

## PROTOCOL ON PREFERENTIAL TARIFF SCHEME Cabinet okays proposal

*Non-govt Pry Teachers' Trust Act, Nat'l Culture Act get nod*

UNB, Dhaka

The Cabinet yesterday approved a proposal for signing 'The Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme (PRETAS)' meant for facilitating enhanced trade among the OIC nations.

An official announcement said the Protocol is aimed at "expanding trade among the member-countries of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) on preferential basis".

With Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair, the weekly meeting of the cabinet also approved two draft acts and a few proposals.

The two proposed laws are: The Non-government Primary Teachers Welfare Trust (Amendment) Act 2006 and The National Culture Act 2006.

The cultural law provides for formulating a policy for making specific plans for fostering the nation's "glorious cultural heritage, its present stage and its future

flourishing".

It also approved a proposal for ratification of the 'Stockholm Convention on POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants)' to remove POPs, identified as risk elements for public health and environment protection, from the environment gradually.

Cabinet members and state ministers concerned attended the meeting. The cabinet secretary and secretaries of the ministries concerned were also present.

## ELECTION OLYMPIAD IN KHAGRACHHARI

## Civil society members urged to help strengthen democracy

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Khagrachhari

Speakers at an Election Olympiad here yesterday called on the civil society members to come forward unitedly to strengthen democracy and make the country prosperous.

If the civil society raises its voice, the ruling party would be compelled to bring reforms to the electoral law and Election Commission, they said.

The civil society should also play a vital role in bringing about reforms in the political parties and curbing crimes and corruption, they

added.

They said unqualified politicians often become hostage to bureaucrats who actually run the government and indulge in corruption.

Economist Prof Sekander Khan inaugurated the Election Olympiad organised by the Sushasoneer Jonno Nagorik (Sujan) and Channeli.

Bodhi Sattya Dewan, principal of Khagrachhari Government College, chaired the discussion while Zila Parishad Chairman Monindra Lal Tripura was present as the chief guest.

Sujan coordinator Dilip Kumar

Sarker, Rangamati Press Club President Sunil kanti Dey and Editor of the Pratidin Khagrachhari Tarun Kumar Battacharya also spoke.

About 250 college and university students took part in a competition during the Election Olympiad held at Khagrachhari Government College.

In the competition divided into two groups, the students gave answers to objective-type questions on citizens' rights, election process, electoral laws and the caretaker government.

## Call to repeal Labour Law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday threatened to go for tougher agitation if Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 is not repealed immediately.

Terming it a black law, Jatiya Sramik League President Abdul Matin Master and General Secretary Roy Ramesh Chandra in a joint statement said the bill is a clear violation of the constitution, ILO convention and 1969 ordinance on trade relations.

With the implementation of new law, the workers will lose their rights to nominate their leaders, the trade union presidents and secretaries will be harassed through frequent transfers on punishment, about half of the total workers will lose their jobs as the age-limit has been reduced to 57 from 60, and 70 percent agricultural labour will be deprived of their rights to trade union, they said.

Meanwhile, Karmojibi Nari President Shirin Akhtar and General Secretary Sharmin Kabir have said the law lacks clear indications on work hours, weekly and other holidays, maternal leave, minimum wage and security in workplaces while the clause 324 (1) of the new law allows the owners to do whatever they like in this respect.

Jatiya Sramik Federation President Abul Bashir and General Secretary Shafiuddin Ahmed condemned the law and said it would incite violence inside the factory instead of making it peaceful.

They called for formulating a democratic labour law discarding the Labour Law 2006.

## Demand for Tk 3000 as minimum wage reiterated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different garment workers organisations yesterday rejected fixing of minimum wage at Tk 1604 and reiterated their demand for Tk 3000.

Garments Sramik Sangram Parishad staged a sit-in in front of the Wage Board office at Topkhana Road in the city and submitted a memorandum to the Board Secretary Khorshedul Haque Bhuiyan.

Besides, a platform of 16 garment organisations held an urgent central committee meeting with Mir Abul Kalam Azad in chair at Topkhana and vowed to continue their agitation until their demand is met.

Later, they held a rally at Muktangan and decided to submit a 'mass objection' letter to the chairman of the Board.

## Bridge named after Saifur

BSS, Dhaka

The bridge constructed on the Dholai river in Companyganj upazila of Sylhet has been named after Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman as "M Saifur Rahman Bridge."

A handout said here yesterday the government has taken the decision in honour of the finance minister's contribution to the overall economic development of the country.



## Bangladeshi made chief of staff in UNIIC in Lebanon

Humayun Kabir, a Bangladeshi, has been appointed as the chief of staff in the United Nations Independent International Investigation Commission in Lebanon (UNIIC), says a press release.

