



Death anniversary of Osmani today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 24th death anniversary of General MAG Osmani, the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces during the War of Liberation, says a press release.

Various organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

Bangabir Osmani Smriti Parishad will offer prayers at his grave in Sylhet at 10:00am and hold a discussion titled 'Ideals of Bangabir Osmani in building a corruption-free country' at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka at 3:30pm.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashud Chowdhury and Maj Gen (ret'd) Mainul Hossain Chowdhury will take part in the discussion.

Sylhet Division Development Action Council will hold a doa mahfil at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 1:00pm and also form a human chain at the North Gate of the mosque.

Jatiya Janata Party will hold a memorial meeting at its party office at 4:00pm while Bangabir Osmani Samajshikha O Gabeshana Sangsad will also hold a discussion at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

In a statement yesterday, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia appointed Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain paid tributes to the memories of Gen Osmani.

The nation will always remember Gen Osmani for his contribution to the country's independence and democracy, he said.

Sgt Zahurul Haque

Bangladesh Air Force observed the 39th death anniversary of Sergeant Zahurul Haque yesterday, says an ISPR release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil was held at the central mosque of the BAF Base Zahurul Haque after Juma prayers. Officers and all ranks of the Air Base attended the milad and prayed for salvation of the departed soul and for continued peace and prosperity of the country.

Natyaguru Prof Nurul Momen

Today is the 18th death anniversary of Natyaguru Prof Nurul Momen, says a press release.

Various socio-cultural organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

Besides, a discussion and milad mahfil will be held at the residence of his son Dr Mahmud Nurul Momen, a journalist and writer. Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the milad.

Amir Shakil

Today is the 6th death anniversary of Amir Shakil, son of late Haji Abdul Quadir of Zinzira, Keraniganj, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his Gulzarbagh residence at Zinzira.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the milad mahfil and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwan

Qulkhwan of Hafeza Khatun, mother of Rafikul Islam Manik, former president of Gazi Bhaban Shopping Centre Shop Owner's Association and a social worker, will be held after the Asr prayers at Naya Palton Mosque, Gazi Bhaban Shopping Centre Mosque in the city today, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfil will be held and food will be distributed among the destitute at her village home.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

'Concerted efforts needed to help develop students' talents'

CU CORRESPONDENT

Education and Commerce Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman has laid emphasis on concerted efforts to help nurture talents of school students with a view to building a prosperous country.

He urged the corporate and voluntary organisations to come forward alongside the government to achieve the objective.

The adviser was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of a contest titled 'Marks All Rounder' on Ispahani Public School and College premises yesterday.

Drishy, an educational and cultural organisation, and Marks, a brand name of full cream milk powder of Abul Khair Group, jointly organised the contest to hunt the

talents of school students.

Dr Zillur said, "We should take the challenge of building up today's students as complete persons able to lead the nation of tomorrow."

He also underscored the need for introducing befitting curriculum for the students.

Principal of Ispahani Public School and College Prof Hasina Zakaria formally inaugurated the contest.

Secretary to chief adviser of the caretaker government Kazi Amin, Abul Khair Group Executive Director Brigadier General (ret'd) Shahidullah Chowdhury, Head of Law of London Trinity College Proshanta Bhushan Barua, Drishy Adviser Safia Ghazi Rahman, President Masud Kamil, General

Secretary Saif Chowdhury and Consultant of Abul Khair Group Tasneem A Karim also spoke on the occasion.

The prize giving ceremony of the contest was held in the afternoon.

Vice-chancellor of Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University Dr Nitish Chandra Devnath was the chief guest while educationist Shila Momen and Abul Khair Group Factory Manager Jahangir Kabir were the special guests at the ceremony.

More than 2000 students from 35 educational institutions took part in seven categories including song, dance, recitation, solo acting and quiz.

Radio Foorti was the radio partner of the competition.



Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury speaks at a reception ceremony for meritorious students at the Engineers' Institute auditorium in the city yesterday. Sylhet Division Development Council accorded the reception to students from Sylhet who achieved excellent results in the SSC and HSC examinations.

Install measuring units at customs bonded oil tank terminals

Commerce adviser asks authorities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Commerce Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman has directed the authorities to immediately install measuring units at the customs bonded edible oil tank terminals to check fraud in delivery of crude oil and tax evasion.

