture of the region.

"We need to retain our national, sub-regional and regional standards while keeping pace with the globalisation. We have to protect and uphold the values of our respective religion, culture and heritage," he said opening a

two-day meeting of national radio and television chiefs of Saarc countries.

The minister said the unprecedented growth of information technology has turned the globe into a village bringing all the nations and peoples closer together, but the Asia-Pacific region still finds it at the receiving end. "Now it is time for us to gather our pieces together and direct our own flows within and beyond the region," he added.

Twenty-three delegates from the Saarc countries including two Saarc secretariat representatives are taking part in the meeting hosted by Bangladesh information ministry.

The first meeting of the Heads of National Radio and Television Organisations of Saarc countries was held in New Delhi in 1999 and the

second one in Islamabad last year.

Information Secretary Nazmul Alam Siddiqui, Director General of Bangladesh Television Mostafizur Rahman and Director General of Bangladesh Betar and Convenor of the organising committee of the meeting Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury also spoke at the inaugural session.

Tariqul said the South Asian nations experience common realities which were not evident in the western world and therefore "We need to set our common standards and evolve a common strategy of co-operation at sub-regional and regional level and adapt them to the global trend."

Nazmul Alam said the government media could play a vital role as a "facilitating and participatory institution rather than the controlling and regulatory body to express the government's views and project its development activities."

"The government considers the media as an important vehicle for social development," he added.

The two-day meeting, among other things, is to review the decisions of the past two meetings and the follow up actions on the Saarc Audio Visual Exchange Programme held in Thimpu last month.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Jafar Ahmed told the BSS that the delegates were expected to fix specific measures for regional co-operation among the member countries to optimise the use of electronic media for the welfare of the common people.

He said the meeting would also decide on the steps to run Saarc news for radios and Saarc round up for televisions, organise Saarc film festivals, video film festivals for children and exchange of radio and TV programmes.

BUSINESSMAN MURDER

Kajal's accomplice held trying to flee country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Immigration officials of Benapole land port in Jessore yesterday arrested an accomplice of Jubo Dal leader Rafiqul Islam Kajal, the prime suspect for the gruesome killings of an old Dhaka businessman and his son, when he was fleeing the country.

The officials caught Abdur Rahim, one of Kajal's eight accomplices, after they identified him from a photograph police earlier supplied to the immigration.

A police team from Dhaka went to Jessore to bring him back to Dhaka for grilling. Rahim is a resi-

dent of Madan Pal Lane in old Dhaka.

Police said the team was due to be back in Dhaka by midnight last night and the police would start quizzing him from morning.

Police, however, could not arrest Kajal even 12 days after the grisly murders that sent a shock wave among the businesspeople.

Kajal went into hiding after remains of Shamsul Haq and his son Russell Sheikh were found in 200 pieces two days after their disappearance on March 26.

Earlier, the body of Haq's driver Moazzem was found at Dhamrai.



Md Yeasin Ali, managing director, Dutch-Bangla Bank, hands over a payment order of Tk 2 lakh to Prof. Rabiul Husain, managing trustee, Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex, recently to increase the number of beds. Senior executives of the bank and the foundation were also present.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind with hails is likely to occur at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met office said.

Highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and the lowest 19.2 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.17 pm today and rises at 5:44 am tomorrow.

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	32.7	25.8	79	67
Chittagong	32.4	25.2	77	83
Rajshahi	35.4	24.2	82	68
Khulna	33.5	26.4	55	81
Barisal	33.6	25.5	83	69
Sylhet	27.8	21.0	95	68
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.5	77	80

Ethnic conflicts lead CHT to impoverishment

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Successive governments had fuelled ethnic conflicts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) leading the region to impoverishment, said the speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday.

They said migration of people from plain land to the CHT region and expropriation of land were the two major reasons for ethnic clashes.

Some donors-aided projects to alleviate poverty have also turned into boomerang for ethnic people, the speakers added.

The seminar on 'Migration, Land Alienation and Ethnic Conflict: Causes of Poverty in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh' was held at the YWCA auditorium.

Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moniswapan Dewan attended the seminar as chief guest.

Samata Chairperson Khushi Kabir chaired the session while Director of the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury delivered the welcome address.

Swapan Adnan, professor of National University of Singapore, delivered the keynote speech on the topic.

The deputy minister said the hill people are suffering from frustration due to continuous economic and cultural aggression on them.

Secretary General of the Bangladesh Economic Association Prof. Abul Barakat said the rulers have deprived the hill people in the name of national interest.

