

OIC DAY TODAY President greets Islamic Ummah

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh along with fellow Muslim countries observes the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Day today.

The OIC was formed in 1969 in the Moroccan capital of Rabat.

In a message yesterday, President Iajuddin Ahmed felicitated the Islamic Ummah around the world on the occasion of the OIC Day.

The president said the observation of this day bears special significance for the Islamic Ummah as it provides us with an opportunity to dedicate our faith in the strength and unity of the Ummah.

Describing Islam as a religion of peace, solidarity and tolerance, he said we must not allow this to be tarnished by extremism. "We, the Islamic Ummah, should work together for reinvigorating the spirit of Islam," he said.

In another message, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia reiterated Bangladesh's firm commitment and resolve to work unitedly within the framework of the OIC to fulfil the aspirations of the Islamic Ummah.

"This is high time that the Ummah coordinate its activities under the umbrella of the OIC and use the organisation as a conduit for advancing its political and economic agenda," she said.

"The Ummah is now passing through difficult times. Islam is under attack despite its enduring message of peace and justice. Many Muslim communities around the world have become victims of political, economic and cultural discrimination," she observed.

China-Bangladesh photo exhibition begins today

BSS, Dhaka

A weeklong China-Bangladesh Friendship Photographic Exhibition and Chinese Film Show begins in Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the city today.

The Chinese Embassy and Bangladesh-China Friendship Association are jointly organising the photographic exhibition and film show to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Bangladesh.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain, who is also the president of Bangladesh-China Friendship Association, and Chinese Ambassador Chai Xi will inaugurate the photographic exhibition and film show at 11.30 am.

More than 150 photographs will be displayed at the photographic exhibition, a press release said.

Six feature films and six documentary films will be screened at the film show.

The photographic exhibition will remain open to the public from 10 am to 6 pm except Friday at the National Museum Gallery From 2 pm to 8 pm on Saturday.

RU students misbehave with teacher

RU CORRESPONDENT

The outgoing students of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday misbehaved with an assistant proctor and beat up a general student when they brought out a rally to say farewell to the campus.

Sources said, the students misbehaved with assistant proctor Moklesur Rahman of pharmacy department as he rebuked some of them for uttering slang words from the rally towards a female student.

They also beat up Ismail Hossain Suman, a third year student of Bangla department when he protested their misbehaviour with the teacher.

When contacted, Moklesur Rahman said, "Some students of Ziaur Rahman Hall misbehaved with me."

Teachers, students and officers have expressed deep concern over the incident and demanded punishment.

Leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra Union also met university proctorial body and demanded exemplary punishment to the students responsible for the incident.

Dr Ali Asgar joins GB



Prof Dr M Ali Asgar joined the Gono Bishwabidyalay (GB) as the head of the department of medical physics and biomedical engineering, says

a press release.

He will also serve as the chief in computer science and engineering department.

Prof Asgar did his Ph.D. from South Apton University, England. He is the author of about 20 books on science and education.

One-third of all cancers caused by tobacco

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One-third of all cancers are caused by tobacco and of the tobacco-related diseases 80 percent are caused by smoking, said the cancer experts at a public awareness programme on Prevention of Breast Cancer yesterday.

The programme was organised by Bangladesh Cancer Foundation Hospital (BCFH) to coincide with the launching of a weeklong breast cancer screening programme (September 24 - 30).

Speaking at a large gathering at the National Press Club, Dr Md Habibullah Talukder, secretary general of BCFH, said, "We tend to ignore our own health problems until it develops into a serious problem. In fact, practice of some basic routine including self-examination to detect development of certain unusual growth or change in our

body can help avoid major health crisis."

"Unfortunately, majorities of the cancer patients who come for treatment at advanced stage lack knowledge on how to perform simple but very important self-examination to detect breast cancer at premature stage. Early treatment can completely cure breast cancer but at late stage it is difficult to achieve good results even with chemotherapy combined with radiotherapy and surgical intervention as cancerous cells often spread (metastasis) fast when there is not much options left," he added.

Dr Talukder said apart from smoking that causes lung cancer, oral cancer is also caused by the use of tobacco products commonly found at low price.

