



Birth anniversary of poet Sufia Kamal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 96th birth anniversary of poet Begum Sufia Kamal, a champion of women's rights. Sufia Kamal, a major literary figure, dedicated her life to achieving empowerment of women. She took part in democratic cultural movement throughout her life. Born in Barisal in 1911, Sufia Kamal won many awards and accolades for her contribution to literature. She passed away on November 20, 1999. On the occasion of the poet's birth anniversary, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina paid tribute to the memory of the poet. Begum Sufia Kamal played an important role in the language movement, Liberation War and cultural and democratic movement as a poet and freethinker, Hasina said in a statement yesterday. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a memorial lecture and cultural programme at BIAM auditorium in the city today to mark the day. Noted litterateur Hasan Azizul Haque will deliver the lecture on 'Sufia Kamal and democratic movement'.

State of emergency due to failure of political leaders

Says Khulna mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khulna City Mayor and BNP leader Shaikh Tayebur Rahman yesterday said state of emergency was declared to avert imminent civil war in the country. Such a situation was created due to failure of top leadership of major political parties, he added. He said had he known the corruption of top-BNP leadership earlier, he would have disassociated himself from BNP politics. The BNP leader made the comments while talking to the journalists yesterday in the city after a meeting with the officials of the ministry of local government. When asked why he did not protest the wrong-doings of his fellow party-men, the mayor said when one gets involved in politics, he cannot express everything due to some obligations. Replying to a question whether there are opportunists among the leaders who are vocal about reforms in political parties, he said definitely there would be some opportunists that can be identified by examining their track records.

Incident of hill cutting unearthed

CU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court unearthed an incident of hill cutting in Bagghona area at Lalkhan Bazar in the port city yesterday. The court, led by Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Munir Chowdhury, found that boundary walls and 30 to 40 plots were developed cutting a 15-acre hill of the area. The cutting resulted in several cracks and landslides of the hill, posing a great threat to the lives of 10 families, living in shanties and semi-pucca houses at the foothill, sources said. The court in primary investigation found that 10 people and organisations are involved in the hill cutting. The court told the Department of Environment (DoE) and Police to file separate cases against the accused and stop construction work. Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) and DoE officials assisted the mobile court during the two-hour drive.

World Refugee Day today

UNB, Dhaka

World Refugee Day 2007 will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world today with a call for ensuring shelters for all refugees. This year's theme of the day is "A New Home, A New Life". To mark the day, the Refugee Counseling Service Unit (RCSU) of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, an implementing partner of UNHCR, will organise a programme here for urban refugees and asylum seekers. The programme includes documentary show on refugee issues and cultural events to be staged by refugees. Legal Education and Training Institute (LETI) of Bangladesh Bar Council will organise a daylong training for lawyers, which will be followed by a discussion, titled "Refugee challenges in Bangladesh".

Make concerted moves to push thru' RTI Bill

Speakers tell workshop on media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A workshop on media concluded yesterday with a call to make concerted moves to adopt the Right to Information (RTI) Bill and to make politicians, bureaucrats and the people aware of the need for greater access to information. Researchers and NGO leaders said the push to pass the proposed draft of the RTI Bill has not turned into a 'movement' as yet, but it is slowly gathering pace. Organised by the World Bank Institute, the two-day workshop on 'Media and Information Environment in Bangladesh' focused on international RTI laws and their implementation, lessons learned in this regard in Bangladesh and how they can be moved forward. The Daily Star, Channel i and Mass-line Media Centre were the partners of the workshop held at a city hotel. Naomi Hossain of the Centre for Governance Studies, Brac University, said young civil servants should be the target of awareness campaign as they are willing to

change themselves and change the 'culture of secrecy' in the bureaucracy. Enacting the right to information law is needed to ensure accountability in social welfare and development, she added. Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said the people need to know why they should have access to information. She suggested arranging public hearings at the grassroots level on various issues such as transparency in ration card distribution and cost of road constructions. She also urged the leading NGOs like Brac, Proshika and Asa to take the message down to villages of what it means to have the law and how it would positively affect their lives. The culture of secrecy may go if a 'win-win' situation is created whereby the people would benefit from transparent public information system and the government can showcase the positive effects of their programmes, she said. Outlining the Mexican laws relating to the access to information,

