



## Begum Rokeya Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation will celebrate the Begum Rokeya Day today marking the birth anniversary of Begum Rokeya, a pioneer of women's rights in the subcontinent.

Different socio-cultural and political organisations have taken elaborate programmes to observe the day.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the occasion.

President in his message said Begum Rokeya's contribution to bringing the womenfolk out of confinement onto the path of education and progress remains refulgent in history.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said the noble woman, circumventing the hurdles of conservative society in 19th century, had devoted herself to developing the status of women.

In her message Sheikh Hasina urged all to build up resistance against women repression. Inspired with the ideal of Begum Rokeya, Awami League, under its rule, had taken many good steps, she said.

Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha will hold a discussion on 'Role of male in resisting women repression' at 10.00am at WVA auditorium in the city today. Karmojibi Nari will hold a rally at Muktangan at noon demanding formation of a 'contingency security fund' for female workers in garment industry. The organisation will also submit a memorandum to the Commerce Ministry.

Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre, Nari, Q Manobadhikar Foundation and Bangladesh Coalition for Child Rights will jointly form a human chain at 10.30am in front of the High Court.

Our Rangpur Correspondent reports that the Rangpur district administration has undertaken a three-day programme beginning today to observe the 125th birth anniversary and 5th death anniversary of Begum Rokeya at Payerabond under Mithapukur upazila.

Bangladesh Shishu Academy and Bangla Academy's Rangpur units took up elaborate programmes at Begum Rokeya Smriti Kendra at Payerabond.

A three-day fair titled Rokeya Mela organised by the district administration will begin on the Begum Rokeya College premises today.

## Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Lutfal Kabir, Senior Sub-editor of the Daily Inqilab, died of cancer at the Islami Bank Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 41.

He is survived by his wife and two sons.

Kabir was buried at the Azimpur graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque and the Inqilab Bhaban.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Information Minister M. Shamsul Islam expressed deep sorrow and grief at the death of Lutfal Kabir.

In separate condolence messages, they prayed for the peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.



Opposition leaders wave to the people at a public meeting at Shaheed Khokan Park in Bogra yesterday. The meeting was organised by the 14 opposition political parties to make the December 11 no-confidence human wall programme a success.



PHOTO: STAR

## Ctg JCD cadre Don arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) nabbed a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadre and listed criminal in the city yesterday.

Shafiqul Alam alias Don, wanted by both police and Rab, was arrested at Pahartali area in the afternoon.

Rab later went out on a search for illegal firearms taking Don with them.

## President assents to Women Seat Elections Bill

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday gave his assent to 'Jatiya Sangsad (Reserved Women Seat) Elections Bill-2004,' said a press release.

The bill was passed in the 14th session of eighth parliament.

## Stamp on Saarc Summit released

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Post Offices yesterday released a stamp of Tk 6 denomination on the occasion of the 13th Saarc Summit 2005 to be held in Dhaka.

A first-day cover valued at Tk 6 was also issued on the occasion.

The issuance of the stamp coincides with the 19th anniversary of the signing of Saarc Charter.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia cancelled the stamp at a simple ceremony at her office.

Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan, who was present on the occasion, told the prime minister that the Saarc has been awarded 'Observer' status at the United Nations.

## Emirates SkyCargo reaches out to flood victims

Emirates SkyCargo, the award-winning cargo division of the airline, transported vital equipment, medicines and food for the flood-affected and needy people of Bangladesh, free of cost, says a press release.

Despite heavy payloads on the Boeing 747-400ER Emirates SkyCargo transported the goods from Gothenburg to Dhaka via Dubai on behalf of the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital.

Ahmad Al Falasi, Area Manager, Dhaka said "We didn't hesitate to help when we were approached by Lifebuoy Friendship, which initiated major charity projects for the poor and needy of Bangladesh, including flood relief."

Runa Khan, Executive Director of Lifebuoy Friendship, said: "Our cargo of vital medical supplies from Gothenburg has reached us safely and we thank Emirates SkyCargo for their contribution to this worthy cause."

## Govt takes steps to modernise armed forces: PM

UNB, Rajendrapur

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated that her government's efforts would continue to build up the armed forces making it capable of facing any challenge of the present century.

She said that the government was implementing various programmes for strengthening the armed forces through modernisation and flourishing professionalism.