Prof Ahmed Sayeed, head of the department of surgery of Holy Family Red Crescent Medical

College and Hospital, suggested launching of massive nation-wide campaigns to make women aware of the 'self-diagnosis' for breast cancer especially at rural areas where options of clinical diagnostic tests are not widely available.

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said, "Generally one in every four female cancer patients suffer from breast cancer in the country. Self-examination for breast cancer could greatly benefit the patients."

State Minister for Health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Director General of Health Services Prof Md Shahadat Hossain, Head of the radiotherapy department of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital Dr A K M Golam Mohammad, and Director of Bangladesh Cancer Foundation Mosarrat Jahan Talukder also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain speaks at the launching ceremony of a weeklong breast cancer screening programme at the National Press Club yesterday.

Illegal structures demolished in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Hundreds of BNP leaders and workers aided by the police and Rajshahi city corporation (RCC) employees evicted two land grabbers from the town protection embankment on the bank of river Padma and demolished the illegal structures yesterday.

Rajshahi city mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu led the daylong eviction drive, which was conducted under the banner of Rajshahi Parishad Rakkha Andolon Committee without any prior

notice.

The team first demolished the structures constructed by of Joyal Abedin Dulal, an influential person, near the GPO Groyen point.

A huge amount of banned drugs, including heroin, 40 Chinese axes, a number of machetes were found during the demolition, which were thrown into the river.

The team also bulldozed another structure built by Khondaker Hasan Kabir, which was used as a recreation centre with seating arrangements for common people.

Later in a press conference, the

two evicted persons claimed the lands belong to them and termed the eviction drive politically motivated.

They also said that many illegal structures on the 17-km embankment, including a large slum and fast food shop, were spared during the drive as those lands are being used by pro-BNP Jamaat men.

However, Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu dismissed all allegations, saying that all illegal structures would be evicted gradually. "We have an ambitious plan for the beautification of the city."



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna division in the next 24 hours till 6:00 pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also expected at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Mongla and the lowest of 23.6 degrees at Comilla.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:52 pm today and rises at 5:48 am 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	31.4	24.5	98	86
Chittagong	26.3	24.8	100	90
Rajshahi	32.7	25.3	92	94
Khulna	34.0	27.3	87	82
Barisal	32.2	26.5	87	93
Sylhet	29.2	24.4	97	96
Cox's Bazar	30.8	23.8	98	92

90pc women get access to family planning services: Survey

BSS, Dhaka

At least 90 percent of country's women get access to family planning and childcare services within a kilometer where they live across the country.

This was revealed in the recently published National Demographic and Health Survey-2004, conducted by National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

According to the survey, 92 percent of married women live in areas where child immunisation are available at the satellite clinics within a kilometer, while 76 percent of women can get an oral saline packet.

Access to satellite clinic services increased from 79 percent in 2000 to 92 percent in 2002 while the availability of contraceptive pills and condoms increased from 70 percent in 2000 to 84 percent in 2004.



PHOTO: STAR

Mayor of Chittagong ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury speaks at a seminar on 'The crisis of journalism in Bangladesh and its remedy' at the Chittagong Press Club auditorium yesterday.

15 sculptures missing from Fine Art Instt

DU CORRESPONDENT

Some 15 sculptures worth about Tk three lakh have been missing from the Institute of Fine Arts of Dhaka University.

The teachers and students came to the institute yesterday after the two days of closure only to find that the sculptures have been missing from the field in front of the Sculpture Department.

Among the sculptures, four are created by prominent sculptors Niamul Bari and Rashid Chowdhury and the rest by the former students of the Institute.

The security guards said they do not have any idea about how these sculptures were stolen.

Sources said a number of outsiders in connivance with some former students might have stolen the sculptures.

Director of the Institute Prof Farida Zaman was not available for comments.

Robbers stab woman, loot valuables

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of robbers stabbed a woman and looted cash and gold ornaments totalling Tk 2 lakh from a house at Lalbagh in the city yesterday.

The woman, Rezia Begum, 67, was alone at her home when the gang entered the house and tied her up.

As the woman raised an alarm, the robbers stabbed her and decamped with the booty.

Later, neighbours rushed her to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

In another incident, a gang of miscreants stabbed Mohammad Biplob, 26, an accounts officer of Popy Pharmaceuticals, in the head at his office.