Juan Pablo Guerrero Amparan, commissioner of the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information (IFAI) in Mexico, said the laws require the government to publish certain materials online, especially the results of government audits and civic participation mechanism. He also presented the operations of the IFAI, an independent agency that supervises the access to information laws and helps enforce them. The participants, including media leaders, development practitioners and academics, also offered strategies to move the RTI Bill forward, saying mass awareness programmes should be launched on the media and through various other means such as play, song and poster. Stressing the need to adopt the RTI Bill at the earliest, they also suggested holding a series of dialogues with politicians, government agencies, the media, donors and training institutes to formulate a more effective and comprehensive strategy to push the RTI Bill forward.



PHOTO: STAR

Beauty Akter Rupa and Sasim Majumdar perform at a programme of old songs at National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Performing Media Centre organised the programme.

UN to help Bangladesh achieve development goals

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations will extend every possible support to Bangladesh to achieve its development goals as the country has a special place at the UN system. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said this when Bangladesh's new Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ismat Jahan presented her credentials to him yesterday. Praising the country's role in UN peacekeeping operations, the UN Secretary General said Bangladesh has a special place at the UN system. He also appreciated Bangladesh's role in the ongoing reform initiatives of the UN, including the restructuring of the

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Ambassador Ismat Jahan reaffirmed Bangladesh's strong commitment to the goals and objectives of the UN Charters and to various UN initiatives and programmes for global peace, security and development. She emphasised the active participation of Bangladesh in the UN Peacekeeping Operations as one of the leading troop contributing countries (TCC). "As member of the Least Development Countries (LDCs)", she said, "Bangladesh takes special interest in matters relating to this group of countries." She assured the UN Secretary General of Bangladesh's strong commitment to a wide range of UN

issues like development, environment, good governance, human rights and humanitarian programmes. As the new Ambassador, she particularly expressed her desire to uphold Bangladesh's pro-active role in the United Nations and sought the Secretary General's cooperation in this regard. Ban Ki-Moon recalled his visits to Dhaka as a young diplomat soon after Bangladesh's independence and expressed his desire to visit Dhaka again at a convenient time to express his solidarity with the Bangladesh against the adverse effects of climate change. UN Under-Secretary-General for Management Alicia Barcena Ibarra, Deputy Permanent Representative Muhammad Ali Sorcar and Defence Adviser Brigadier General Ilyas Iftikhar Rasul were also present on the occasion.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places, Met office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country during the period. Highest temperature 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Khulna and lowest 23.2 degree Celsius at Rangpur. **The sun sets in the capital at 6.49pm today and rises at 5:11am 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	34.8	28.0	78	73
Chittagong	32.8	26.0	75	77
Rajshahi	34.0	27.0	84	88
Khulna	36.4	28.4	77	79
Barisal	34.8	27.3	84	97
Sylhet	31.5	24.8	92	81
Cox's Bazar	33.3	26.5	76	75

DHAKA TODAY

Memorial lecture

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a memorial lecture titled 'Sufia Kamal and the movement of democracy' to mark the 96th birth anniversary of Mahila Parishad's founding president Poet Sufia Kamal. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Memorial meeting

Bhashani Samarthak Goshthi will hold a memorial meeting to honour the NAP Bhashani leaders. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Exhibition

Department of Development Alternative (UODA) will hold an 'Intra University Software and Hardware Exhibition 2007'. Venue: UODA building, Dhanmondi. Time: 10:00am.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of 'Fair Trade Practice in Bangladesh' organised by Ecota Fair Trade Forum and GTZ Progress will be held. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Dhaka University Day July 1

