

Five-day youth festival begins

BSS, Dhaka

A five-day festival of the youth of Bangladesh and the United Kingdom began at the British Council in the city yesterday, aimed at making scope for youths of the two countries to develop more intimacy in political, cultural and social fields.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon inaugurated the festival styled as 'Connecting Futures' attended by over one hundred Bangladeshi and British youths.

The main objective of the festival is to create scope for the youths to exchange thoughts and to be acquainted with each other's history, heritage and culture.

Representatives from the Scottish Youth parliament, Student Council of the University of Bath and the Change Makers, UK and representatives of the World Literature in London are taking part in the festival.

The programmes include debate on parliamentary democracy and practice, performance, development of youth leadership and awareness programme on HIV/AIDS.

A colourful procession was brought out from the British Council on the occasion, which terminated at the same place after parading through the Dhaka University campus.

Director of the British Council Dr June Rollinson and representatives of local partners of the festival addressed the function.

Inaugurating the festival, Ehsanul Haque Milon urged the youths to make endeavours to build a new global village based on equity, prosperity and mutual respect.

He said the government would provide all-out support to promote any initiative aimed at youth development.



Bangladeshi and British youths took out a colourful procession in the city yesterday marking the 'Connecting Futures' festival.

PHOTO: STAR

Police nab 2 robbers after gunfight

Listed criminal arrested

UNB, Narayanganj

Two suspected robbers were arrested after an hour-long gunfight between police and robbers at Daboi in Arahazar upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

More than 100 rounds of bullet

were exchanged during the gunfight, creating panic among the villagers.

Police sources said a police patrol at about 3.00am challenged the driver of a truck, parked near the Amtipar Bridge in Sonargaon upazila, on suspicion that it was carrying bandits.

As the driver tried to speed away, the police followed them. The robbers also fired on the police, triggering a gunfight.

Police nabbed two robbers, identified as Sumon, 20, and Farid, 25, but the other members of the gang managed to flee.

Meanwhile, police arrested Faruq, a listed criminal, during a drive in Masdair area of Fatulla on yesterday morning.

Faruq was wanted in connection with 10 cases, including robbery, police said.

Road renamed after Ziaur Rahman

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The road from Farmgate to Tongi Bridge via Mohakhali has been renamed as Bir Uttam Ziaur Rahman Road in recognition of his outstanding contribution during the War of Liberation.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has been renaming some

major roads of the capital as part of their programmes to honour the valiant freedom fighters.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will unveil the plaque of the road formally at Jahangir Gate, Dhaka Cantonment, today, said a DCC press release.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Prof. Rezaul Karim will be present at the inauguration ceremony.

Screening of Matir Mayna

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day screening of Matir Mayna, a film based on the liberation war, began at Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium of the Public Library in the city yesterday.

The screening of the film has been organised by Tapur Tupur Entertainment, a cultural organisation.

Opposition urged to withdraw March 31 hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Optical Industries and Traders Association has appealed to the opposition party to withdraw its hartal programme on March 31 for smooth holding of the International Optic Fair 'Bangla Optica-2005.'

The association, in a press release yesterday, said a number of optic traders from home and abroad will take part in the three-day fair scheduled to begin on that day.

The fair is very important from the national point of view as it provides an excellent opportunity for the development of optic industries in the country through exchange of opinions among the stakeholders, the press release added.

The association also thanked the opposition party for the withdrawal of hartal on the Easter Sunday.

Robbers shoot housewife, loot valuables worth Tk 2 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robbers shot and injured a housewife and took away cash, ornaments and valuables worth about Tk 2 lakh from her house at Shyampur in the city yesterday.

Ashura Begum, 30, wife of fruit-seller Nannu Miah, was alone at her house at 44/3 Nabinchandra Goswami Road under Shyampur police station when a gang of robbers rang the doorbell and got into the house during Juma prayers.

The robbers, around eight in number, took away Tk 30,000 in cash, gold ornaments and other valuables from the almira.

When the robbers were about to leave, Ashura shouted for help. Annoyed at her shout, the gang shot a round of bullet on her forehead and fled away from the spot.

She was rushed to a local clinic and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) at 3:00pm. She was released after preliminary treatment at DMCH.

When contacted, Shyampur police said they did not know anything about the incident as of 6:45pm last night.

One killed in road accident

UNB, Manikganj

A man was killed and 20 others were injured in an accident at Muljan on Dhaka-Aricha highway early yesterday.

Police said the accident took place at about 3.00am when the Paturia-bound minibus carrying newspapers overturned on the highway, killing Ata Fakir, 40, on the spot.

Of the injured, four were sent to Dhaka while six were admitted to Manikganj Sadar Hospital.

CHILDREN ACT 1974

Change in mindset needed to attain its objectives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A change in the mindset of the law enforcement agencies, judiciary and the society as a whole to attain the objectives of The Children Act 1974, said the speakers at a seminar on Thursday.

They stressed the need for increasing the number of probation officers, sensitising the law enforcement officials and setting up of uniformity in determining the age of the child offenders.

The seminar titled 'The Children Act 1974: A critical analysis,' was organised by Save the Children, UK at Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

Differentiating the goals, purposes and methods of juvenile and criminal courts, Advocate

Shahdeen Malik, director of the School of Law of Brac University, said the identity of the offender is vital for the juvenile court. "Care, treatment, protection and rehabilitation are the objectives of the juvenile court instead of retribution," he added.

Advocate Nizamul Huq Nasim, another discussant, suggested some amendments to give priority to children act over other laws.

Citing different cases and their verdicts, Nasim said determination of age is a major factor to be considered during the trial.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Jalal Ahmed said officers-in-charge (OC) are not yet motivated in dealing with child offenders.

He also called for increasing the number of probation officers in the

districts.

The CMM said more than 60 children under 16 are brought to his court everyday.

Determination of the age of the offender is very important in the functioning of the juvenile court, said Habibun Nessa of Save the Children, UK.

She said police should concentrate only on the incident, rather than questioning the offender.

Deputy Attorney General Adilur Rahman Khan said, "Magistrates in the judiciary are also not equipped in dealing with the cases of children."

In his thanksgiving speech, David Humphrey, programme director of Save the Children, said the mindset of all the stakeholders has to be proactive, rather than reactive.