The gang also locked the other staffs in a room and ransacked official documents. Biplob remains unconscious since the attack on him.

In another incident, a youth was stabbed by his friends at Uttar Badda.

Mohammad Rony, 20, was stabbed during an altercation with his friends over house rent.

Both the men were undergoing treatment at the DMCH.

JS RESERVED SEATS BNP nominates six more candidates

UNB, Dhaka

The ruling BNP yesterday nominated six more candidates for the seats reserved for women in the Jatiya Sangsad.

They are Rezina Islam, Khodeza Emdad Lata, Rasheda Begum Hira, Simun Begum, Newaz Halima Aili and Fahima Hossain Jubilee, said a BNP press release.

Nine reserved seats were allotted to the main opposition Awami League as per proportion of its representation in parliament.

As Awami League refrained from putting up candidates, the BNP shared six seats while the Jamaat, JP and IOJ got one each.

DHAKA AHSANIA MISSION Orientation meeting with volunteers held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Ahsania Mission yesterday organised a half-day orientation meeting at its auditorium in the city for the people interested to join the Mission's Volunteer Service Programme (VSP).

Kazi Rafiqul Alam, president and chief executive of the Mission, welcomed the participants and discussed various aspects of the programme at the meeting.

More than 100 people with diverse backgrounds attended the meeting.

Shahnewaz Khan, director of Training and Materials Development Division, highlighted the Mission's activities through multi-media presentation.

The meeting decided that the Mission would arrange small group meetings with interested volunteers in selected fields of activities to develop specific modalities.

RU postpones exams

BSS, Rajshahi

Rajshahi University (RU) authorities yesterday postponed all course system examinations, scheduled for today and tomorrow due to unavoidable reasons.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Jahangirnagar University formed a human chain on the campus yesterday demanding immediate removal of a teacher of the business administration department for his indecent behaviour with female students.

Saarc commerce ministers meet in Islamabad Oct 22

BSS, Dhaka

Commerce ministers of Saarc member states are scheduled to meet in Islamabad on October 22 to review the progress of negotiations of the committee of experts to prepare a functional system for Safta which is expected to come into force early next year.

Official sources said the meeting is going to take place before the forthcoming Saarc summit here on November 13 and 14. Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury will attend the Islamabad meeting.

The Saarc commerce ministers will take stock of the progress of the work of the committee of experts and formulate recommendations for the summit leaders to provide direction for the next move about launching the Safta.

The commerce secretaries of the

seven member states will also meet on October 20 and 21 to review the overall trade and investment situation at the intra-regional level.

This meeting will be preceded by a two-day meeting of the committee of experts which is negotiating the complex issues related to launching the free trade regime.

This will be the 11th meeting of the committee of experts negotiating primarily on negative list, rules of origin and compensation mechanism for the Saarc's least developed partners including Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives.

The sources said there are some areas where intervention from the top leadership of the Saarc members like India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka may be required to settle the issues.

The Saarc commerce ministers may make important recommendations for the summit leaders.

DHAKA TODAY

Handicraft exhibition
National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled organises a four-day handicraft and art exhibition of disabled people. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 10:00 am.

Food exhibition
Save Environment Movement and Positive Bangladesh Uddog organises a weeklong 'Poisonous and Adulterated Food Exhibition and Discussion Programme'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00 am.

Discussion
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organises a discussion and a musical programme to commemorate renowned

musician Shaheed Altaf Mahmud. Venue: Academy's training building. Time: 8:30 pm.

Seminar on IT
Brac University organises a seminar on 'Global IT Industry Trends' with Dr Stanley Sakai of Korea Development Institute as keynote speaker. Venue: University conference room. Time: 5:30 pm.

Publication ceremony
Dumki Upozilla Unnoyon Sangram Parishad organises the publication ceremony of the 'Khuje fir shai sonar desh' (looking for my golden motherland) by Dr Mohammad Motaasim Billah. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium. Time: 4:00 pm.

JS ignores burning issues

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213 call attention notices and some of them were discussed. Except two Jamaat-e-Islami lawmakers, none of the ruling alliance legislators submitted any notice on the August 17 blasts.

