



Suhrawardy's anniversary of death today

UNB, Dhaka
The 42nd death anniversary of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy will be observed in the country today.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion.
In his message, Iajuddin said Suhrawardy is a bright chapter in Bangladesh's history of democracy, and his lifetime mission was to ensure welfare of the common people through the establishment of democracy.

Month-long campaign to raise awareness about Aids

UNB, Dhaka
Life, an United Nations associated NGO, and the Children's Voice launched a month-long campaign yesterday to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS to prevent the spread of the deadly disease.

Raising mass awareness is a must to fight Aids. It is high time to take steps in this regard, Amanullah Khan, chairman of UNB, said while speaking at the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Attack on Mayor Hartal observed in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet
The eight-hour hartal called in Sylhet by the main opposition Awami League (AL) in protest against Friday's grenade attack on the Sylhet city mayor passed off yesterday peacefully.

'Ensure equal rights for women'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Speakers at a meeting yesterday reiterated their call for ensuring equal rights for women.

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka
Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

'Establish education as fundamental right under constitution'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Lawmakers and educationists at a dialogue yesterday underscored the need for establishing education as a fundamental right under the constitution of the country.

Parliamentary Caucus on Education along with lawmakers from all political parties are working to establish education as a fundamental right under the constitution.

education system existing in the country, he said, "We are now building a kindergarten-based Bangladesh, Madrasa-based Bangladesh and Bangla medium school-based Bangladesh, resulting in present unrest situation."



The Communist Party of Bangladesh took out a silent procession in the city yesterday to commemorate those killed in the bomb attacks in Gazipur, Chittagong and Jhalakathi.

Obituary

Md Ataur Rahim, a prominent banker, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Canada on November 27, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son, mother and a host of relatives. Rahim, who had been living in Canada since 1973, retired from Toronto Dominion Bank recently.

Usha Chakroborty, former president of district Mahila Parishad, passed away on Saturday night at her residence at Srinath Charterjee Lane in the city at the age of 85.

Usha, wife of Advocate Sudhir Kumar Chakroborty, a martyr of the War of Liberation, left behind her two sons and a daughter.

She was cremated at the Barisal crematorium. Barisal City Corporation Mayor Advocate Majibur Rahman Sarwar and leaders of Barisal Reporters Unity, Mahila Parishad, Sangskritik Sangathan Samannayya Parishad, Puja Udjapan Parishad and various socio-political-cultural organisations consoled her death and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

SM Amin Akhtar Solaiman
SM Amin Akhtar Solaiman passed away at Apollo Hospitals in Dhaka on Saturday at the age of 66, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, a daughter, a son, four grandchildren and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His qulkhwani will be held after Asr prayers on December 6 at his Gulshan residence.

Haji Shamsun Nahar
UNB, Dhaka
Haji Shamsun Nahar, wife of late Moulavi Karimul Haque of Shibpur village under Feni district, passed away at her son's residence at East Basabo in the city on Wednesday at the age of 82.

Nahar was buried at her family graveyard, says a press release.

PM gives Tk 5 lakh each to families of two slain judges

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday gave Tk 5 lakh each to the families of two senior assistant judges killed in a bomb attack in Jhalakathi to meet their urgent needs.

Khaleda handed over the cheques to the bereaved family members of the slain judges, Sohel Ahmed and Jagannath Pandey, when they met her at the PMO at her invitation.

The prime minister consoled Farhana Tarannun, the widow of Sohel Ahmed, and Pallabi Pandey Rita, the widow of Jagannath Pandey, and also assured them of providing suitable jobs to them immediately.

The families of the two slain judges could now stay at the government quarters where they are residing.

Mentioning the government steps, the prime minister said the killers would be brought to justice.

Iftikhar, the 3-year-old son of Sohel Ahmed, Sohel's father Dr Mansur Ahmed and father-in-law Prof AKM Mohsin and Shertho, the two-year-and-seven-month-old son of Jagannath Pandey, Pandey's father Ram Narayan Pandey and father-in-law Mukul Chandra Mukherjee also came to meet the PM.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, State Minister for Law Shajahan Omar, PM's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Judicial Service Association Rafiqul Islam and Secretary General Reazul Karim were also present.