The adviser gave the directive while visiting the terminal of Messrs Elias Brothers (Private) Limited at Patenga yesterday.

As per the directive, the NBR will issue an order for installing two meters in receiving and delivery outlets of each tank terminal.

The meters must be of international standard and have to be installed within two weeks, sources said.

The tank terminals would be allowed to operate as long as the meters will function and the operation would be suspended instantly if both the meters at any outlet are found out of order.

Sourced alleged that without having any measuring unit the tank terminals used to receive excessive quantity of crude oil while they made delivery without recording the quantity to evade tax.

Mentionable, a huge fraud was detected in withdrawal of around 20 thousand metric tons of edible oil worth Tk 135 crore evading revenue of Tk 22 crore at Messrs Elias Brothers Limited on May 16 of last year.

Chief Adviser's Office Secretary Kazi Amin, NBR

Gono Forum demands dialogue in presence of media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum has demanded dialogue between the government, civil societies and political parties in presence of the media for the sake of free, fair and neutral election, says a press release.

The demand was raised at the standing committee meeting of Gono Forum with Pankaj Bhattacharya, presidium member of the party, in the chair yesterday.

The meeting was attended by presidium member Commander (ret'd) Abdur Rouf, Shamsuddoha, acting general secretary Subrata Chowdhury, Jamal uddin Ahmed and Nawab Ali.

DU Gha unit admission test result published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of admission test of 'Gha' unit of Dhaka University (DU) under academic session 2007-08 were published yesterday.

A total of 11,111 students, out of 32,038 candidates, came out successful, says a DU press release.

The results are available on DU's website: www.univdhaka.edu.

It will also be available on display board at the arts faculty gate.

The date of interview of the applicants, who came out successful, will be announced later through newspaper advertisement.

Students who want their answer script to be reexamined may apply within the period from February 18-25.

One stabbed to death in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Unidentified miscreants stabbed a young man to death at Laxminathpur village in Pabna Sadar upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Arifuzzaman alias Abu Hanif, 25, son of Abu Sama.

Police recovered the body from the spot yesterday morning and sent it to Pabna General Hospital Morgue for autopsy.

Quoting locals and family sources police said Arif received a call at his cellphone on Thursday night and went outside. Since then he had been missing.

Locals found his body at a garden adjacent to his residence yesterday morning.

Police suspect he was murdered over past enmity.

Book fair begins in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A three-week-long book fair began in the port city yesterday to mark the Amar Ekushey.

Renowned Scientist Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam inaugurated the fair as the chief guest.

The fair is being organised by Batighar, a bookshop, on its premises in Cheragi Pahar area.

Prof Golam Mostafa of Chittagong University, Assistant Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Bishwajit Chowdhury, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCCI) Secretary Abhik Osman, cultural activist Shahriar Khaled and poet Mozammel Mahmud addressed the inaugural ceremony.

Dr Nazrul said there is no alternative to books in building a knowledgeable society.

He emphasised studying and practicing Bangla literature in school and college level to help the students become familiar with this enriched culture and heritage.

Books published from different popular publishing houses of Dhaka like Ananya, Agamee, Onnya Prakash, Abashar, Pratik, Kakoli, Khan Brothers, Pearl, Dibya Prakash, Bidya Prakash, Somoy and Maola Brothers are available at the fair.

Batighar proprietor Dipankar Das said they are organising the fair to offer the local book lovers a scope for flipping through the pages and buying the books that are now on display at the on-going Amar Ekushey Book Fair in Dhaka on 25 per cent discount.

India extends Taslima's visa

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India has extended the visa of Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, which was due to expire on February 17, but asked her to be sensitive to Indian traditions and secular ethos.

The Ministry of External Affairs announced on Thursday night the extension of Nasreen's visa even as the 45-year-old author has been in hiding following threats from radical Islamic groups over her writings.

Announcing the visa extension whose duration was not mentioned, ministry spokesman Navtej Samra said, "It is incumbent on those who are welcomed as guests in India that they remain sensitive to India's traditions. We expect that they do not undertake actions that could hurt the sentiments of the many communities that make up our multi-religious and multi-ethnic nation."

Nasreen has been staying at an undisclosed destination in the Indian capital because of security concerns ever since she was bundled out of Kolkata in November last year after large-scale violent protests there by a radical group which protested portions of her writings.