DU CORRESPONDENT

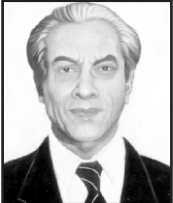
Forgotten 'Dhaka University Day', an annual celebration for all of the university family, is going to be revived after 18 years, as the authorities yesterday decided to celebrate the Day on July 1. Dhaka University (DU) Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz said DU authorities at a meeting yesterday decided to revive the Day celebration and formed a committee headed by Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam Azad to organise the event successfully. The Day has not been celebrated since 1989 due to lack of initiatives from the authorities and reluctance and absence of awareness among students. The University Day that was regarded as a day of celebrations and open to all, was last observed on March 31, 1989. The present generation of the DU students hardly know about the event. Popularly known as "the Open Day", various fun-fare programmes including reminiscence meeting of university alumni, sports, debates and cultural functions were the main features of the occasion. People used to flock the DU campus to join in the celebrations. The Day celebrations started in 1983 to mark the last day of university studies in a bid to introduce another culture rather than rag day. The day was celebrated five times in the following years in the month of February each time. DU Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) will organise the celebration programme with the cooperation of DU Debating Society and DU Alumni Association, sources said. The daylong celebration will begin with a rally at 9:00am, where university's former VCs, distinguished persons, teachers, students and their guardians will participate. Special foods will be served at the university offices and residential dormitories, sources added. An essay highlighting university's history and heritage will be presented on the Day, while Curzon Hall will present a special feature. However, who will present the essay is yet to be determined. Prof Faiz expressed his satisfaction as the Day celebration is going to revive. He said, "Due to lack of preparation and time, the celebration might not be a mega one but we will try to make it lively."

Obituary



Quazi Golam Ajmiri, son of late Kazi Fazlul Karim of Burdaman, passed away in a hospital at Rhode Island in the US on Monday at the age of 84, says a press release. He is survived by his wife, youngest brother Maj Gen (Retd) Quazi Golam Dastagir, two sisters, four children and a host of relatives to mourn his death. Relatives and admirers are requested to pray for his departed soul.

Death anniversary



Today is the 23rd death anniversary of Ahmad Sobhan, a prominent lawyer and former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, says a press release. On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Dhanmondi residence.

Prof Md Abdul Jabbar



Today is the seventh death anniversary of Prof Md Abdul Jabbar, former vice-principal of Mymensingh Ananda Mohan College and head of chemistry of Dhaka College, Titumir College and Jagannath College, says a press release. On the occasion, milad mahfil and Qurankhwan will be held at his village home at Musuli in Nandail, Mymensingh, at 5:00pm.

Shraddha



Shradha (post-funeral rites) of Kiranmoyee Sen, wife of late Monindra Lal Sen, will be held today at her village home at Dhemsha in Satkania, Chittagong, says a press release. Kiranmoyee passed away on June 8 at the age of 88. She left behind three sons and as many daughters. Her eldest son Prof Amal Kanti Sen is the controller of examinations at the Gono Biswabidyalaya.



PHOTO: STAR

North South University Vice-chancellor Hafiz GA Siddiqui speaks at a press conference to launch the 'Citigroup Financial Quiz Competition' at National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Dr Mohammad Farashuddin and Mamun Rashid and on his right are Masih UI Karim and Barrister Nihad Kabir. Citibank NA Bangladesh and North South University are jointly organising the competition.

