

Tagore's birth anniversary today

UNB, Dhaka

The 146th birth anniversary of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore will be celebrated today.

Rabindranath, whose multifaceted talent enriched all genres of Bangla literature and arts, was the first Asian to be awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize.

His poems, novels, short stories, dramas, articles, essays, paintings,

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HSC exam begins Thursday

UNB, Dhaka

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent examinations, including Alim and HSC (BM), will begin across the country on Thursday.

Addressing a press conference at his office yesterday, Education Adviser Ayub Qadri said as many as 541,817 students will sit for the exams this year under Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla, Jessore, Chittagong, Barisal, Sylhet, Madrasa and Technical education boards.

Of the total, 129,179 students will appear under Dhaka Education Board, 104,394 under Rajshahi, 46,573 under Comilla, 80,535 under Jessore, 37,764 under Chittagong, 24,599 under Barisal and 17,204 under Sylhet education boards from 1007 centres.

Some 52,034 students will appear in Alim exams under Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board from 345 centres and 49,535 students will sit for HSC (BM) exams under Bangladesh Technical

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Dhaka asks Delhi to send back Joy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh requested India to send back deraised crime lord Khandakar Tanvir Islam Joy, who was arrested by Kolkata police on Saturday.

The Bangladesh foreign ministry yesterday sent a letter to the Indian foreign ministry through Bangladesh's Deputy High Commission in Kolkata requesting to handover Joy, private satellite television channel, ETV, reports quoting the deputy high commissioner.

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Prayer Timing		
May 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrab	6-34	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Hawa Bhaban active again to rule BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of people close to Hawa Bhaban and Tarique Rahman have taken initiatives to persuade the BNP chief to make changes in the upper echelon of the party in an attempt to re-establish their own supremacy in the embattled organisation.

According to sources, the Hawa Bhaban clique wants to convince Chairperson Khaleda Zia to take disciplinary actions against some reformist senior leaders of the party, accusing them of not playing the expected role against the arrest of Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman and against the virtual 'house arrest' of the party chief.

The clique, which has become controversial for its members

activities in the last five years, is opposing some of the senior party leaders' move to bring reforms in the organisation, saying that reforms cannot be brought while the party chairperson is not accessible and the senior joint secretary general is in jail.

Party sources said the coterie of Hawa Bhaban people Khaleda Zia already made her younger brother Saeed Iskandar a vice-president of the party, giving rise to a new controversy, which prompted some leaders including former ministers Osman Faruk and Hamzan Shah to term the appointment as untimely.

"These people made the party chairperson's office controversial by engaging in corruption while the party was in power, now they are trying to create a gap between

sons had gone into hidings after the declaration of the state of emergency, who are now trying to make their reappearances public only after the government issued a press note denying that there is any restriction on Khaleda Zia's movement.

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Indian cricket team in town

SPORTS REPORTER

India arrived here yesterday morning to play three one-dayers and two Tests against the Tigers.

The wounded Indians, who were sent packing by Bangladesh from the first round of the just-concluded World Cup in the West Indies, took a short flight from Kolkata to reach Dhaka for their second full series after they had played their first one in 2004.

India won their first series quite comfortably, clinching the Test series 2-0 and lifting the one-day series 2-1.

But after Bangladesh's glorious five-wicket victory against Rahul Dravid's boys in the Caribbean, the latest series that start with the three one-dayers got enormous attention among fans of the two neighbouring countries.

While Dravid's India, without their two great sporting icons - Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav

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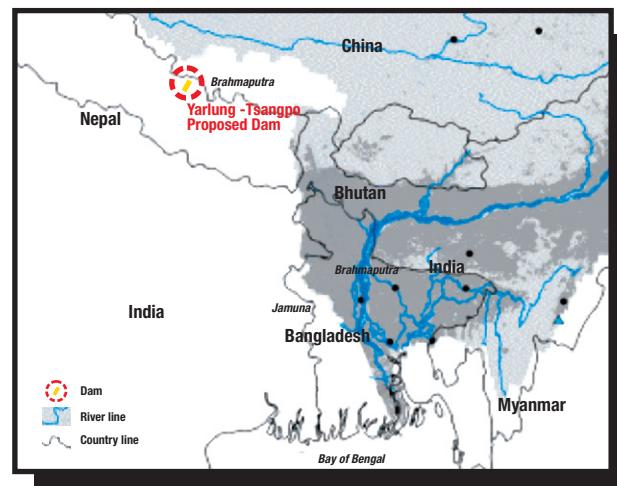


PHOTO: STAR

India captain Rahul Dravid talking to reporters on arrival in Dhaka yesterday to play three ODIs and two Tests against the Tigers.