Khaleda expressed the hope that every individual of the armed forces would make contribution from their respective position in the process of building a modern force.

She was addressing a 'darbar' on the occasion of a three-day programme of the 4th Ordnance

Corps Reunion, 5th Colonel Commandant Investiture Ceremony and Annual Corps Conference at the Rajendrapur Cantonment.

Water Resources Minister Maj (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, chiefs of the three services, and a large number of officers and jawans and their families were present.

On arrival at the venue, the Prime Minister was received by Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, Corps Colonel Commandant Maj Gen Abu Roshde Rokonuddawla, Logistic Area Commander Brig Gen Muhammed Maswood and Commandant of the Ordnance Centre and School Brig Gen Golam Zakaria.

Khaleda in her speech reminded

that after returning to power this time, her government has been able to set up a formidable foundation for a strong state through socioeconomic development as well as modernisation, expansion and technological improvement of the armed forces.

Lauding the role of the members of the armed forces in building up the nation and standing beside the people in times of need, she hoped that they would continue to carry out their responsibilities with more confidence and sincerity.

She placed wreaths at Raktosopan, the memorial built in remembrance of the members of the Ordnance Corps who laid down their lives during the War of Liberation.

## Fanaticism main threat to nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday expressed their concern over growing religious fanaticism in the country.

Islamist zealots operating in the country are the main threat to the country, they said and called on the government to take immediate action against these operatives.

The Bangladesh Foundation for Development Research (BFDR) organised the seminar on 'International Terrorism: Bangladesh Context' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday.

The speakers said Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan issues should be addressed immediately to put an end to international terrorism.

Although the severity of terrorism in Bangladesh has been less pronounced compared to other

South Asian countries, terrorism is registering a steady rise in recent times as a section of people within the government is patronising it, said former foreign secretary CM Shafi Sami in his keynote paper.

He also expressed concern at the activities of various Islamist groups, including Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB).

Sami also called on the international community to launch sustained efforts to root out the causes of terrorism taking place across the world.

Unless the causes of terrorism are not removed, the world will not get rid of the scourge, said former finance minister SAMS Kibria.

Kibria, also the chairman of BFDR, pointed out that the big powers of the world need to investigate the root causes of international

terrorism.

Referring to Bangladesh context, he said the Islamist groups want to turn the country into a theocratic state. The government should take action against the groups immediately, he added.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, said the killing in 'crossfire' with Rapid Action Battalion amounts to encouraging state terrorism.

"Islamic fanaticism across the world is on the rise as the Muslims are being deprived of their basic human rights in several regions of the world," he said.

Presided over by Prof Kabir Chowdhury, the seminar was also addressed by Prof Ajay Roy, Prof Nim Chandra Bhowmik, Brigadier (ret.) Shahedul Anam Khan and advocate Abdul Baset Majumder.



PHOTO: STAR

Sammitia Ainjibi Samannya Parishad forms a human chain on the High Court premises in the city yesterday demanding separation of judiciary and protesting politicisation in appointment of judges and 'killings in crossfire' with the Rapid Action Battalion.

## Honest, effective leadership a must for nation building

### Leadership Development Course begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Effective leadership is a crucial prerequisite at every sphere of social life for making nation-building endeavours a success, speakers said at a Leadership Development Course yesterday.

Despite Bangladesh's enormous potential, the inadequacy of leadership affects the country badly with adverse consequences on the socio-economic and political development, said Prof SMA Faiz, vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, while inaugurating the two-day course organised by the Centre for Governance Studies.

The country needs honest and effective leadership not only in politics but also in business, education, media and administration to resolve conflicts, alleviate poverty, empower women and the disadvantaged and to ensure good governance, he said.

The democratic leadership in Bangladesh is still fragmented, Prof Faiz said, adding that although the country has institutions for good governance, they are yet to be made efficient and responsible agents of change.

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury said there is a need for leadership at every level of jobs starting with a sweeper up to a high commissioner. "But a leader has to resist the temptations for power, ego and special consideration in the process of making rational decision."

Bangladesh is a country that

really needs skilled leadership, expertise, investment and knowledge on how to retain talented people for the nation's well-being, said Choudhury.

He also called for strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring good governance, accountability and transparency and participatory leadership.

Democracy must ensure that people have a fair say and their views are respected, the British high commissioner said.

