



Udichi took out a colourful procession from the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to mark its two-day national council.

Hasina, Ramesh discuss bilateral trade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting Indian State Minister for Commerce Jairam Ramesh yesterday met with the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina and discussed bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

After an hour-long meeting at Hasina's Sudha Sadan residence in the city, Ramesh told the journalists that it was a courtesy call where he discussed bilateral issues especially the economic ties between the two countries.

"I have informed her of the progress of Safta at the Saarc Commerce Ministers' meeting in Dhaka when the opposition leader wanted to know," he added.

Briefing the journalists, AL Presidium Member Kazi Zafnullah MP said the Indian minister came only to call on the opposition leader as he did not meet her earlier.

He had discussed with her the possible ways to strengthen bilateral relations between the two close door neighbours.

Another AL Presidium Member and former commerce and industry minister Tofail Ahmed said they told the Indian minister that the AL is not against bilateral FTA with India, and it could be done protecting the interest of Bangladesh.

Tofail said they also discussed how to reduce Bangladesh's trade imbalance with India.

Obaidul Quader, AL's acting general secretary, said the Indian minister wanted to see Bangladesh an economically strong country.

AL leaders Abdur Razzak MP and Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Veena Sikri were also present in the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR
A metal mural titled 'Business and Art' by sculptor Hamiduzzaman Khan was inaugurated at the Summit Centre at Karwan Bazar in the city yesterday.

Summit Centre wears new look with Hamid's touch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A dazzling stone sculpture and metal mural constructed inside a city's business house Summit Centre by eminent sculptor Hamiduzzaman Khan was inaugurated yesterday.

Jahanara Abedin, wife of master artist Zainul Abedin, inaugurated the sculpture.

Lauding the work of the sculpture, she said all credit goes to Hamid, as the sculpture is unique.

Hamiduzzaman said, "I had worked hard for 7 to 8 years ago and anyone felt the aesthetic beauty just when he/she steps in the building."

He also said it is a pleasure that nowadays the businesses like Summit came forward in promoting art.

Muhammad Aziz Khan, chairman of Summit Group of Companies, said Hamiduzzaman Khan and Summit share a common interest in the development of people, nature and social harmony.

The walls of the building were also decorated with some outstanding paintings of Hamiduzzaman Khan, Zainul Abedin and SM Sultan.

Nat'l seminar at JU

JU CORRESPONDENT

A two-day national seminar on 'State, violence and rights: Perspective from social science' begins at Jahangirnagar University (JU) today.

The Department of Anthropology of JU organised the seminar in association with Save the Children, Sweden and Denmark and University Grants Commission.

MANIKGANJ BY-POLLS

Massive rigging alleged

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Citizen's Committee candidate Mushfiqur Rahman Khan Hannan has brought allegation of massive vote rigging in the Manikganj by-election against the ruling four-party alliance.

Speaking at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium yesterday, he demanded recounting of the ballot papers in presence of all the candidates.

Hannan claimed if recounted he

would win the election although the ruling party candidate Mainul Islam Shanta was declared winner by a margin of 12,000 votes.

He alleged that his polling agents were driven out from all the centres.

Apart from this, his supporters were intimidated and the administration detained the leaders and activists of the Citizen's Committee, he claimed.

Hannan said although the presence of voters was thin, 70 to

80 percent votes were shown cast in three centres of the union from where the ruling party candidate hails, but only 40 to 50 percent votes were shown cast in other centres.

He said complaint was lodged with the returning officer immediately but he did not accept it.

A written complaint will be filed with the Election Commission Office in this connection tomorrow, he added.

Final of English debate contest in Ctg today

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Chittagong

William Carey Academy and Summer Fields School yesterday emerged as finalists in the 'Mutual Trust Bank-The Daily Star 6th International English Debate Competition'.

The final of the debate, organised by Drishti, a cultural organisation, will be held at the auditorium of Theatre Institute Chittagong today.

The Daily Star and the Mutual Trust Bank are the sponsors of the weeklong contest that began on Tuesday.

Apart from the final, another debate session will also be held to identify the second runners-up.

