

Dhaka to enact law to curb militancy

Moudud tells US attorney general

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh is going to enact law providing for harsh measures against financing militant activities.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed told US Attorney General Albarto R Gonzales in Washington, an official release said.

During the meeting they discussed matters of bilateral relations and exchanged views how the two countries could enhance co-operation in the fields of law and justice.

Moudud apprised the US Attorney General of the government programmes undertaken during the last four and a half years for reforms and modernisation of the judiciary.

He briefed him about the success of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in speedy disposal of cases. He said pre-bargaining system will be introduced soon in the judicial process.

Lauding the success of the government programme Albarto Gonzales assured Moudud of US assistance in improving the judiciary and anti-militancy measures.

Bangladesh High Commissioner in USA Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury was present during the meeting.

FALL OF AUTOCRACY DAY

Step up movement to oust govt: Hasina

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the people to step up movement to oust BNP-Jamaat coalition government in a message on the 'Fall of Autocracy Day'.

'Through corruption, plunder, politicisation, violating human rights arbitrarily the alliance government has tarnished the image of the country to the world community' mentioned Sheikh Hasina saying responsibility lies with all patriotic citizens to free the country and its people from the grip of this failed, despotic and corrupt government through stronger movement.

The leader of the opposition said, unified on the issue of caretaker and electoral reform proposals on this day in 1996 the BNP government formed through a voter less poll was compelled to quit in the face of vigorous mass movement, though they braggd to run for the full tenure.

People at that time rejected the election of theft and rigging, said Hasina adding the founder of BNP Ziaur Rahman introduced the vote theft saga, who forcefully grabbed power that was completely unlawful and unconstitutional.

Hasina observed, Zia obtained 99% votes through a mock 'Yes/No' election in 1977.

The chronicle went on while in 1978 keeping Army rule in force Zia brazenly used the administration in presidential election.



Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mother has sought financial assistance for the treatment of her son who has been suffering from Hepatitis C.

Arman Bin Kamal, a student of class five at Saroj International School and College, contracted Hepatitis C following a blood transfusion during a surgery on his body son after his birth. But his illness was diagnosed in 2001.

According to doctors, his liver has already been affected by the virus and he needs immediate hospitalisation.

But the prolonged treatment involves about Tk 15 lakh, which his family cannot afford.

Arman is not only a meritorious student but also writes poems in this young age.

His mother has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save her son's life.

Contributions can be sent to Parveen Akhter, SB A/C No.- 5698/29, Sonail Bank, Begum Rokeya Saroni Branch, Mirpur, Dhaka.



PHOTO: STAR

Non-government primary school teachers stage a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

Biharis should be helped to avert trouble

Says UK House of Lords member

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Baroness Tonge, a member of the UK House of Lords, yesterday expressed concern over the status of stranded Pakistanis in the country, saying that they might cause troubles in the future, if deprived of their due rights.

"If the Biharis (stranded Pakistanis) are not helped, they will go to other people for help, which may lead to troubles," she said while addressing a roundtable at the British Council auditorium in Dhaka. The Dhaka Initiative and the British Council organised the roundtable titled 'Asolution to the Bihari issue'.

Leaving young people of the Bihari community out of education, healthcare and other basic needs is dangerous for all, said Tonge, who is also a trustee of The Dhaka Initiative.

Baroness Tonge, now on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, informed the roundtable that the UK government and the European Parliament, under

their strategy paper for Bangladesh, have initiated a project in the Bihari camps to improve their status.

Presently, The Dhaka Initiative is conducting a survey on the condition of the Biharis across the country and their opinions about whether they want to live in Bangladesh or return to Pakistan.

The Biharis who want to return to Pakistan should be helped and those don't should also be helped in their settlement in Bangladesh under the national and international legal framework on an urgent basis, Tonge stressed.

According to a rough estimate by the Refugee and Migratory Movement and Research Unit (RMMRU), there are about four or five lakh Biharis living in the country. And 75 percent of them were born here after the War of Liberation in '71.

