

Historic June 7 today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic June 7 will be observed today across the country.

On this day in 1966, police and then East Pakistan Rifles gunned down 11 people including Monu Mia, Shafiq and Shamsul Haq in Dhaka and Narayanganj during a hartal.

The strike was called for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other leaders detained for launching the six-point demand movement that included autonomy for East Pakistan.

The killings had reinforced the labour movement across the country and given a momentum in the student and people's movement.

The Awami League (AL) has chalked out a daylong programme, which includes hoisting of national and party flags atop the party office in the morning and placing of wreaths on the portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhanmondi. The AL will also hold a discussion at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh.

AL President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in a message yesterday said June 7 is a milestone in the history of the movement for independence.

"This year the historic June 7 has returned to us with a call of action and movement," Hasina said.

She called for unity of the democratic and patriotic forces to ensure rule of law and democracy in the country to save it from the 'misrule' of the four-party alliance.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) takes separate programmes to observe the day that include a discussion at the party's central office in the city at 5:00pm. JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu will chair the discussion.

Runaway girl raped in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A schoolgirl was raped by a gang of hoodlums at Fatulla in Narayanganj on Sunday night.

The girl, who ran away from her home following a quarrel with her parents, was waiting at the Fatulla railway station for a train to go to a relative's house at about 8:00pm, but a gang of three youths -- Jahir, Kalam and Manik -- took her to an abandoned house and violated her at gunpoint, police said.

The victim, a student of class nine and resident of Aliganj, is now undergoing treatment at the Narayanganj Hospital.

Meanwhile, some influential quarters warned the victim's family not to file any case, in a bid to cover up the crime.

Police have detained Sakhina Begum, mother of Manik, for interrogation.

When asked, Shafiullah, officer-in-charge of Fatullah Police Station, could not confirm the incident.

"If such incident takes place in the railway area, the railway police will take necessary steps," he said.

BLANK MADRASA EXAM ANSWER SCRIPTS

JCD leader, 4 Alim students arrested

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested a JCD leader with blank answer scripts of Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board's 2005 examinations at Azimpur area on Sunday.

The accused Abdullah al Mamun was arrested along with four of his would-be clients, all Alim examinees, police said. Mamun used to pilfer blank answer scripts from the Madrasa Board with the help of an office staff and sell each set for Tk 2,000 to prospective examinees for cheating in the examinations.

The four arrestees are Mustafizur Rahman, Shafiul Mustak, Sadik Hossain and Kamal Hossain, all Alim examinees from Dhaka Alia Madrasa.

Intelligence sources said Mamun, 24, son of Pangsha Mohishal Alim Madrasa Principal Abdur Rahman of Sujanagar, Rajbari, is a former joint general secretary of JCD Alia Madrasa unit.

Mamun yesterday told the reporters at the CID office that being a first year Fazil student of Dhaka Alia Madrasa he used to get facilities from the board staff and officials being a leader of JCD. He said he helped about 30 examinees so far to change their exam sheets of the Madrasa Board with the help of peon Shaheen.

Mojibur Rahman, personal secretary of State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon, was present at the press briefing at CID conference room.

He said the minister, who was earlier informed about the gang, asked police to look into the matter. The minister also recruited his personal source to find out the culprits.

On information, senior CID official Munshi Atiqur Rahman along with his team raided Azimpur 37/5 resident Sunday night and arrested the five with blank 10 exam sheets and 33 extra scripts.

Minister for action against owners of faulty vehicles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Legal action should be taken against the owners of defective vehicles as such vehicles and unskilled drivers are mainly responsible for road accidents, said Communications Minister Nazmul Huda at a workshop yesterday.

He also said the government is planning to bring a change to the road design in order to make the roads safer for pedestrians.

The Brac and the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) organised the workshop on road safety at the Brac Inn centre at Mahakhali in the city.

The minister said that if the bus owners would be more careful about their vehicles and selection of drivers, the rate of road accidents would come down to a great extent.

Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury,

executive director of Brac, said that the Brac has taken a community-based awareness programme to check road accidents.

"It is surprising that many drivers who were trained under the programme said they didn't heard about traffic rules and signs before. They have just learned how to drive," he said.

Mueyed Chowdhury suggested setting up a road safety fund with a view to checking road accidents and helping reduce the suffering of the victims.

A Nazmul Hussain, a director of Brac, presented a paper on "Experiences from Road Safety Public Awareness Campaign on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway: A GO-NGO Collaboration".

He said that the campaign has successfully made the passengers and pedestrians aware about the

use of footpath and bus stoppage.