China plans to divert Brahmaputra waters

Environmentalists fear huge eco disaster in Bangladesh



SURAJNITH DEABNATH

China plans to construct a dam at Yarlung Tsangpo point on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet province to divert 200 billion cubic metres of water annually to the Yellow River threatening a major ecological disaster in Bangladesh within the next few years.

Experts and environmentalists fear Bangladesh would turn into a desert in the near future as water flow of Brahmaputra-Jamuna river, which is about 60 per cent of the total water flow, will fall drastically if China builds the dam on the Brahmaputra.

According to morphologist Maminul Haque Sarker of Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), one-third water flow of Brahmaputra-Jamuna would decline if the

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NETRAKONA BLAST

Charges framed against Bangla Bhai's wife, 3 JMB men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Speedy Trial Tribunal Court-1 in Dhaka on Sunday noon framed charge against four JMB men including Fahima Farjana, wife of executed militant kingpin Siddikul Islam Bangla Bhai, in the case filed for December 8, 2005 bomb blast in front of Udichi office in the district town, Netrakona police said.

The three other accused are Asaduzzaman Asad alias Panir, Salauddin alias Sohel, and Yunus Ali alias Kawser Ahmed, an absconder.

Asaduzzaman, Fahima and Salauddin were produced before the court.

This is the first time a charge has been framed against Fahima.

Eight people were killed and 50 others injured in a suicide bomb blast in front of Netrakona Udichi office on December 8 in 2005.

PRE-BUDGET DISCUSSION

Hold talks before, after budget in absence of JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former adviser to a caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan has suggested that the caretaker government hold consultation meetings before and after the budget declaration to fulfil the constitutions in the absence of a parliament in the country.

The parliament is not effective for holding budget discussions but there is no bar to holding consultations with the people, he said while addressing as chief guest at a pre-budget discussion in the capital yesterday.

Referring to Article 38 of the

constitution, Akbar said there should not be any taxation without the act of parliament. "As parliament is not effective and there is hardly any chance of its being formed in next 18 months, the government should hold consultations and discussions with the people about the tax measures in the upcoming budget," he said.

The parliament is not effective at least 15 days' time after budget speech to discuss the budget measures at various forums before finally declaring the budget through an ordinance, he added.

International Business Forum

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SERIES EXPLOSIONS

Ahmadiyas point at bigots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahmadiya Muslim Jamaat, Bangladesh says Islamist organisations that had threatened the Ahmadiyas on various occasions in the last few years might be behind the three concurrent bomb explosions in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet on May 1.

At a press conference at its central office in the city, Ahmadiya Muslim Jamaat said Alami Majlis-e-Tahfiz Khatme Nabuwat, Khatme Nabuwat Sangrakhan Committee, International Khatme Nabuwat Movement Bangladesh, Amra Dakhshabi and Jahase Mostoba might be involved in the explosions.

The press conference was organised against the backdrop of the ultimatum issued by Jadid

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PHOTO: STAR

Dozens of rain trees in the port city's CRB area have died in the last few weeks as botanists attribute this to Die-Back disease.

Rain trees in Ctg dying of rare fungus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The century-old rain trees at the city's Central Railway Building (CRB), Polo Ground and the Tiger Pass area might have been attacked by a rare and deadly disease named dieback, said experts.

Around 50 rain trees (Albizia saman) have been infected by the disease and 38 of them already died in the last two weeks.

A p a t h o g e n c a l l e d Botryodiplodia theobromae might have caused the trees to be infected with the dieback epidemic that could wipe out vegetation in the entire area, botany experts suggested.

Dieback means dying plants. The fungus attacks the roots of the plants and blocks water intake through the roots. The plants slowly die of thirst.

"This disease is not known to us, but from the symptoms, it could be dieback. And the reasons behind the disease are also unknown to us.

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Major reshuffle in administration

17 secys, jt secys given new posting

UNB, Dhaka

Seventeen secretaries and joint secretaries have been given new postings by the caretaker government in its latest reshuffle in the administration.

According to an official release, Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) M Mosleh Uddin has been made acting secretary of the land ministry while National Housing Authority Chairman Mohammad Shahidul Alam made Rajshahi divisional commissioner, Additional Secretary to the Chief Adviser's Office Mostafa Kamal made Barisal divisional commissioner and Joint Secretary of the Economic Relations Department M Yunusur Rahman appointed Khulna divisional commissioner.