The commission will investigate the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, which took place in 2005.

Prior to his new assignment, Kabir served as the Director for Security Planning and Management and the Chief of Staff in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

During his long 30-year career in the United Nations, Kabir held several field and headquarter positions in the International Labour Organisation, UN Development Programme, UN Drug Control Programme and the UN Secretariat in New York.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia offers munajat at an iftar party at the Proshan Montri Bhaban in the city yesterday.

## ATTACK ON DU JOURNOS

## BCL high-ups take move to save attackers

KAMRUL HASAN KHAN

Instead of taking any organisational actions against 12 leaders who beat up journalists on Dhaka University (DU) campus recently, the high-ups of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL), are taking a blatant move to save the attackers.

After repeated demands from the journalists' community, the BCL top shots are mum over taking any action against them.

Sources said BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon and General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton are patronising the attackers and making vigorous efforts to make two of the 12 leaders Ashrafur Rahman and Sohel Rana Tipu as president and general secretary of DU unit committee which is likely to be formed soon.

Ripon and Roton are very reluctant to take any action against the attackers even after AL Chief Sheikh Hasina on September 19 instructed them to take action to solve the problems between the BCL and journalists.

Hasina also directed few mid-level AL leaders to look into the matter. But those leaders have expressed their dissatisfaction over the BCL activities to Hasina and refused to take any responsibilities in this regard.

A senior AL leader preferring not

to be named has told The Daily Star that Hasina also is not happy with the BCL activities and she may dissolve present committee if situation like this continues.

Some BCL leaders and activists have alleged that former BCL president Liaqat Sikder is influencing incumbent president and general secretary not to take any punitive actions against the attackers, as they are loyal to Sikder.

However, Sikder has denied the allegation.

Sources said Ripon and Roton had directed some of the 12 BCL men over phone to attack the rival faction's press conference on September 16 in which at least five journalists were wounded.

Next day, Dhaka University Journalists' Association (Duja) filed a case against the BCL leaders and activists including Sohel Rana Tipu, Saiful Islam, Alaul Islam Saikat, Tarek, Faisal, Ashraf, Abu Abbas Bhuiyan, Mizan, Nuruzzaman, Ziko and Titu who launched the attack on the journalists.

Even after 11 days into the attack, only two attackers Ashraf and Nuruzzaman were arrested.

Others are continuing participation in BCL activities and AL programmes outside the campus.

As the BCL did not take any actions, journalists have been boycotting their functions.

## Asian Women University Bill passed in JS

BSS, Dhaka

A new bill with provision for setting up the much-awaited Asian University for Women was passed in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Education Minister Dr M Osman Faruk earlier piloted the Asian University for Women Bill, 2006 in the House for approval saying, the decision to set up a separate university was taken to bring the backward women community of Asia to the mainstream of national development.

The other important objective of the bill is to develop capable women leadership in various disciplines through higher education in the world's largest continent.

The proposed university will be set up at the picturesque hill-locked Pahartali in the port city of Chittagong.

The minister while advocating in favour of the bill said, "there exists an urgent need to create and sustain centres of excellence in education for the Asian women in general and in particular for women from the rural, poor and other disadvantaged populations."

He told the house that the government places top priority on improving the condition of women and strengthening the quality of education as the means for advancing national development and desires to host and support the university in Bangladesh.

A number of opposition lawmakers brought amendment and proposed to send the Bill for seeking public opinion, which, however, were rejected by voice votes.

## PM takes iftar with orphans, physically challenged children

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia took iftar, on the first day of Ramadan fasting, with the orphans, physically challenged children and Alem-Ulema.

Noted Islamic thinkers, orphan boys and girls from different orphanages and physically challenged children attended the iftar party at Proshan Montri Bhaban.

The PM exchanged pleasantries with the guests and enquired about well-being of the children.

A munajat was offered before iftar, seeking blessing of the Almighty Allah for "peace, progress and prosperity" of the country and its people.

Several ministers and lawmakers also attended the function.

## PM inaugurates Archeological Bhaban

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday formally inaugurated the newly constructed 10-story Archeological Bhaban at Agargaon in the capital.

The Cultural Affairs Ministry implemented the project at a cost of over Tk 13.89 crore.

Khaleda unveiled the plaque of the building and joined a prayer offered on the occasion.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman was present during the inauguration.

## Former BNP MP Zahurul passes away

UNB, Bogra

Advocate Zahurul Islam, a former BNP MP and pourashava chairman, passed away due to old age ailment at his residence in the district town yesterday morning at the age of 72.