Samirangan Dewan, a student of class ten, who was trained and made a traffic cadet under the road safety programme, told The Daily Star, "We have learned how to cross roads and many other issues. Now we teach our fellow students and local people road safety skills."

Stein Lundebye of the World Bank presented an animation film titled 'Lal, Holud aar Shobuj' featuring road safety skills.

Communications Secretary Md Shafiqul Alam, RHD Chief Engineer AKM Faizur Rahman also spoke at the workshop.

Later, a technical session on support for the road accident victims, road safety advocacy, drivers' road safety awareness campaign strategy and road safety engineering facilities was held.



PHOTO: STAR

Police intercept a procession of the Alliance of Student Organisations against Terrorism and Communalism in front of the High Court Mazar gate in the city yesterday. The Alliance took out the procession demanding arrest of the JCD cadres responsible for the attacks on students.

Increase allocation in edn, agri and health sectors

Demand HR groups

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights groups yesterday called for increasing allocations in education, agriculture and health sectors and reducing the allocation in the defence sector in the coming budget.

They also called on the government not to raise the prices of edible oil, fuel oil, gas, electricity and water and impose VAT (Value Added Tax) on essential commodities in the proposed budget for 2005-06 fiscal year.

The Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC), Bangladesh Coalition for Child Rights (BCCR) and Nari O Manabadhikar Forum (Namaf) placed their suggestions at a meeting on 'Budget and livelihood security' at the National Press Club in the city.

They also urged the government to take stern action against corrupt people in different sectors, middlemen and those who avoid tax.

Sharif A Kafi, director of BDPC,

said productive sectors should get more budgetary allocations than the defence sector to make the country free from poverty and illiteracy.

Criticising the price hike of diesel, he said the step was taken to check the smuggling of fuel oil, but the worst sufferers are the farmers.

"The government should provide more subsidies for the agriculture sector and take initiative to ensure that genuine farmers get the benefits," said Lina Jambil, member secretary of Namaf, while presenting a keynote paper.

The three organisations also suggested reducing system loss of electricity and water, checking price hike of essentials, withdrawing duty on bicycle and creating job opportunities.

Ashraf Nithi of Naripakkha, Shahana Sultana of BCCR and Billal Hossain of BDPC attended the meeting.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Md Manirul Islam, a father of three young kids, has appealed for financial assistance for his treatment as he has been suffering from blood cancer for the last eight months.

Manirul, 42, now undergoing treatment at a hospital in India, needs several lakh taka for his treatment but it is quite impossible for him to bear the expenses.

He and his wife Farzana Islam urged the generous people to come forward to extend a helping hand to save him.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Farzana Islam, Savings Account No.-14242, Janata Bank, Daudkandi Bazar Branch, Comilla. Phone: 0188-035835.

Army chief starts farewell visit to cantts

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff Lt General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury started valedictory visit to different cantonments as he goes on retirement on June 15.

The visits have been organised as per tradition and existing rules of the armed forces prior to his retirement after serving a three-year term as chief of army staff, said ISPR yesterday.

He will join different functions being organised in his honour during the visits.

As part of his schedule for saying goodbye to his colleagues, General Mashhud yesterday visited Savar cantonment and Shaheed Salauddin cantonment at Ghatail.

Savar area commander of the armed forces and general officer commanding (GOC) of 9 Infantry Division Major General Mohd Aminul Karim received the outgoing army chief at Savar cantonment. Ghatail area commander and general officer commanding of 19 Infantry Division Major General Muhammad Ishtiaq received him at Shaheed Salauddin cantonment.

The chief of army staff separately addressed the army men at the two cantonments.

He expressed his gratitude to all of them for all cooperation during his tenure.

General Mashhud inspected guard of honour given by two smartly turned-out contingents of the armed forces at the cantonments.

"He will visit other cantonments by turns," said the ISPR in a news release.

Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury was appointed chief of army staff on June 16, 2002.

Regular talks to strengthen Bangla-Pak ties stressed

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and Pakistan yesterday emphasised regular dialogue between the two countries for strengthening mutual cooperation.

The two countries also viewed that the two foreign secretaries should hold their annual consultations at an early date.

The observations came when outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner to Bangladesh Manzar Shafiq paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan at his office.

Morshed Khan appreciated the efforts made by the High Commissioner during his stay in Dhaka for further strengthening the excellent bilateral relations between Dhaka and Islamabad.

The Foreign Minister expressed his satisfaction at the growing trade relations between the two countries and hoped that the existing high level of interaction would be sustained.