Major reshuffle in Railway

Officials asked to join new workplaces by June 26

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Railway administration has been reshuffled thoroughly, giving its high officials a June 26 deadline to swap their workstations. General manager of the BR western zone (Rajshahi) Md Iqbal Mollah has been transferred to the eastern zone (Chittagong) while GM of the east Md Sirajuddin to the west. Dhaka Kalyan Trust Managing Director Md Shahjahan has been transferred as COPS of the western zone while COPS of the west Md Akhtaruzzaman made MD of the Dhaka Kalyan Trust. DRM of Paksey Md Amzad Hossain has been transferred as additional CO (bridge) of the East while DRM of Lalmonirhat Md Solaiman Chowdhury as CPO of the West, DRM of Dhaka Md Yusuf Ali Mridha as CPO of the East and DRM of Chittagong Md Mozammel Haque transferred as additional CO (track) of the west. CPO of the East Md Tafazzal Hossain has been transferred to Dhaka as DRM, CPO of the West Md Anwarul Kabir as DRM of

Pakshi and additional CO (Track) of the West Md Kazi Rafiqul Alam transferred as DRM of Paksey. Additional CE (Bridge) of the East Md Ibrahim Khalil has been transferred as DRM of Chaittagong while CME of the West Md Khalilur Rahman as CME of the East and CME of the East Md Shamsuzzaman as CME of the West. Additional CSTE (Telecom) of Rail Bhaban Sukumar Chandra Kundu has been transferred as additional CSTE (Telecom) of the East while additional CSTE of the East Md Mizanur Rahman was transferred as additional CSTE of Dhaka. "All of the transferred officials have to join their new workplaces by June 26, 2007, failing which they should instantly stand released on June 27, 2007," said an official announcement yesterday. The shakeup in the administration of the problem-ridden railway came under large-scale reshuffle in the interim administration of the caretaker government.

SSC exams begin Feb 1, HSC Apr 1 from 2010

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SSC and its equivalent examinations will begin on February 1, and HSC and its equivalent examinations will begin on April 1 from 2010, says a press release. However, SSC and its equivalent examinations for 2008 and 2009 will start on February 28 and February 15 respectively. Similarly, HSC and its equivalent examinations for 2008 and 2009 will begin on April 29 and April 15 respectively.

The government has also fixed the dates for publication of results of these two examinations. Results of SSC will be published on May 10 and HSC on July 10 from 2010, the press release added. However, results of SSC and its equivalent examinations for 2008 and 2009 will be announced on June 8 and May 25 respectively. Similarly, results of HSC and its equivalent examinations for 2008 and 2009 will be published on July 10 and 25 respectively.



PHOTO: STAR

Sylhet Divisional Commissioner Aziz Hasan speaks at a seminar titled 'Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) in Bangladesh' at the conference room of the deputy commissioner in Sylhet yesterday. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance jointly organised the seminar.

Japanese volunteers' role lauded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Japanese volunteers have been playing laudable role in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh for long, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday. The seminar titled 'Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) in Bangladesh' was held at the conference room of the deputy commissioner in Sylhet. It was organised jointly by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance. Divisional Commissioner Aziz Hasan attended the seminar as chief guest while Additional District Magistrate Mamun Ur Rashid chaired the session. The purpose of the seminar was to share and disseminate informa-

tion about the activities of JOCVs in Sylhet region. JICA officials at the seminar said a total of 968 Japanese volunteers have been serving in different fields like health, agriculture, education, engineering and sports in Bangladesh since 1973. Presently, 51 volunteers and 3 senior volunteers are working with different institutions and organisations in Bangladesh, they added. The speakers said JICA recruits young men and women who want to contribute to the development of other countries and train them with required skills before dispatching them as JOCVs. These skilled persons provide on the spot help in developing countries for their socio-economic as well as human resource development, they added. The speakers said the activities

of the volunteers are not only aimed at transferring technology but also developing person-to-person friendly relations at the grassroots level. JICA's Assistant Director Kazi Abul Mamun spoke about its technical cooperation in Bangladesh and the activities of JOCVs. Besides, volunteers Takashi Tamura, Hitomi Urushihata, Keiji Ichikawa and Mamoru Hazawa narrated their experiences that they had gathered while working in different sectors. District level officials from different government departments including administration, education, public health engineering, health and family planning, and youth development attended the seminar.