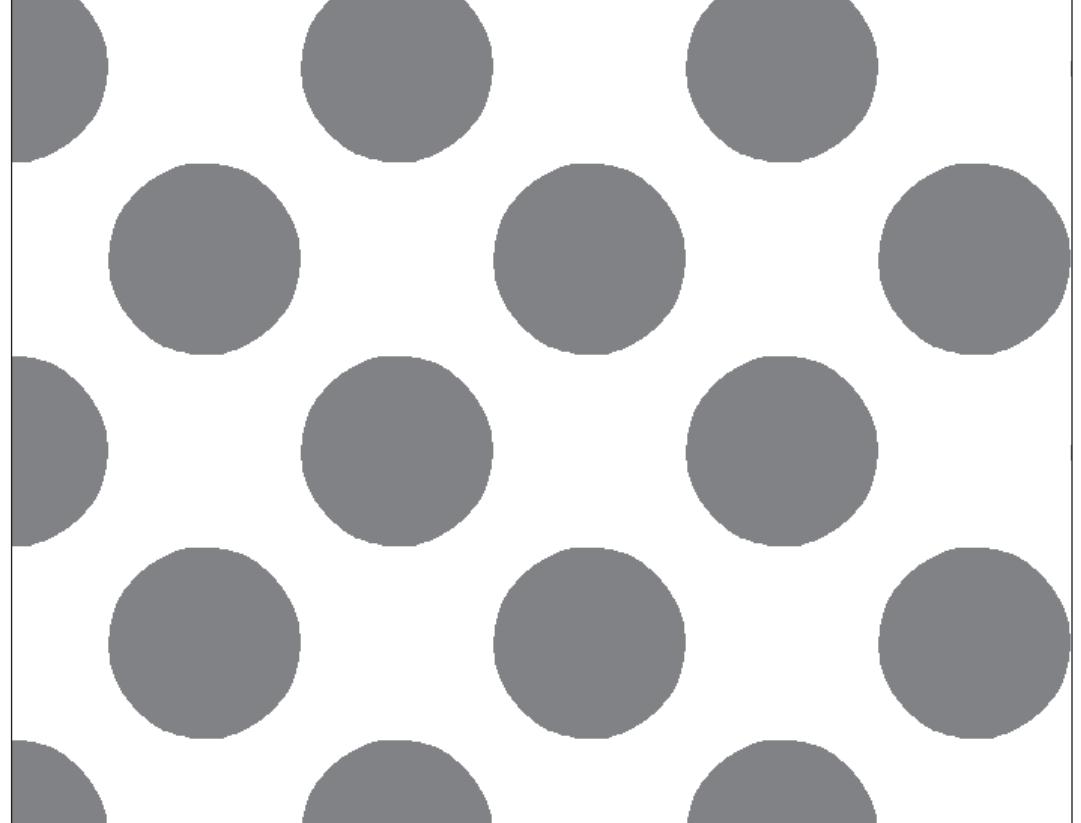
Former chief metropolitan

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Registrar of Cooperatives Department Ekram Ahmed has been appointed Dhaka divisional commissioner while National Housing Authority Chairman Mohammad Shahidul Alam made Rajshahi divisional commissioner, Additional Secretary to the Chief Adviser's Office Mostafa Kamal made Barisal divisional commissioner and Joint Secretary of the Economic Relations Department M Yunusur Rahman appointed Khulna divisional commissioner.

Former chief metropolitan

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Iraq reels from spate of blasts

Car bombs kill 20

AFP, Baghdad

Suicide car bombers killed 20 more Iraqis yesterday as Iraqi and American forces battled to regain the initiative after a day of carnage left eight US soldiers and a European journalist dead.

Colonel Tareq al-Dulaimi, a senior security official in Anbar province, said Monday's first bomb exploded in a market just north of Ramadi and the second 15 minutes later at a police checkpoint two kilometres (one mile) away.

"Ten were killed in each explosion and both were from suicide car bombs," said Dulaimi, speaking by telephone from the provincial capital. "Five of those killed

were police," he added.

The Ramadi blasts came after Sunday saw a fierce surge in insurgent attacks, including a car bombing in a Baghdad shopping street, a suicide assault on a Samarra police station and a deadly ambush on an American patrol.

"There are going to be these rough spots and the enemy is not just going to sit back and wait for us to clean them out and be done with it," said Major Joe Edstrom, a US military public affairs officer.

"We have to expect that there will be days like this. We are just going to do what they always do and just drive on, press forward, take measures and steps and

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