The BNP lawmaker left behind his wife, a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Advocate Zahurul Islam, founder president of BNP Bogra district unit, was elected MP twice in 1981 and 1996. He was also the chairman of Bogra pourashava from 1979 to 1999.

He was buried at Dakshin Bogra graveyard.

## Firoz Uddin

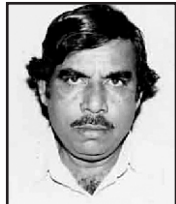
Firoz Uddin, superintend of customs, excise and vat department, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on Sunday at the age of 53, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Dhaka-Rajshahi Customs, Excise and Vat Executive Officers Association, expressed deep condolence at his death and also conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family.

## Ismat Reza Khan Manu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Rajshahi



Ismat Reza Khan Manu, a freedom fighter and former president of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industries, died

at Birdem Hospital in Dhaka on Sunday at the age of 53.

He had been suffering from liver cancer.

He is survived by his mother, wife, two sons and a daughter.

He was buried at Tikapara graveyard in Rajshahi city yesterday.

Awami League leader AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, Workers' Party leader Fazle Hossain Badsha and JSD leader Abdullah Al Masud Shibli expressed deep shock at his death.

## Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 7th death anniversary of noted litterateur and journalist Mafuha Chowdhury, says a press release.

During her long career in journalism, Mafuha, wife of poet Talim Hossain, had worked for the then Dainik Pakistan, Dainik Bangla and the daily Millat.

She also served as the head of Bangla department at BAF Shaheen School in Dhaka.

Her family members will hold a special prayer session to mark her death anniversary.

## CASE OF VANDALISM

## Dr Iqbal gets regular bail

UNB, Dhaka

Former Awami League lawmaker Dr HBM Iqbal, accused in a case of vandalism during the September 10 hartal enforced by 14-party opposition combine, gets regular bail from the High Court yesterday.

A vacation bench comprising Justice Salma Masud Chowdhury and Justice Farid Ahmed, in response to an application filed by Dr Iqbal, passed the order.

Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru and Barrister Mustafizur Rahman Khan appeared for the petitioner.

## Book on media launched

DU CORRESPONDENT

Publication ceremony of a book entitled 'Communication in Bangladesh: Media Responses and Campaign Strategy' by Prof Dr Golam Rahman was held at RC Majumdar Auditorium of Dhaka University (DU) recently.

Rahat Khan, acting editor of the daily Ittefaq, unveiled the cover of the book published by Shrabon Prokashoni.

The book will help the media deal with problems prevailing in development communication, social and health sectors, he said.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, DU, said the book provides useful communication directives to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

Chaired by Prof Sakhawati Ali Khan, the ceremony was also addressed by media personality Mohammad Jahangir, Robaet Ferdous, Dr ASM Amanullah and Mir Mosharraf Hossain, says a press release.

The author, Prof Golam Rahman, is a former chair of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism.



## Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

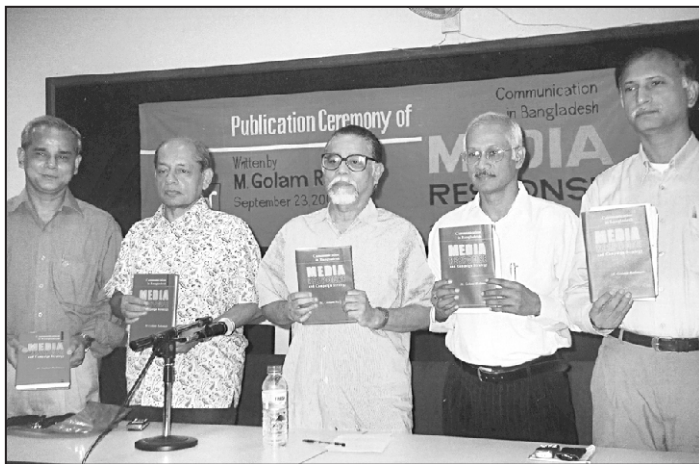
Day temperature may rise by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and lowest 23.2 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11pm today and rises at 5:49am 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	31.2	26.3	77	76
Chittagong	32.5	25.4	77	81
Rajshahi	30.6	24.8	91	95
Khulna	32.0	25.6	88	86
Barisal	29.6	26.0	92	91
Sylhet	33.0	26.0	96	73
Cox's Bazar	32.0	24.3	76	78



Guests and the author of the book entitled 'Communication in Bangladesh: Media Responses and Campaign Strategy' hold copies of the book at its publication ceremony in the city recently. From left are Mohammad Jahangir, Rahat Khan, Dr Sakhawati Ali Khan, author Dr Golam Rahman and Prof Arefin Siddique.