He called on the young generation to get involved in politics to address their disillusionment and raise their voice when frustrated

with student politics that disrupts university life and delays exams.

Prof M Ataur Rahman, chairman of the Centre, said it is rather unfortunate that leadership factor which is so crucial for good and effective governance has so far been ignored.

The leadership development course, first of its kind in Bangladesh, is designed to help the future leaders of the country achieve their full potentials and to equip them with skills and knowledge so that they can build a better future, he said.

A total of 30 participants, including university students and young professionals, are taking part in the course.



PHOTO: STAR

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury speaks at the Leadership Development Course at Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday. On his right is Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz and on his left is Prof M Ataur Rahman.

## Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



The father of an 11-year-old boy who has been suffering from osteosarcoma, a type of bone cancer, seeks financial assistance for his son's treatment.

Preetu, a student of class five, is now under the treatment of Dr Manish Aggarwal at Tata Memorial Hospital, India.

As a temporary remedy, the ill-fated boy is being treated with chemotherapy. According to Dr Aggarwal, more treatment can bring the boy back to normal life, which will cost at least Tk 8 lakh.

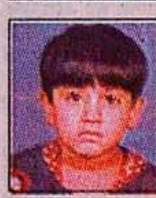
But his father Abul Fazal, a government officer, cannot afford such expensive treatment. He appealed to the generous people to extend a helping hand to save his son's life.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Md Abul Fazal, Savings Account No. 7973, Rupali Bank, Mohammadpur branch, Dhaka-1207.

Interested persons can also contact his family at 8151723 and 0172818506.

Marzia Kabir Emmy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Marzia Kabir Emmy, a six-year-old girl, has been suffering from blood cancer for long.

She is now undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital.

According to doctors, only bone marrow transplantation can save her life, which will cost a lot of money.

But her parents cannot afford such an expensive treatment. They appealed to the generous people to extend a helping hand to save their daughter's life.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Arifa Kabir, Savings Account No. 002234703, Janata Bank, Mohammadpur Corporate Branch, Dhaka-1207.

Interested persons can also contact her family at 0172694970 and 0172185415.

## Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Dr Md Habibullah, a former professor of Accounting and Information Systems at the Dhaka University, will be held today after Asr prayers at Azimpur Community Centre in the city.

Abdul Latif Miah



Qulkhwani of Abdul Latif Miah, manager of Bank Asia, Malkhanagar Branch, will be held today after Asr prayers at his village home at Abdullahpur in Munshigonj.

Latif Miah who died of heart failure on December 6 at the age of 55, left behind his wife, three daughters and one son.

## 14 houses gutted in Chittagong city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Fourteen houses were gutted in a devastating fire at Asker Dighir Par in the port city yesterday.

The fire broke out at Jahangir Colony under Kotwali thana at around 11.30am and spread fast enough to reduce the houses to ashes in one and half hours, sources said.

Four units of fire fighting vehicles managed to extinguish the fire at around 12.40pm.

Fire service sources said a burning candle sparked off the fire and estimated the loss at Tk 15 lakh.

However, fire victims and local

people claimed that the fire damaged property worth over Tk 30 lakh.

Md Syedul Alam, an official of Sonali Bank in Dhaka and owner of two video shops in the port city, was the worst victim of the blaze, they said.

The fire gutted all the six houses of Syedul Alam, his brothers and sisters, along with the furniture and electronics goods, said Setara Shamim, Syedul's sister-in-law.

Syedul's wife Shamsun Nahar Munni, a teacher of Halishahar SOS School, broke into tears when she returned from the school only to watch the fire engulfing her house.

## DHAKA TODAY

### French film festival

Zahir Raihan Film Society in collaboration with the Alliance Francaise will screen two films by Jacques Rivette -- 'Paris Belongs to Us' (1960) and 'The Nun' (1966). Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26 Mirpur Road. Time: 4.30pm and 6.45pm.

### Launching ceremony

Unicef flagship report titled 'The State of the World's Children' will be launched. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10.30am.

### Cultural function

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad in association with Sammitia Sangskritik Jote organises a cultural function to raise awareness about violence against women. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 3.30pm.

### Discussion

Bangladesh Adibasi Adhikar Andolon will hold a discussion on 'CHT treaty and rights of indigenous people: Role of civil society'. Venue: RC Majumder auditorium. Time: 3.30pm.