After the meeting with the prime minister, Pandey's widow told reporters that no other women should be widowed like her and no children orphaned. She also said it would be better if she gets a suitable job.

The widow of Sohel said words failed her in expressing her woes. She, however, said she needs a standard job to maintain the lifestyle they have developed.

'Deploy female cops at Hasina's residence'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
In the backdrop of recent spate of bomb attacks across the country, office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina has requested the police administration to deploy women police to check female visitors at the entrance of her residence.

An aide of the opposition leader yesterday sent a letter to the inspector general of police (IGP) stressing that there is an urgency to step up the security at her residence which need women police.

"We have requested for women police at Sudha Sadan to check the female visitors as spate of bomb terrorism in the form of suicidal attacks have increased alarmingly," Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to the opposition leader, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Earlier, we requested the police administration verbally for women police, but they did not respond even after three days. So, we have sent the letter," he said.

Reiterating the demand for strengthening the security of the leader of the opposition, Saber said, "We have been requesting the government for Special Security Forces (SSF) for long, but no step has been taken yet."

Saber said, "We have also requested the government to improve the quality of her security as mere increase of the number of security personnel is not enough in the present situation of the country."

Death anniversary

Today is the 14th death anniversary of S M Shafiqul Azam, former justice, commerce and industry and energy and mineral resources minister, says a press release.

S M Azam Memorial Committee has taken elaborate programmes to observe the day.

On the occasion, special prayers will be offered at his graveyard and alms will be distributed among the destitute.

Special programmes will also be held at Dr SM Muhammadul Haque Govt Primary School, Latifa Khatoon Orphanage and Forkania Madrasa at his village home in Chittagong.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Captain Ali Ahmed, former director of health directorate, will be held at his home at House # 52, Road # 8/A, Dhanmondi, after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Unite to free country from militants: Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain called on the political parties to be united with the support of people to form a democratic and non-communal government.

"In the month of victory, we have to make a fresh vow to build a country free from Islamic militants and extremists," he said at a discussion organised by the Bangalee Sangskriti Mancha at Dhanmondi in the city to mark the Victory Day.

The Bangladeshes could not be defeated through bomb or grenade attacks, he said, adding that once they are united, it is impossible for the vested quarter to suppress them.

The politics of the 14-party opposition combine would be to wipe out the failed politics that could not ensure people's rights, said Dr Kamal.

"The politics will be aimed at establishing the rights of people," he said.

It is time to make the new generation aware of the true history of the War of Liberation and instill its spirit in them, he added.

The speakers at the discussion urged all to be imbued with the spirit of the liberation war as well as the ideals of Bangabandhu and resist the fundamentalist forces unitedly.

Convener of Bangalee Sangskriti Mancha Alamgir Kumkum presided over the discussion. Folklorist Shamsuzzaman Khan, Journalist Md Mizanur Rahman, General Secretary of Awami Secchhashebok League Firoz, Abdul Matin Bhuiyan, Shahadat Chowdhury, Shariful Islam and Habibur Rahman were also present.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia hands over a cheque for Tk 5 lakh to Pallabi Pandey Rita, the widow of slain judge Jagannath Pandey, at her office in the city yesterday.

TENGRATILA BLAST Petrobangla to claim Tk 250cr from Niko

BDNEWS, Dhaka
Petrobangla is about to claim Tk 250 crore as compensation from Canadian Niko Resources Ltd for the losses caused by two explosions at Chhatk gas field, also known as Tengratila.

Officials at the energy division said a formal compensation claim will be made this week.

The compensation includes Tk 84 crore for environmental damage and Tk 166 for burning eight billion cubic feet (CBF) of gas in the two explosions.

On Sunday, a summary of the compensation claim was sent to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia who is in charge of Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources.

Energy Advisor Mahmudur Rahman had approved the compensation claim prepared by Petrobangla, the state-run oil, gas and mineral corporation.

The first accident took place in January when Niko was drilling at the abandoned gas field under a joint venture agreement (JVA) with Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Limited (Bapex), a subsidiary of the Petrobangla.

