



PHOTO: STAR

Health Minister Khondoker Mosharrar Hossain speaks at a rally at Muktaghanga in the city yesterday protesting the Awami League's activities, including the planned siege to Hawa Bhaban. The Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal organised the rally.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader speaks at a rally in front of the party's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday protesting repression on opposition leaders and workers.

BTV launches satellite transmission

UNB, Dhaka

With the state-run Bangladesh Television going global, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said beaming the BTV programmes outside the country is a glorious event for the nation.

She termed it a dream-come-true as the BTV started its satellite broadcasting yesterday.

Inaugurating the BTV World satellite channel at the Rampura television station in the evening, the prime minister said it is a red-letter day for the BTV.

Using the C-Band of Asiasat 3S, the channel will cover Japan and the Far East countries in the East, Cyprus in the West and Egypt to the North.

The people of Australia and New Zealand will also get the chance of enjoying the programmes of BTV World. The people in the northern part of Russia can also watch the programmes.

The prime minister reminded the BTV officials that their responsibilities have increased with the people's expectation going high.

"With the rise in numbers of viewers, you have to produce splendid and innovative programmes to cater to the demand".

Objective news and opinions and programmes for expatriates should be the top priority of BTV World, she said.

Agala function was arranged on the mini-screen marking the launch. Child artistes of popular programme of BTV "Notun Kuri" and the band party of Ansars also took part in the inaugural carnival.

Noted singers Runa Laila, Sabina Yasmin and Shanaz Rahmatullah performed in the cultural session while a play written by Humayun Ahmed was also staged.

EVEREST EXPEDITION

Four youths complete mountaineering training

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four Bangladeshi youths have completed their basic mountaineering training course from Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling as a first step to undertake the Everest expedition.

Speaking at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday, Enam Ul Haque, the first Bangladeshi who visited the world's coldest continent Antarctica, said the course has increased the confidence of our mountaineers.

He said they will be provided higher training on mountaineering in next September.

While narrating her experience on the training, Sadia Sultana Shampa, the only female member of the team, said they had to work very hard to complete the course.

"We have been dreaming to conquer the Everest for long and we hope we will be able to materialise our dream," she added.

Musa Ibrahim and Sirajul Haque, two other members of the team, also shared their experience about the training.

Muntasir Mamun Imran, who has the basic training on mountaineering from Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, said the conquering of the Everest is not an easy task as it involves hard work and long training.

"Around 1200 mountaineers from 63 countries conquered the Everest in last 50 years, but there is no Bangladeshi in the list although the Everest is only 200 kilometers off from Bangladesh," said Sirajul Haque Sagar.

Mountain Dew, a soft drink of Transcom Beverage Limited, sponsored the course.

Speaking on the occasion, Executive Director of the Transcom Beverage Golem Kuddus Chowdhury said their aim is to help conquer the Everest by Bangladeshis in the near future.

DU exams postponed

UNB, Dhaka

All the examinations of Dhaka University, scheduled for today, have been postponed due to unavoidable reason.

Fresh dates of the exams will be announced soon, said a DU press release yesterday.

5TH WAGE BOARD AWARD

Committee to start inquiry next week

UNB, Dhaka

Members of the newly constituted committee to review progress in the implementation of the Fifth Wage Board Award will start visiting newspaper offices in Dhaka next week to inquire into whether the journalists and staffs have been getting salary, allowances and other benefits as per its provisions.

A decision in this regard was taken at a meeting of the committee at Information Ministry yesterday, with committee Convenor Additional Secretary M Sirajul Islam in the chair.

The committee will submit its report to the government after the investigation in all newspaper offices and news agencies across the country.

Committee members Ruhul Amin Gazi, Abdus Shaheed, Asadullah, Motiur Rahman Talukdar, Saiful Alam, DFP Director General Sayed Mahbubur Rahman and Director Tasir Ahmed were present at the meeting.

The committee was formed recently to ensure implementation of the Fifth Wage Board Award in all the newspapers and news agencies as the journalist unions have long been demanding formation of the sixth wage board.

'Islam never supports terrorism'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since Islam is a tolerant and pluralistic religion, the whole Muslim nations should not be labelled as terrorist just because of the acts committed by some individuals and renegade groups, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said Islam is a religion of humanism and it never indulges in terrorism.

The seminar on 'Tolerance and Pluralism in Islam,' was organised by the Centre for National and Regional Studies (CNRS) at the IDB Bhaban in the city.

In a keynote paper, former director general of the Islamic Foundation Syed Ashraf Ali said Islam does not support terrorism.

He called upon the Muslims all over the world to unite against the hyena of terrorism at this critical hour of the history.

Former minister and CDRB Chairman Mizanur Rahman Shelly said most of the people in the USA and Europe do not know the tolerance and pluralism that exist in Islam. It is essential to project this aspect of Islam to them, he added.

Chairman of the Islami Oikya Jote Mufti Fazlul Haq Amini said Islam allows tolerance and there is no scope for terrorism in it. However there is provision for Jihad against the oppressors and wrongdoers in Islam, he added.

Presided over by CNRS Chairman Abul Hasib Khan, the seminar was participated, among others, by Prof. Asma Abbasi, Vice-Chancellor of Southeast University Prof M Shamsher Ali, Editor of monthly Modina Mohiuddin Khan, former chief election commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf and Zillul Hye Razee of the European Commission.



Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions during the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met office said. Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and Rajshahi and the lowest of 19.0 degree at Comilla.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.19pm today and rises at 5:39am 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	33.2	25.4	86	74
Chittagong	31.0	22.0	73	72
Rajshahi	36.2	24.0	84	63
Khulna	33.6	26.0	76	73
Barisal	32.4	25.0	78	71
Sylhet	24.2	19.4	98	88
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.0	--	77

Four get death penalty for killing two

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two courts in Dhaka yesterday sentenced four people to death and three others to life imprisonment in two murder cases.

In the first case, Judge AR Masud of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 passed the death penalty on Md Kamruzzaman alias Ratan and Md Moshir Rahman alias Nasim in Ekramul Islam Bhuiyan Murder Case.

The convicts can appeal to the High Court against the verdict in 30 days, the judgement said.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded the statements of 12 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, Ekramul Islam Bhuiyan alias Nipun was knifed to death by Nasim and Ratan at his Banshri house under Sabujbagh thana at about 2.30am on June 29 last year as he refused to

pay them tolls.

The victim's younger brother Enamul Islam Bhuiyan filed a case with Sabujbagh police against Nasim and Ratan the next day.

The investigation officer pressed charges against the two on September 10 last year and the court framed charges on October 18.

In the other case, Rashed and Moynul Haq alias Ripon were sentenced to death and Shahed, Saifur Rahman and Mohammad Hossain alias Faruq Ahmed to life in jail.

Judge Mohammad Rabiul Hassan of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict in Mohammad Amirul Islam Murder Case.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 30,000 each. Those who were jailed will have to suffer three more years in prison if they fail to pay the fine.

According to the prosecution, Amirul Islam alias Babu was abducted by a gang of hoodlums from in front of an under-construction building of T & T Bhaban near the Bishwa Road in the city at about 10:00am on May 8, 1996.

They took Babu to Shahjahanpur Railway Colony and shot him dead over previous enmity.

The victim's mother Hosne Ara filed a case with Sabujbagh police against Rashed and four others the same day.

The investigation officer pressed charge against them on August 9, 1996 and the court framed charges on May 9, 1999.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Ali Haider Kiron appeared for the state while advocates Mohammad Hanif and Anwarul Kabir Babul defended the accused.

Two more offshore patrol vessels sail for home from UK

UNB, Dhaka

Two newly procured Bangladesh Navy ships, Sangu and Turag,

have sailed for home from Portsmouth, UK to join the naval fleet of offshore patrol vessels (OPV).

Bangladesh Navy procured a total of five vessels from the United Kingdom and three of them had already arrived.

During their 8,000 nautical mile voyage, the ships will make brief stopovers at Tangier in Morocco, Port Said in Egypt, Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, Raysut in Oman and Colombo in Sri Lanka on a "good-will visit as well as to replenish ration, fuel and provisions", an official release said yesterday.

Earlier, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK AH Mufazzal Karim, officials of the Royal Navy and senior officers of the Bangladesh High Commission bade farewell to BNS Sangu and Turag prior to their departure.

"The newly acquired OPVs are expected to enhance surveillance capabilities of Bangladesh Navy over the vast exclusive economic zone of the country," says the ISPR release.

Moreover, it added, these acquisitions would facilitate the Navy further to combat smuggling, piracy and other unlawful activities and to protect the marine resources.



Kazi Md Idris (posthumous) and Ekhlisuddin Ahmed were awarded Mohammad Modabber-Husney Ara Smrity Sangsad Award 2004 for their contribution to journalism and juvenile literature at a function at the National Press Club recently. From right are Ekhlisuddin Ahmed, Dr. Anisuzzaman, Kazi Aziza Idris, wife of Kazi Md Idris, and Shirin Begum, secretary of the Sangsad.



Andrzej Wajda retrospective

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two films in a retrospective to Andrzej Wajda, the world renowned filmmaker of Poland. The films are 'Ashes and Diamonds' (1958) and 'The Young Ladies of Wilko' (1979). Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Mirpur Road. Time: 5.00pm and 7.00pm.

Film show

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

Indian film show

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

Sandhani

The opening ceremony of a full-fledged unit of Sandhani Central Parishad will be held. Venue: Bangladesh Medical College premises. Time: 2.00pm. It will be followed by a voluntary blood donation and cultural function.

Workshop

Khan Foundation organises a workshop on 'Transparency and Accountability: Preconditions for a strong local government'. Venue: Democracy auditorium, Momenbagh. Time: 11.00am.

BCDJC programme

BCDJC organises a programme titled 'Face to face with women journalists' with eminent politician Rashed Khan Menon as chief discussant. Venue: BCDJC seminar room, 53 Central Road. Time: 10.00am.

Seminar

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organises a seminar on 'Access to finance for SMEs: Problems and remedies' with Chairman of the Privatisation Commission Enam Ahmed Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: DCCI auditorium, Motijheel. Time: 3.30pm.

JSD rally

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) will hold a rally under the banner of 'Janaganer Nirapatta Dibas'. Venue: Muktaghanga, Ramna. Time: 4.00pm.



Andrzej Wajda retrospective

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two films in a retrospective to Andrzej Wajda, the world renowned filmmaker of Poland. The films are 'Tanton' (1982) and 'Man of Marble' (1976). Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Mirpur Road. Time: 4.00pm and 6.15pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film from New Zealand titled 'Whale Rider' (2003) and an American film titled 'Body of Evidence' (1993). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm and 8.30pm.

Seminar

Hizb ut Tahir Bangladesh organises a seminar on 'Solution of hartal, murder, destructive and partisan politics is Islamic ruling-Khilafat'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 2.30pm.



The Centre for National and Regional Studies organised a seminar on 'Tolerance and Pluralism in Islam' in the city yesterday.