Reacting to the extension of her visa, Nasreen expressed gratitude to the Indian government but remained concerned over curbs on her movement outside her house and 'freedom' of expression.

"I am grateful to the government of India for extending my visa but restrictions on my movement and my freedom of expression remain," she said.



Mutasim Billah M Al Mamun

Sub-Editors Council executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

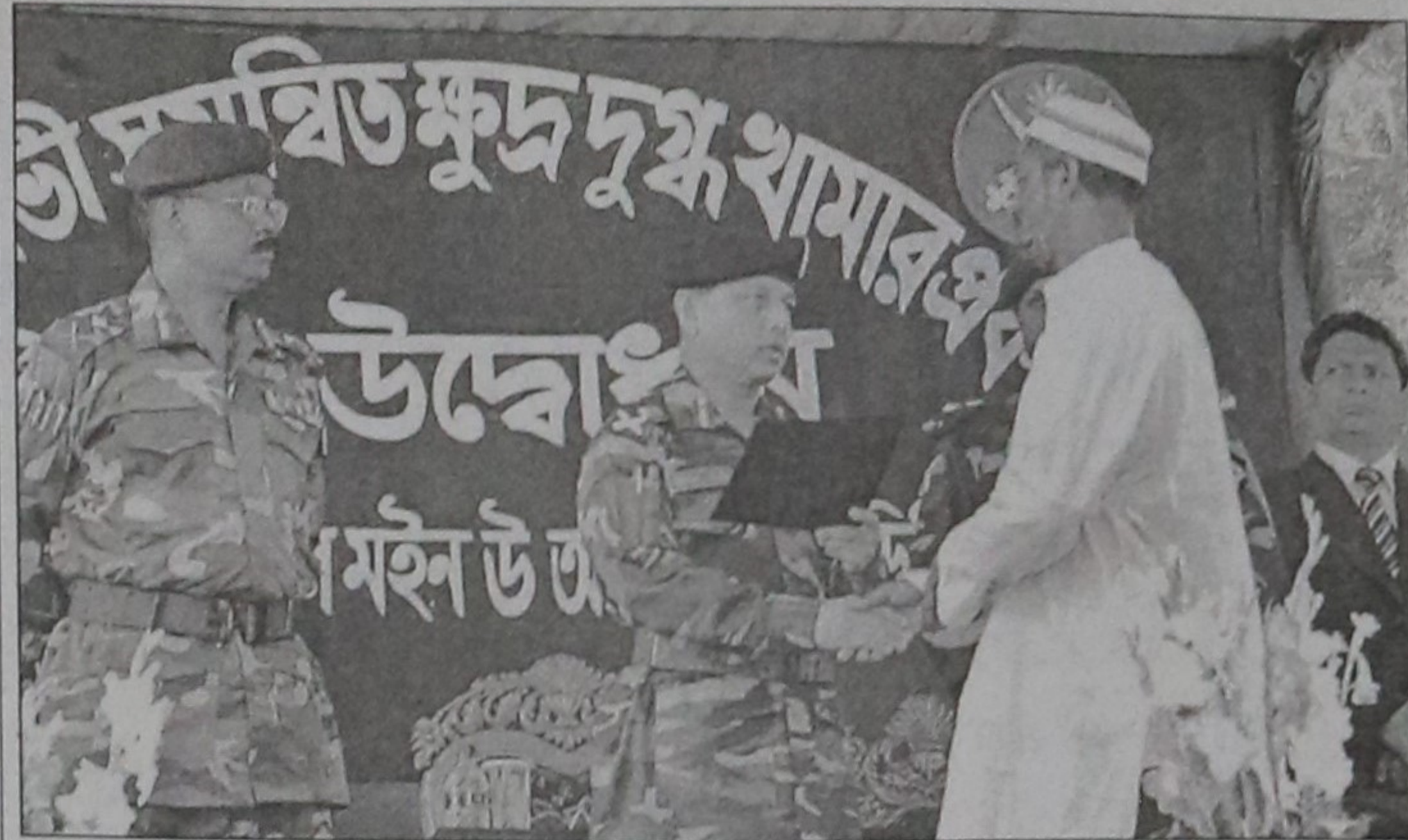
Shah Mohammad Mutasim Billah of the daily Janakantha and M Al Mamun of the daily Ittefaq have been elected president and general secretary of the Dhaka Sub-Editors Council (DSEC).