The High Commissioner proposed a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries on the sidelines of the ensuing Doha South-South Summit.

EVASION OF DUTY Show cause on shipping deptt official

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The shipping ministry has issued a show cause notice on a high official of the shipping department for allegedly helping evade a huge amount of government duty while surveying and registering cargo ships, sources said.

The show cause notice was issued on the basis of an investigation conducted by the shipping department about the registration of ships between January 2003 and June 2004.

Fakhrul Islam, now posted in Barisal, was the engineer and ship surveyor of Dhaka zone at that time.

According to the investigation, a total of 347 cargo boats were surveyed and registered during the period.

Out of them, no value added tax was collected from 75 ships, while income tax evasion was alleged against 51 vessels.

The notice was issued on June 2 asking Fakhrul Islam to reply within 10 days.

Earlier, he was once suspended temporarily and made officer on special duty (OSD) for two times, sources said.

'Set up land court in each district'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bhumi Odhikar Udjapan Parishad leaders at a press conference yesterday demanded distribution of Khas land among the landless people.

They also urged the government to set up land court in every district for quick disposal of land-related cases.

Udjapan Parishad, a platform of several non-government organisations, held the press conference at the National Press Club to mark the World Land Rights Day to be observed on June 10.

Samata Executive Director Abdul Kader said the government should take stern action against the people those who are grabbing Khas land and filling up water bodies in the name of real estate business.

He said the slum-dwellers in urban areas should be rehabilitated in Khas land. He also urged the government to set up of a land commission for the indigenous people living in the plain land.

Samsul Huda, member secretary of the Udjapan Parishad, told the press conference that the government should take immediate steps to recover its grabbed land.

If Bangladesh wants to reduce its poverty by 50 percent by 2015, land less people have to be provided with land, he said.

The Udjapan Parishad also demanded transparency in land management system through appointing honest and skilled persons in the land recording process.

They said deforestation in the name of setting up of eco-park must be stopped in different parts of the country.

The Udjapan Parishad will hold a grand rally of landless people on June 10 in Ghughudaha Bilpar under Pabna district to mark the World Land Rights Day.

Abul Hossain, member secretary of the Udjapan Parishad and Sultana Akhter Ruby of Samata, were present at the press conference.

Obituary



She left behind her son Aryan.

ID card a must for free, fair election

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Introduction of voter identity (ID) card is a must to ensure free and fair election, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said the rigging of polls in the past had resulted in creating political and social conflicts hampering democracy and good governance.

The roundtable on 'Importance of Citizens' Identity Card for National Aspects including Fair Election' was organised by Bangladesh Union Sadasya Sangstha (BUSS), an organisation of the union parishad (UP) members, at the National Press Club in the city.

Speaking on the occasion, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda presented a new concept that incorporates voter ID option in passports.

"Introduction of this integrated system will serve both purposes - overseas travels as well as exercise of franchise," he said.

Referring to government's failure to introduce ID card, the

minister said, "We don't want to repeat the same fiasco that occurred while identifying the card previously."

"The rigging under this new system will be nil," he asserted.

Huda suggested the formation of committees by the existing and previous UP members to collect voters' information and pictures, for sending those to the election commission (EC) through thana and district administration.

The EC will then send them to passport offices to issue the passports, he added.

Justice Abdur Rouf, former chief election commissioner, rejected the idea saying that it might be an additional source of corruption in the administration.

Laying emphasis on national ID card incorporating the option for voter ID, he said, "As Bangladeshis we don't have any identity. It's a humiliation for us."

Justice Rouf regretted that he was committed to introduce the voter ID cards, but failed due to the apathy of the bureaucrats.

"It is possible to complete the

process within eight months if efficient manpower and technology are used," he said, adding that political will is the most important thing for this.

Lt General (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman MP, chairman of the parliamentary committee on defence ministry, termed the introduction of voter ID card a part of reforms in the EC, and observed that it needs to be done immediately.

BUSS Chairman Golam Sarwar Milon presided over the roundtable, while Columnist Harunur Rashid presented the concept paper.

Former minister Kazi Firoze Rashid, BUSS Advisor Nabab Begum Shamsunnahar Khwaja Ahsanullah, Vice-chairpersons Prof Masuda M Rashid Chowdhury and Captain (ret'd) MA Quddus, Liberty Movement Secretary General Rita Rahman, Prof M Yusuf Ali, Prof Ataur Rahman, Brig Gen (ret'd) Sakawat Hossain, and FBCCI Vice-president Abul Kashem Haider also took part in the discussion.