Prof. M M Akash of Dhaka

University said it is a matter of great pity that the outsiders are deciding everything for the highlanders.

Dr. Hamida Hossain, Prof Meghna Guhathakurata, Bangladesh Forum for the Indigenous People Secretary General Sanjeeb Drong, Philip Gain, Prof. Prasanta Tripura, and Kabita Chakma also spoke.

CPD launches new web site

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), the premier think tank of Bangladesh, has launched its new web site to meet the increasing demand for its activities, says a press release.

The revised web site - www.cpd-bangladesh.org - is more comprehensive and user-friendly. It contains extensive information about the organisation's research and dialogue outputs, events and details of policy analysis activities.

The web site will expand the CPD's outreach and accessibility to local and international visitors, enabling greater information exchange and awareness about important development.

A new feature of the web site is the online accessibility of CPD's research and dialogue papers which has been arranged through an agreement with the D.Net.

The visitors may now access a range of CPD publications at the click of a button. While many papers can be read free of charge, some will require subscribers to purchase a pre-paid card, either by mail order or from the offices of CPD or D.Net.



Prime Minister of Myanmar Khin Nyunt visits Zia Memorial Museum in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: PID



Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission and Bangladesh Working Group on World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Syed Marghub Murshed yesterday launched a web site - www.wsis-bd.org.

2 die in clash over land dispute in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Two people were killed and 35 others injured in a fierce clash between two rival groups over the possession of 188 bigha of marshy land at village Nandishahar under Palashbari upazila yesterday.

The warring groups used spears, Chinese axes and other lethal weapons during the clash that erupted at 10.00am, leaving Bakul Mia, 50, and Afsar Ali, 45, dead.

Among the injured, the condition of ten people was said to be critical.

Police arrested 13 people from the spot and forces have been deployed in the area to avoid further clashes.

With a tense situation running high, all men have fled the village for fear of arrest.

Police said the clash was sparked by a long-standing feud between two groups belonging to eight Ghar and Challish Ghar. Several clashes have taken place over the land dispute since 1958 and claimed five lives.

2 BNP activists held with arms in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police arrested two BNP activists and recovered from their possession a pistol loaded with two bullets on Monday night.

They were identified as Farid Gazi, 30, and Bishwajit, 30, of Diraha village under Rupsha upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided their hideout at Skidghat where they were hatching up a plan for criminal operation in the city. Witnesses said two other armed cadres managed to escape during the raid.

Bogra cultural team calls on president

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday underlined the need for taking local initiatives to educate people particularly the womanfolk.

"No nation can be developed without education," the president said while he was talking to a delegation of Bogra Cultural Forum (BCF) at Bangabhaban.

President of the forum M Harunur-Rashid Raju led the delegation.

The forum members emphasised the expansion of art and culture and building up industrial units and also talked about reopening of closed mills and factories there.

They informed the president about taking initiatives to establish an institution of art and culture in the capital.

The forum leaders also apprised the President of formulation and implementation of different programmes for expansion of woman education and mentioned about establishing an out campus of Uttara University in Bogra.

The President appreciated the forum leaders for taking initiatives to promote education along with cultural activities.

DHAKA TODAY

Drama festival

As part of the weeklong drama festival of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Gramchitra Chapainabaganji will stage a drama titled 'Bibaha Caricature'. Venue: Theatre hall of the academy, Segun Bagicha. Time: 6.00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Something's Gotta Give' (2003). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Debriefing session

Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) organises a debriefing session on Global Ministerial Forum held in South Korea with Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj as chief guest. Venue: FEJB conference room, National Press Club. Time: 10.00am.

Regional seminar

The opening ceremony of Asian regional seminar, organised by the World Federation of Building and Wood Workers Unions, will be held. Venue: BRAC Centre Inn, Mohakhali. Time: 9.00am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Drama festival

As part of the weeklong drama festival of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Kathak Theatre of Chittagong will stage a drama titled 'Suryasen'. Venue: Theatre hall of the academy, Segun Bagicha. Time: 6.00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an Indian film titled 'Hungama' (2003), a German film titled 'Good Bye Lenin' (2004) and an American film titled 'Bound' (1996). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 3.30pm, 6.30pm and 8.30pm.

Indian film show

The High Commission of India will screen a film titled 'Baghban'. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, Gulshan 2.

Roundtable

In observance of the World Health Day, the health and family welfare ministry organises a roundtable on 'Road safety is no accident' with Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain as chief guest. Venue: CIRDP auditorium, Topkhana Road. Time: 11.00am.