The election and annual general meeting of DSEC was held at the National Press Club on Thursday.

Other office-bearers are: Mukul Talukder of the daily Jai Din - vice-president, Sharif Talukder of My TV - joint secretary and Ashrafur Islam of the daily Inqilab - treasurer, Idris Madraji of the Naya Diganta - organising secretary, Mamun Rashid of NNB - office secretary, Jahidul Haq Jahir of the Inqilab - publication and publicity secretary, Khairul Alam of the Ittefaq - sports and cultural secretary.

The executive members are: Suman Islam (Amar Desh), Shahana Sheolee (Jugantor), Enamul Haq (Bangladesh Today), Jakirul Islam (Ittefaq), Imam Gazzali (Rhorer Kagoj), M Shamsul Alam Shetu (Janakantha), Uttam Kumar (Amader Samoy), Jahangir Alam (Media for Media), Paritosh Kumar Roy (Janakantha), Shahed Jahedi (Direct) and Md Nadim (Sangbad).

M M Salahuddin of the Bhorer Kagoj has been elected training and research secretary unopposed.



Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed distributes loan certificates among the owners of small-scale dairy farms at the launching ceremony of the project at Sharifpur in Begumganj, Noakhali yesterday.

ENERGY SECTOR 'Make public agreements with foreign companies'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday urged the government to make public all recently signed agreements on gas, oil and coal exploration with different foreign companies.

They also said the present caretaker government has already decided to lease out 28 gas-oil blocks to the multinational companies.

New forum of journalists

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Action Force for Development Alternative (BAFDA), a new organisation of journalists, was launched at a meeting in the city recently.

The objectives of the organisation are to raise awareness among the people about their rights and obligations through holding seminar, symposium and roundtable.

The meeting also formed an 11-member convening committee of the organisation with Md Akhtar Hossain Masud as the convener and ASMA Khalique, Md Shafiqul Alam Ratan and Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury as joint conveners, said a press release.

Nagarik Sanghati organised the discussion titled 'Agreement with multinational companies and our right to information' at Moni Singh - Farhad Smriti Trust in the city.

The speakers at the discussion termed the agreements corrupt and a burden to the economy.

Former Petrobangla chairman Prof Hossain Mansur said people should know about Production Sharing Contracts (PSC).

"The agreements that go against the national interest should be cancelled," he added.

Writer and columnist Syed Abul Maksud, politicians Haider Akbar Khan Rono and Ruhin Hossain Prince, Engineer Enamul Haque and Nagarik Sanghati General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif also spoke on the occasion.

Bishwa Zaker Manjil Urs

BSS, Dhaka

The four-day Urs Sharif of Hazrat Shahsuji - Khwaja - Baba Faridpur will begin today at Bishwa Zaker Manjil, Atrashi in Faridpur.

All preparations have been completed to observe the programme, says a press release.

235 Phensidyl bottles seized

UNB, Dhaka

Detective Branch of police seized 235 bottles of Phensidyl and Tk 2 lakh found in a fish-laden truck at West Panthapath in the city and arrested three people yesterday afternoon.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of plainclothes policemen challenged the driver of a truck in front of Ayesha Complex at about 3:45pm and searched the vehicle. They found 235 bottles of banned Indian cough syrup and Tk 2 lakh during the search.

The three arrestees are Gopal Chowdhury, Alamgir and Rafiqul Islam who were travelling in the truck.