The second blowout was in June when Niko was drilling a relief well to extinguish the fire originating in the first explosion.

Niko claimed it successfully put out the fire by drilling another relief well in October. Bapex said although Niko successfully controlled the fire, there are still flames at several points.

Niko has so far paid Tk 2.5 crore in compensation to the local people.

Niko Executive Chairman Edward S Sampson recently met the energy advisor and sought permission to begin production from the gas field.

The advisor told him Niko would not be permitted to start production until it agreed to make the compensation.

Sampson, in a recent interview with BDNEWS, said accidents in the oil and gas industry are common. "Every year 300 such accidents take place across the world, but there is no provision of compensation for burnt gas," he added.

He told the energy advisor that Niko will follow the JVA if Petrobangla formally makes the compensation claim.

Demand for national govt unconstitutional Say 9 senior lawyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Nine senior lawyers of the Supreme Court (SC), in a statement yesterday, termed the demand for national government replacing the elected coalition government 'undemocratic' and 'unconstitutional'.

They also termed the statement of Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Rokonuddin Mahmud 'unconstitutional' as he called upon the SC judges to refrain from discharging their judicial functions voluntarily.

The lawyers criticised eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain and former president Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury for their demand of an alternative government or national government replacing the elected four-party alliance government.

They reminded Rokonuddin that the judges are holding constitutional posts and they are oath-bound to discharge their judicial functions.

"His call is not only unconstitutional but is an affront to the concept of independent judiciary," they said.

They said suicide bombing is a new phenomenon in Bangladesh and the government took steps to increase the security measures on the court premises and provide gunmen to the judges.

"No doubt more effective steps will be taken in future to combat terrorism but in the absence of unity and co-operation among the political parties against the acts of terrorism, it would be difficult to adopt meaningful measures," they said.

They observed that there are interested quarters who want to paralyse judiciary and portray Bangladesh as a failed state.

They hoped that the people will be united and prevent this handful of politicians from resorting to undemocratic and unconstitutional means.

The lawyers are Tofazzal Hossain Khan, Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed MP, Ziaur Rahman Khan MP, Habibur Islam Bhuiyan, Mahbubur Rahman MP, Barrister AKM Nazrul Islam Khan, Mohammad Nazrul Islam, Barrister Abdur Razzaq and Jainul Abedin.

Bomb recovered from KG school

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Kotwali police recovered a bomb from a kindergarten school at the city's Patharghata area yesterday morning. The bomb was later defused.

Police said the authorities of Ideal Kindergarten School informed them about the abandoned bomb near the school boundary wall at about 9:30am. Sub-inspector (SI) Mir Kashem immediately rushed to the spot, brought the bomb to police station and defused it at 11:30am.

WEATHER TODAY

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

DHAKA TODAY
Discussion: Dakkhin Bangla Jubo Kalyan Samity organises a discussion to mark the death anniversary of Hossain Shahid Suhrawardy. Venue: Mazar premises near Doel Chattrar. Time: 8:00am.
Technology fair: The opening ceremony of China Commodities and Technology Fair 2005 will be held with Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 10:30am.
AL rally: A rally of Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine will be held to protest the bomb blasts on court premises across the country. Venue: Mukhtangon, Ramna. Time: 3:00pm.
Chhatra Maitree: The silver jubilee function of Biplobi Chhatra Maitree will be held. Venue: TSC of Dhaka University. Time: 11:00am.
Samajik Andolon: Sammita Samajik Andolon organises a discussion on the role of civil society in the present perspective of the country. Venue: Liberation War Museum auditorium, Segun Bagicha. Time: 3:30pm.
Disability fair: A national fair on disability will be inaugurated by Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman to mark the International Day of Disabled. Venue: Dhanmondi Playground. Time: 11:00am.
Peoples' Caravan: The concluding rally of the Peoples' Caravan, organised by Ubing to protest the unfair activities of WTO against the interest of the developing countries, will be held. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 3:00pm.
Birthday celebration: A discussion and cultural function will be held in celebration of the birthday of Poet Nasir Ahmed. Venue: World Literature Centre, 14 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Time: 5:00pm.