### Karmojibi Nari

Karmojibi Nari, an initiative for working women, will hold a rally demanding setting up of a security fund for garment workers. Later, it will submit a memorandum to the commerce ministry in this regard. Venue: Muktangan. Time: 12.00 noon.

### Roundtable

Projanma Academy arranges a roundtable on 'Parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh: Aspirations and achievements'. Prof Ataur Rahman of Dhaka University will present the keynote paper. Venue: Purbani Hotel. Time: 2.30pm.

### Discussion

Acid Survivors Foundation will hold a discussion on 'Ensuring the implementation of the acid laws and the promotion of social awareness'. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium, Tophkhana Road. Time: 9.00am.

### CDL seminar

The Community Development Library (CDL) organises a seminar on 'Socio-

economic impact of foreign debt in Bangladesh'. Refatun Nessa Ummeh Sayera will present the keynote paper. Venue: CDL auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.30pm.

### Nari Progoti Sangha

Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha will hold a discussion on 'Role of men in checking violence against women' to mark the Begum Rokeya Day. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.00am.

### Disability fair

The concluding ceremony of a disability fair, marking the International Day for the Disabled persons, will be held. Venue: Dhanmondi Club ground. Time: 3.00pm. A cultural function by disabled persons will also be held at 6.00pm.

### Seminar

Advanced Social Science Research Centre will hold a seminar on 'Attitudes towards death: Some observations'. Dr M Habibur Rahman will present the keynote paper. Venue: Seminar room of the centre, Dhaka University. Time: 11.00am.

### Roundtable

Bangladesh Mobile Phone Traders' Association will hold a roundtable on 'Mobile phone traders and client service improvement', with Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moayeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4.00pm.

## DHAKA TOMORROW

### Photography exhibition

A two-day exhibition of photographs by Jamil Khan will begin. The exhibition will remain open from 10.00am to 9.00pm daily. Venue: Pan Pacific Sonargaon Divine Art Gallery.

### Cycle rally

Manusher Jonno Rasta (Road for people) will hold a cycle rally to press for its demand for protection of people's right to road. Venue: From Kalabagan Colony ground to Azimpur. Time: 11.00am.



## Light to moderate fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with chances of light to moderate rain or thundershowers at places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Mymensingh and Tangail till 6.00pm today. Light to moderate fog is likely to occur at places over the country during early morning, met office said.

Highest temperature 30.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 14.0 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:12pm today and rises at 6:30am 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	28.5	18.3	67	64
Chittagong	30.5	18.7	67	55
Rajshahi	29.0	14.5	79	72
Khulna	28.7	16.4	87	69
Barisal	28.8	15.5	87	94
Sylhet	28.8	16.4	66	72
Cox's Bazar	30.5	19.0	68	72

## MoU signed to train civil servants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil servants of four national public service training academies will be provided with gender sensitive training under the "Capacity Building Gender Mainstreaming Project", funded by UNDP.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard with Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy (BCSAA), Academy for Planning and Development (APD) and National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday.

One of the main objectives of the project is to provide gender sensitive training to government officials at the policy, project and administration levels through building the capacity of the four national training institutions.

Minister for Women and

Children Affairs Khurshid Zahan Haq attended the signing ceremony as chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, Khurshid Zahan said the government has recognised and identified gender training as a key instrument for building capacity of government officials towards strengthening gender governance.

She further said that the government has realised that gender issues and concerns have to be mainstreamed in the development activities of all sectors at the policy, programmes and project levels during their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Bangladesh has already made considerable progress in introducing a gender governance system, but it is still considered necessary to address knowledge gaps and increase technical capacity among government officials at all levels, she added.

The minister hoped that government officials at various levels would be able to enhance technical

knowledge through the implementation of the project.

"I believe that this is a mammoth task because it is not you and me, individuals, groups and organisations, but the whole society and effectively the whole nation that need to be involved," said UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Larry Maramis.

Earlier, in her welcome address UNDP's gender expert Dr Shirley Randall commented that the project was lending the world with its commitment to achieve good governance through training key officials.

Women and Children Affairs Secretary Moruza Hossain Munshi and National Project Director Jahurul Haq spoke on the occasion while senior government and UNDP officials were present.