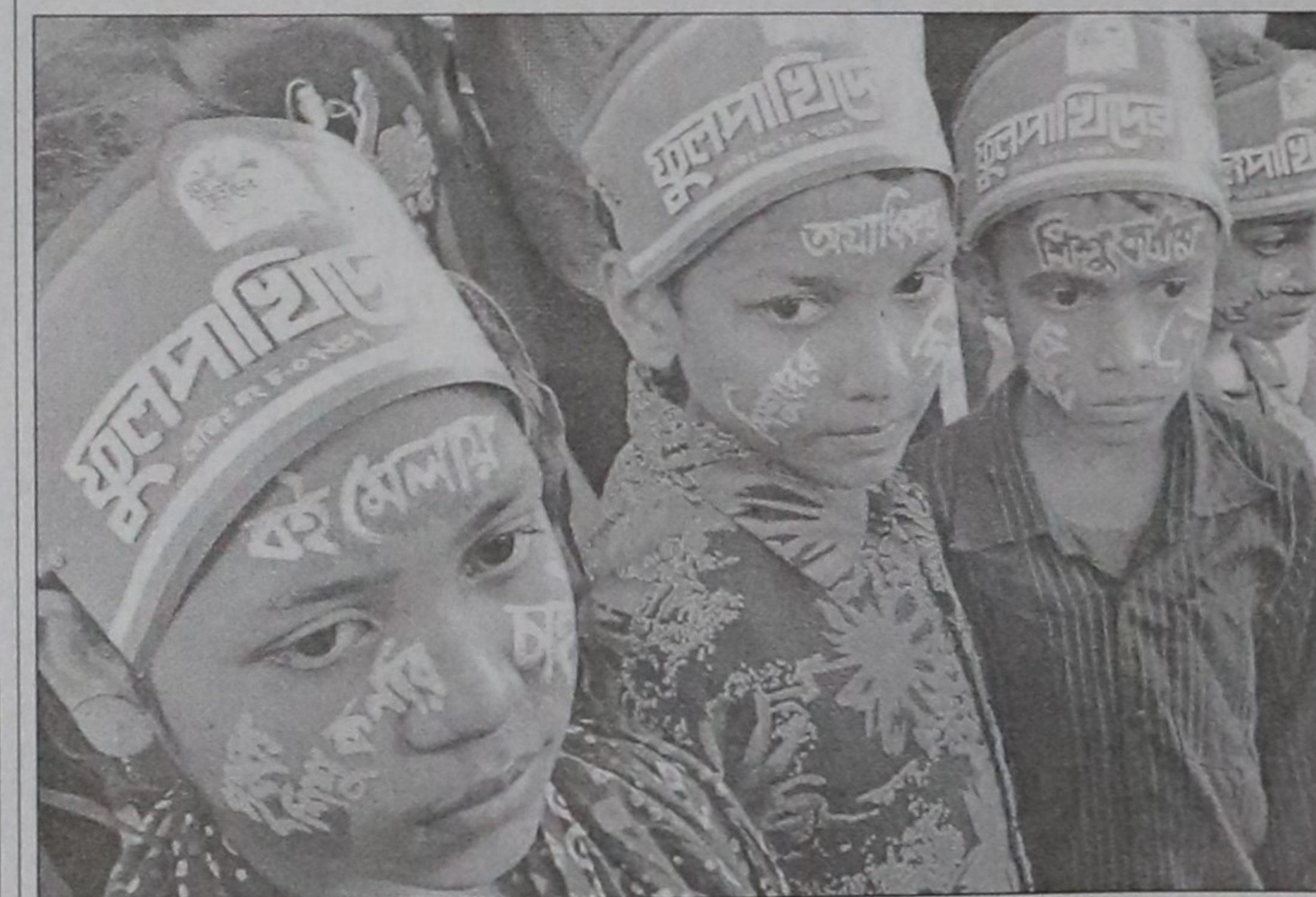
BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 25th edition of the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap will be held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital today.

Jatiya Party Acting Chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud, BNP chairperson's adviser Mofazzal Karim, Women Affairs Secretary of Awami League Dr Dipu Moni and Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University will take part in the programme as panellists.

The recorded programme will be aired on BBC Bangla radio at 8:00pm tomorrow and on Channel 1 at 8:00pm on Monday.



Members of Phul Pakhider Mela, a children's organisation, gather on the Bangla Academy premises yesterday demanding a separate children's corner in the Amar Ekushey Book Fair.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate cold wave that is sweeping over Rajshahi division and the regions of Tangail, Comilla, Srimongal, Satkhira, Jessore, Kushia, Barisal and Khepupara may continue, Met office said.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 25.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 5.2 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:31am 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	24.1	12.4	55	36
Chittagong	23.2	12.0	44	47
Rajshahi	23.8	06.8	76	46
Khulna	25.0	10.3	70	53
Barisal	24.5	09.0	66	52
Sylhet	24.5	10.4	76	42
Cox's Bazar	25.3	14.2	42	37