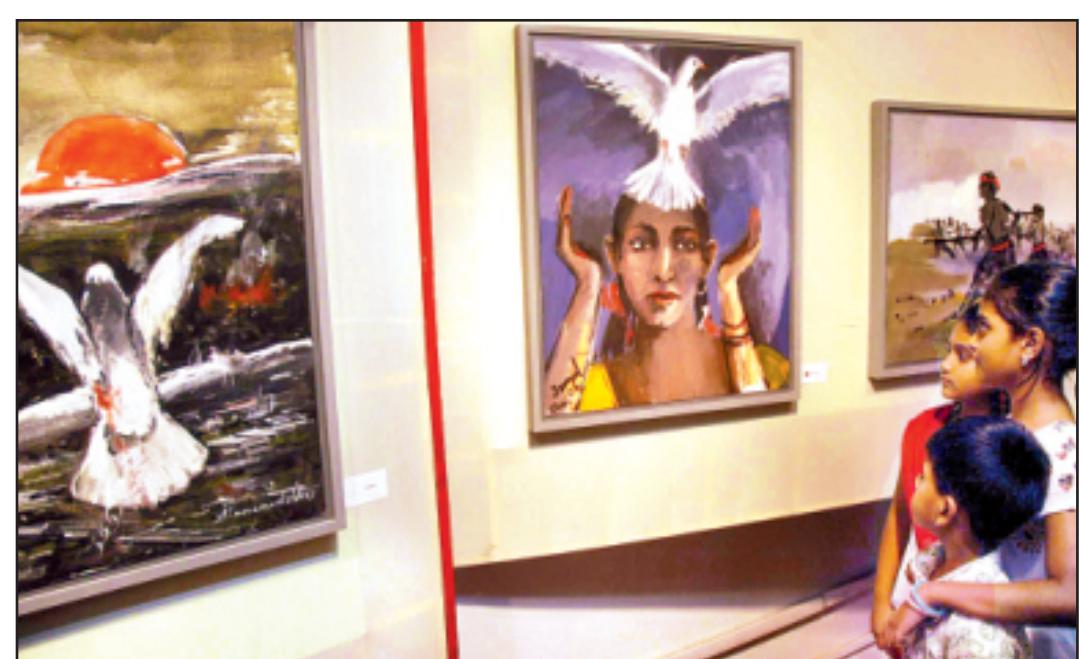
The final and championship debate will be held in parliamentary style.

In the semi-finals held yesterday, William Carey Academy defeated Oxbridge International School while Summer Fields School beat Elementary School.

The motions of parliamentary-style debates were "Developed countries are mainly responsible for violation of human rights" and "The expansion of information and communication technology (ICT) in Bangladesh is mainly hindered by our unskilled manpower rather than our infrastructural shortcomings".

Tasmia Hoque of William Carey Academy and Amit Bhattacharjee of Summer Field School and College were adjudged the best debaters.

Bangladesh Debate Federation Joint Secretary Adnan Mannan was the speaker of the debates and USTC lecturer Sazzad Hossain Zami and debater Dr Masud Rana were the judges.



An art exhibition titled 'Freedom' began at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

Five robbers held with arms in Ctg

BDNEWS, Chittagong

A team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five robbers with three light guns and ten rounds of cartridges from an abandoned poultry farm at Rangunia upazila in Chittagong on Thursday night.

The Rab-7 team, acting on a tip-

off, raided the poultry farm at Sarab Ghata union at around 8:30pm when the robbers were preparing to commit robbery.

The arrested are Nizamuddin, Nasiruddin, Tajul Islam, Jashimuddin and Abdul Haq.

They were handed over to Rangunia police station.

WEATHER TODAY

Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division and regions of Tangail and Mymensingh in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said, predicting slight rise in day temperature over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangamati and the lowest of 18.8 degrees at Sayedpur and Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:23pm today and rises at 5:31am 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	33.5	21.3	53	50
Chittagong	35.2	24.5	54	61
Rajshahi	34.6	20.8	60	61
Khulna	35.2	21.5	55	45
Barisal	34.5	21.0	64	63
Sylhet	32.9	20.8	63	49
Cox's Bazar	35.0	24.0	46	51