



Children take part in an art competition organised by the National Museum on its premises in the city yesterday to mark the Independence Day.

PHOTO: STAR

## 50 prisoners freed from Ctg jail

BSS, Chittagong

The government yesterday released 50 prisoners convicted of minor charges from Chittagong Central Jail on the occasion of the Independence and National Day.

Jail sources said four more prisoners would be freed today.

The jail authorities earlier recommended the names of 206 convicts to the higher authorities for their release. But the government allowed amnesty to 54 inmates in the first phase.

Jail Superintendent Bazul Rashid told BSS that more listed inmates would be released in the second phase.

## RU admission process ends with 80 seats vacant

RU CORRESPONDENT

The admission process of first year honours of Rajshahi University (RU) ended with 80 seats in different departments still vacant, as the authorities did not announce next waiting list for new intake.

University academic section office admitted the fact yesterday.

The RU admission process for session 2006-07 began in January this year and admission date of first waiting list ended on March 11.

Three seats are vacant in the Islamic History and Culture, four in the History, three in English, one in

Language, three in Computer Science and Technology, two in Population Science, two in Economics, two in Social Work and two in Public Administration departments, sources in the university academic section said.

The sources said as admission process of many public universities are yet to complete, many students who enrolled in RU may migrate to other universities vacating more seats.

Students in the next waiting list yesterday urged the authorities for filling up of the vacant seats and announce fresh admission date.

University student organisations and teachers also demanded for immediate filling of the vacant seats and give opportunity to the deprived students.

They also said the admission seekers had qualified in the merit list competing 80 students per seat, so these seats were important for higher education.

## Book fair begins in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

A four-day-long book fair titled 'Swadhinatar Boi Mela' began in the port city yesterday.

Freedom fighter and columnist Major General (retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Pratik inaugurated the fair at Nazrul Square (DC Hill) in the afternoon.

Later eminent Scientist Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam, Dr Moniruzzaman, Sangeetacharya Jagdananda Barua, Litterateur Fahmida Amin, Begum Mushtari Shafi, Prof Rawshan Akhtar Hanif, Researcher Dr Mohammad Abul Kashem and Dr Mahbulul Haq inaugurated the subject-wise stalls.

Eminent Social Scientist and Chairman of Chittagong Academy Prof Dr Anupam Sen presided over the inaugural ceremony which was addressed by its Director General Rashed Rouf, Boi Mela Parishad Joint Convenor Nesar Ahmed and Secretary General Dipak Barua.

Recitations, songs and dances followed the inaugural ceremony.

Organised by Chittagong Academy, the fair was attended by a good number of visitors from all walks of life.

Fourteen stalls have been set up in the fair ground after the name of 14 late scholars of the country.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY Some city roads made off-limits to traffic

UNB, Dhaka

Certain city roads have been made off-limits to traffic on the occasion of Independence Day on March 26.

All kinds of vehicles, except those of the invited guests, have been advised to use alternative roads avoiding the following roads for smooth traffic control near the National Parade Square as a five-hour parade will begin at 7:30am on the day, said a DMP press release.

The roads are from Khejur Bagan crossing to Zia Uddin crossing and up to Mirpur-10 Gol Chakkar via Rokeya Sarani, and from Shaymoli Shishu Mela crossing to Rokeya Sarani via Agargaon Light crossing.

The roads also include Bijoy Sarani crossing to Zia Uddin crossing, Crescent Lake to Prodhannomtr Bhaban and from Defence Ministry gap to Rokeya Sarani via Planning Commission.

As VVIPs, VIPs and other invited guests would visit the National Memorial in Savar on the day, big vehicles like buses, minibuses, trucks and lorries have been asked to use alternative roads such as Dhaka Airport Road-Abdullahpur crossing and Ashulia road avoiding Gabtali Amin Bazar Bridge and Savar road from 5:00am to 7:30am.

Dhaka-bound vehicles, which use roads from Aricha to Amin Bazar, have been asked to enter the capital using the roads from Nabinagar Bazar to Ashulia.

Besides, the capital-bound vehicles using roads from Tangail to Ashulia have been advised to use roads from Kaliakoir-Gazipur crossing and Tongi to enter the capital.

# Take steps to protect rivers from industrial wastes

## Environmentalists tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists at a workshop yesterday called for protecting the sources of surface water including rivers and other water bodies from pollution and encroachment to overcome the growing scarcity of water.

The workshop titled 'Bangladesh: Wastage and pollution of water' was organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) at its central office in the city to mark the World Water Day.

The speakers said major surface water bodies, including the Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag and Balu are virtually dead due to illegal encroachment and pollution by industrial waste.

They said Saidabad Water

Treatment Plant in the capital is now unable to treat water from the Shitalakhya due to heavy pollution, and in future water has to be brought from the river Meghna which will be very costly.

"A major industrial growth has already posed serious challenges for maintaining environmental quality and sustaining infrastructural services, including water supply, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management," said former Dhaka WASA chief engineer Kazi Mohammad Sheesh while presenting a keynote paper.

He urged the industrialists to take necessary steps to check river pollution resulting from industrial wastes and illegal encroachments.

Mihir Biswas, member-secretary of Buriganga Bachao

Andolon, said dissolved oxygen level in the peripheral rivers including Buriganga and Shitalakhya fell below one mg/l during the last seven dry months.

"All the major surface water bodies including Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag and Balu around the capital are virtually dead, posing a serious threat to the source of water supply for its residents," he added.

Stressing the need for reducing dependency on groundwater, he said surface water sources, including rivers and other water bodies, have to be protected from pollution.

Dr Nazmun Nahar said due to scarcity of pure drinking water and low sanitation coverage, about 110,000 children under five die of waterborne diseases, including

diarrhoea, every year in Bangladesh.

Engineer Emad Uddin Ahmed, executive director of the Institute of Water Modelling (IWM), said there is no coordination among the different departments concerned for proper water management, and the worsening situation of the rivers has been created due to lack of proper care.

Bapa General Secretary Mahidul Haq Khan said Dhaka will be the second largest mega-city of the world by 2015 with a population of 22.7 million.

"So action plan should be taken to meet the growing demand of water for urban population," he added.

Engineer Abdur Razzak and Academic Kazi Madina also took part in the workshop.



Twenty-five 'free markets' open at different places in the city yesterday with a view to checking price hike of essentials. This picture was taken from Kamalapur TT Para Bus Stand area.



Maj Gen (retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Pratik inaugurates Independence Day Book Fair in the DC Hill area in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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