The survey, which began in December last year and is likely to complete in the next two or three

months, suggests that more than 90 percent of the Biharis expressed their willingness to stay in Bangladesh, as they were born here and are accustomed to this society, said Nigel McCollum, another trustee of The Dhaka Initiative.

They, however, need to be recognised in the social, cultural and political contexts, including voting rights, he said.

RMRRU Coordinator Prof CR Abrar, who chaired the roundtable, said the issue of the Biharis should be brought to the table for thorough consultations.

Other participants stressed the need for providing basic amenities to the Biharis.

Prof Quazi Quamruzzaman of The Dhaka Initiative, Dr Tasneem Siddiqui of RMMRU, Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, Advocate Sultana Kamal of Ain O Salish Kendro, Farida Akhter of Ubinig and Syeda Rizwana Hassan of BELA also spoke.

'Groundwater level falling gradually'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Groundwater level in the country is falling gradually due to shortage of fresh water supply from the upstream and over-extraction of water for irrigation, water experts said yesterday.

They also warned that if such situation continues and the groundwater aquifers are not recharged, the country will face massive disasters.

"If water table continues to fall, a vacuum will be created in the aquifer, which could cause the ground to subside suddenly," said Glasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, executive director of the Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS).

Groundwater aquifers cannot be recharged properly as most rivers and water bodies in the country have either dried up or become severely polluted, he said while delivering a lecture at a course on 'Water and Flood Management for Journalists'.

The water flow from the upstream has declined as India has constructed around 400 dams on the Ganges basin, which is the main source of Padma water, he added.


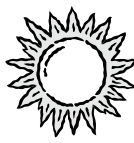
The Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) and Institute of Water and Flood Management (IWFM) of Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET) jointly organised the three-day course at the PIB auditorium in collaboration with the Institute of Water Modelling (IWM) and CEGIS.

Prof Rezaur Rahman of IWFM said water flow of the rivers have decreased to a great extent because of diversion of water further upstream through Farakka barrage and other dams constructed by India.

He suggested preserving water bodies and open spaces across the country so that the aquifers can be recharged through rainwater for the greater interest of the country.

Prof Abul Fazal M Saleh said about 75 percent of water used for irrigation is extracted from aquifers.

Deputy Minister for Information Abdus Salam Pintu distributed certificates among the participants of the course at its closing session yesterday. Information Secretary M Haider Ali and PIB Director General Dr Rezwan Hossain Siddiqui were also present.



# WEATHER

## T O D A Y

### Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Rain or thundershowers, accompanied by temporary gusty wind, is also likely at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Noakhali, Comilla and Chittagong during the period.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 37.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 16.6 degree Celsius at Rangpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:52am 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	36.0	25.4	34	19
Chittagong	36.8	24.5	41	36
Rajshahi	36.4	17.2	29	21
Khulna	35.0	23.0	49	39
Barisal	34.5	22.7	63	64
Sylhet	36.0	21.3	53	30
Cox's Bazar	35.8	23.2	50	37

BAF receives 8 Chinese F-7 fighter planes

BSS, Dhaka

Eight modern F-7 fighter planes out of 16 purchased from China arrived here yesterday.

The government has purchased the fighters for the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF), said an ISPR press release.

Bangladeshi pilots led by Wing Commander Mazharul Karim brought the planes here from Kunming City of China with a short period of landing at Mandalaya of Myanmar.

Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Islam Azam formally received the planes at the BAF base of Kurmitola where high officials of the Air Force were present.

The rest eight fighters are expected to reach here by the middle of the current year.

Hasina returns home today

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will return home this morning after a two-week US tour.

Hasina, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, left Dhaka on March 16 for her ear treatment. Later she went to London from Washington on March 28.

The opposition leader is returning from London by a British Airways flight.

New security system for cars

MAHUB-E-WADUZZAMAN

In the wake of sudden rise in carjacking in and around the capital, a security company has come up with a new security system for cars.