Among the major tasks transacted by the House was to pass nine bills including six for enhanced salaries of the president, prime minister, speaker, deputy speaker, ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers, lawmakers and judges of the Supreme Court.

The speaker in his winding up speech, as could be expected, described the session as a successful one.

Question answer session
The question answer session in parliament has lost its attraction as the lawmakers ask many irrelevant and farcical questions forcing the House to focus on less important issues.

During the question hour, lawmakers are entitled to ask questions to ministers on different aspects of administration and government policy on national as well as international issues. The ministers concerned have to stand up and answer for their respective ministries' acts of omission or commission.

But the lawmakers hardly raise important issues in their questions, they rather ask questions mostly concerning their respective constituencies. Ministers who respond to the queries do not take those seriously, and very often give answers using some common terms such as 'under consideration' or 'on availability of funds'.

The ruling coalition lawmakers do

not dare to embarrass the ministers by asking critical questions.

The situation is such that when the LGRD minister or the communications minister is scheduled to answer, lawmakers simply ask questions demanding roads, bridges and culverts in their respective constituencies. If it is the home ministry's turn to respond, they demand police stations or pick up vans for the police stations in their constituencies.

The PM's question time once a week has also lost its importance as the ruling coalition legislators ask questions that do not deserve answer from the prime minister.

In such a situation, the speaker has a vital role in deciding the admissibility of questions.

The question answer session has lost its significance particularly because of the main opposition lawmakers' absence from the House for long.

Lawmakers' questions are of two types -- starred and unstarred. A starred question is one to which a member seeks an oral answer while an unstarred question requires a written answer, and no supplementary questions on it are allowed.

The rules of procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad provide that each sitting of a session will have one hour for question-answer.

It is considered the most effective parliamentary instrument to have the government make its views or position on any issue known. It is also the most feared and difficult time for the ministers who have to respond to questions.

But the current session that began on September 8 witnessed no burning issues raised by lawmakers. At the

Agitation continues for removal of JU teacher

JU CORRESPONDENT

Over 500 general students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday formed a human chain on the campus demanding immediate removal of the teacher of business administration department for his indecent behaviour with female students.

To express solidarity with the ongoing movement enforced by the department students, hundreds of general students irrespective of party affiliations joined the huge human chain bringing the academic activities of their respective departments to a virtual standstill.

Earlier, a rally was held at the foot of Amar Ekushey where the students vowed to go for tougher agitation if their demand is not met by Monday.

The department students have been agitating since Thursday in protest against the teacher.

They also staged a drama titled 'Ekti Tanvir' (One Tanvir) on the campus following the human chain. A memorandum containing all allegations against the teacher and the demand for his removal was submitted to the vice-chancellor along with over 3,000 signatures of general students.

Meanwhile, a special syndicate meeting was held at the administrative building in the afternoon to decide on the fate of the teacher, and the agitating students staged a sit-in in front of the building until the meeting ended at 6:30 pm.

The syndicate formed a six-member probe body headed by the vice-chancellor to investigate the matter and submit its report in 15 days.

Death anniversary

BSS, Dhaka

The first death anniversary of Ali Akbar Khan, a prominent social worker and businessman of Jhalakathi district, will be observed today.

Qurankhwani, milad mahfil and special munajat will be held at his village home at Nalchhiti.

first sitting of the session, the state minister for home replied to queries for about an hour but there was no question on the August 17 blasts.

More than 35 ruling alliance lawmakers demanded that the state minister provide fire service stations or pick up vans for the police stations in their respective constituencies.

Some lawmakers even asked him the number of fire stations in their constituencies.

The state minister replied to the questions, orally or in writing.

At the second sitting of the session, about 40 lawmakers questioned the communications minister about construction of roads and bridges in their respective constituencies. All of them ignored a vital issue like transport fare hike following fuel price rise. A woman lawmaker however asked a question on the issue.

A number of lawmakers even wanted to know how many roads were constructed during the present government's tenure.

Other questions were also of similar nature. LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, while replying to lawmakers' queries for about an hour, used some terms like 'under consideration', 'will be examined' etc. The lawmakers demanded more development work in their constituencies.

On September 15, several BNP lawmakers asked the post and telecommunications minister to give the number of subscribers under Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board. They however asked if this ministry has any plan for expansion of the service.