Double budget allocation in health sector for children

Representatives of Child Parliament tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Representatives of Child Parliament at a roundtable yesterday placed their proposals on education, health and other child-related issues for consideration in the national budget of the next fiscal year.

The proposals included supply of textbooks free of charge, other educational items at subsidised rate, ensuring proper teaching, and ban on physical torture in classrooms.

Nargis Akhter, Deputy Speaker of Child Parliament, read out the proposals which were prepared in its session on April 17.

Parliament representatives Morzina Akhtar from Tangail, Asma from Natore, Jahid Hasan Rasel

from Barisal, and Shaikh Fahima of Narshingdi also talked about their problems and demands at the roundtable.

They urged the authorities concerned to double the allocation in health sector ending discrimination towards children in hospitals and health care centres, and providing free treatment to the disabled children.

The roundtable on 'Budget for Children' was organised by Samunjoy in collaboration with Child Parliament, Manusher Jonno and the daily Sangbad at the National Press Club in the city.

"Such discussion on budget by children is rare in the world, and it is important for democratisation," said eminent Economist Dr Atiur Rahman.

Among the eight goals of Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the most important are achieving education for all and

Allocation for primary education and reduction of child mortality rate needs to be doubled, he added.

"When we talk about the children, we should know how to honour them," said noted litterateur Selina Hossain.

Sangbad Executive Editor Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul moderated the roundtable while Financial Express Editor Moazzem Hossain, Deputy Country Director of Save the Children Monira Ahsan, and Programme Manager of Manusher Jonno Arifur Rahman were the panel discussants.

'No Indian separatists in Ctg'

BDNEWS, Khagrachhari

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Director General Major General Jahangir Alam yesterday told journalists in Khagrachhari that Indian separatists have no existence in Chittagong.

He said this while he was inaugurating the Rifles Memorial at Ramgarh upazila to uphold the tradition and memory of the original birthplace of BDR.

BDR came into being during the

erstwhile British rule.

To keep the tradition of birthplace of BDR intact the 'Rifles Memorial' was built with eight structures of aesthetically burnt soil indicating the time of its forward marching and the consistent history.

BDR chief said, land acquiring is going on to set up new BDR battalion at Babuchhara in Dighinala to strengthen the surveillance at the bordering areas.

He said, the survey of bordering

land has been done. BSF camp in the Panchhari Bainath Para of Bangladesh has been withdrawn. Within one month the temporary camp will also be withdrawn.

"BDR under no circumstances will allow BSF to erect fences within 150 yards of the border. He also added that 17 acres of land recovery at Achalong border falls into the jurisdiction of the directorate of land survey.

Guimara region commander Brigadier General Amin Tarek, Khagrachhari BDR Sector Commander Colonel Sharier Ahmed, BDR Chittagong Sector Commander Col Shahadat Hossain, Ramgarh Sector Commander Lt Col Farid Haider Khan, and Major Mohammad Zakir Hossain were present.

SAVE FORESTLANDS Hiking programme of Scouts begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day hiking programme of Scouts and Rovers begins in Sylhet tomorrow to raise awareness about protected forest areas.

A total of 70 young Scouts will join the programme organised by the Nishorgo Support Project, a project of the Forest Department, in cooperation with the Bangladesh Scouts.

The hike will start from proposed Satchuri National Park at Habiganj with a call to save forestlands. The group will hike through Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary and Lawachara National Park at Moulvibazar, said the organisers at a press conference in the city yesterday.

They said it is an urgent need to save the sanctuaries and national parks for the future generation as these protected areas play a key role in protecting wildlife and biodiversity.

More than 50 percent of forestlands in the country has disappeared in the last 30 years because of growing population, said Mihir Kanti Majumder, national commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts.

Monoj Kanti Roy, project coordinator of Nishorgo, said forest resources are being depleted at an alarming rate to meet the needs of growing population through commercial forest activity.

Enam-ul Haque, a renowned bird watcher, and J DeCosse, chief of party, Noshorgo Support Project, also spoke.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today.

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

Highest temperature 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.5 degree Celsius at Dhaka.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:45pm today and rises at 5:10am 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	35.0	22.5	71	56
Chittagong	33.7	27.0	69	65
Rajshahi	35.8	25.0	66	55
Khulna	36.0	25.0	83	61
Barisal	34.8	24.8	75	66
Sylhet	34.0	24.8	76	65
Cox's Bazar	33.8	26.0	76	73