The Security and Management Services International Ltd (SMS) has developed the Satellite Vehicle Tracking System (SVTS) based on the Global Positioning System (GPS) to protect cars from carjacks.

The system is linked through the Global System for Mobile (GSM) network and enables the company to track vehicles across the country.

Under the system, a security device is installed in a car, which then can be monitored from the control rooms of the company. If the car is stolen, the security staffs of the company can identify its location immediately.

The staffs will then inform the car owner of such incident. From the control room, the staffs can also lock all the doors of the car and stop it at that moment.

The company has prepared a digital map of Dhaka city and divided the city into 25 zones to find out the exact location of any vehicle.

Besides, the Geo Fencing System of this company will also prevent unauthorised exits of any vehicle from city limits. Under the system, if the owner does not want his vehicle go beyond a certain limit, the car would stop at the point of the limit automatically.

The company will bring the capital under the security system within the next six months, said Nazmul Huda Mehedi, managing director of SMS.

Rajib Chowdhury, marking manager of the SMS, a company of Pathfinder Group, said it will take one year to bring the entire country under this system.

"Our team will provide 24-hour service throughout the year," he added.

The initial cost of installing the security device will be Tk 40,000 to 50,000 and the monthly installation charge Tk 1,500 to 2,000, he said, adding that they are going to formally introduce the state-of-the-art technology on April 3.

Obituary

BDNEWS, Dhaka



Hospital in Dhaka at the age of 81.

Rahim, father of BSS News Editor Bakhtiar Rana, was buried at his family graveyard in Samserabad village in Sadar upazila of Lakshimpur.

He left behind his wife, eight sons and four daughters.

Kalidasi Biswas, mother of staff reporter of the daily Janakantha Tapan Biswas, died at her village home in Khulna on Tuesday night at the age of 76.

She is survived by her husband, two sons and a daughter.

Dhaka Reporters' Unity President M Shafiqul Karim and General Secretary Shahed Chowdhury expressed deep shock at the death of Kalidasi.

9 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 37 others injured in separate road accidents in Chittagong, Narayanganj, Gopalganj and Rajbari yesterday and Tuesday night.

Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong reports: Three people, including one woman, were killed and two others injured in a road accident at Sitakunda early hours of yesterday.

The accident occurred when a Chittagong bound rod-laden truck hit a covered van on Dhaka-Chittagong highway and its driver lost control over the steering near CDA Connecting Road intersection of Dhaka-Chittagong Highway adjoining Faujderhat Railway Station at around 1:00am.

The van driver identified as Suruj Mia, 25, his relative Jahanara Begum, 40, and helper of the truck Ayar Mohammad, 35, were killed on the spot.

Janara's minor son Karim Ullah,

8, and the van helper Badal, 18, were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

The bodies were kept at Sitakunda Police Station till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

Police seized both the vehicles.

BDNEWS from Narayanganj adds: At least two day-labourers were killed and 35 others injured in a road accident yesterday on BhultaKanchan Road at Ponab under Rugganj upazila in Narayanganj.

The deceased were identified as Abdul Khalek, 40, and Sabur, 50.

Local people and police said the mishap occurred when a truck, carrying 40 day-labourers, fell into a roadside ditch after its driver lost control.

Police sent the bodies to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

UNB from Gopalganj adds: A primary schoolboy was crushed under the wheels of a bus at

Haridaspur crossing in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead was identified as Badal Thikadar, 6, student of class-I.

Local people said the accident took place when Badal was going to school at about 8:00am.

Police seized the bus but driver managed to escape.

UNB from Rajbari reports: Three people were killed as a truck fell into a roadside ditch in Sadar upazila on Daulatdia-Khulna highway on Tuesday night.

Police and locals said the accident took place when a truck hit another truck, parked on the road, from behind at Nimtala at about 10:00am, killing three truck passengers on the spot.

Two of the dead were identified as Mrinal Kanti Biswas, 45, and Kabir, 32. Identity of another could not be known.

Police sent the bodies to morgue for autopsy.

Couple held on charge of torturing maid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested employers of a minor domestic help yesterday for allegedly torturing her causing severe burn injuries on different parts of her body.

Nuruzzaman and his wife Shuchi Zaman, who live at a rented house at Rampura Banasree in Khilgaon in the city, were nabbed at about 12:30am after the owner of the house had informed the police about the incidence.

Police recovered the domestic help, Ruma, 7, with burn marks on several parts of her body from the house and admitted her to the One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Khilgaon police filed a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act accusing the couple and sent them to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

OCC Gynaecology Consultant

Bilkis Begum said the marks suggest that her injuries were caused for pouring hot water on her delicate body and the poor girl was also hit with broken glasses. It will take time for her to be cured, she noted.

Ruma, the domestic help, told the reporters at the DMCH yesterday that Shuchi used to beat her often and so did she yesterday causing those injuries.

Bangladesh Bank CBA leader suspended on charge of theft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A CBA leader of Bangladesh Bank (BB) was suspended temporarily yesterday on charge of stealing Tk 11,500 at the Motijheel branch of the bank.

Noushad Ali, an MLSS and joint secretary of the CBA, pocketed 23 notes of Tk 500 while making bundles of banknotes at around 11:00am, sources said.

While checking the bundles, a currency officer found that 23 banknotes have been missing. Later during a search, the notes were found in the possession of Noushad.

A high official of the bank said a committee will be formed soon to probe the incident and the final decision regarding Noushad will be taken on the basis of the committee's report.



PHOTO: STAR

Samajik Protirodh Committee takes out a procession at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding execution of the High Court verdict against fatwa.



# DHAKA

## T O D A Y

### Workshop on Early Marriage

The Population Council organises a workshop on 'Programmes and Policies to Prevent Early Marriage in Bangladesh'. Venue: Brac Inn. Time: 9:30am.

### Workshop on Early Childhood

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises a workshop on 'Early Childhood Development'. Venue: Khan Foundation Conference Room. Time: 10:30am.

### Discussion

Bangladesh Council for Child Welfare (BCCW) will hold a discussion on '35th Year of Independence of Bangladesh: Dream and Achievement of Our Children'. Venue: BCCW, Topkhana Road. Time: 4:00pm.

### Recognition ceremony

The matriculation and recognition ceremony of University of Information Technology & Sciences (UITS) will be held. Venue: Emma Nuelle's, Gulshan. Time: 4:00pm.

### NIKDU Day

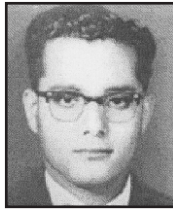
National Institute of Kidney Diseases and Urology (NIKDU) will celebrate NIKDU Day. Venue: NIKDU premises. Time: 9:00am.

### Blue for Peace

Family of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria will stage a silent sit-in as part of their Blue for Peace Programme demanding trial of the killers of former minister. Venue: In front of Malancha, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:30pm.

Death anniversary

BSS, Dhaka

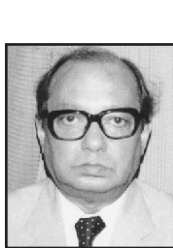


Today is the 35th death anniversary of Shaheed Dr Lieutenant Colonel ANM Jahangir.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and doa mahfil have been arranged after Esha prayers at Nayatola Darus Salam Madrasa at Madhubagh in the city today.

Prayers will be offered at the mazar of Col Jahangir at the Comilla Cantonment and doa mahfil at the Comilla CMH Mosque after Juma prayers tomorrow.

Lt Col Jahangir was brutally killed in captivity of the Pakistani occupation forces during the War of Liberation in 1971.



press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his village mosque in Gazaria, Munshiganj after Zohr prayers today.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

**A H Chowdhury**

Today is the first death anniversary of A H Chowdhury, former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, says a