



Death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 47th death anniversary of noted politician Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque.

The nation will observe the day with due respect. Different socio-political organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

In separate messages, President Mohammad Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid rich tributes to the leader who had fought for the downtrodden throughout his life.

The president, in his message, said the nation recalls contributions of Sher-e-Bangla to the development of farmers and workers. His contribution to education, politics and social reform as a chief minister of undivided Bengal would remain as a big example for the nation, the president added.

"Outstanding personality, political intelligence and efficiency of Sher-e-Bangla encourage us to work for building the country and the nation," Zillur observed in the message.

Sheikh Hasina in her message said Sher-e-Bangla was a real friend of repressed farmers and workers. He submitted the historic Lahore Resolution and placed the Eleven-point Demand.

She expressed hope that the ideology of this great leader would always encourage people to establish a society free from repression.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at the residence of his grandchild AK Faizul Haque after Maghrib prayers today.



Abdus Samad Azad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 4th death anniversary of former foreign minister and Awami League presidium member Abdus Samad Azad, says a press release.

Born in 1922 in Sylhet, he played a significant role during the Language Movement in 1952.

He had significant contribution to the anti-Ayub movement and the six-point movement in 1966.

He was one of the key organisers of liberation war and the first foreign minister of independent Bangladesh.

He embraced imprisonment at different times in his life for his political involvement.

A number of programmes have been chalked out to observe the day.

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at Kalabagan Lake Circus Mosque in the city after Maghrib prayers.

Besides, commemorating discussions will be held at Zila Awami League units across the country.

Abdus Samad Azad Smriti Parishad will also organise a discussion today.

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop

The inaugural ceremony of a four-day workshop on using ICT in education toolkit for policy makers, planners and practitioners will be held. Venue: BANBEIS hall room. Time: 9:00am.

Technology fair

Grameenphone organises a two-day technology fair. Venue: Grameenphone head office. Time: 3:45pm.

Discussion

Barisal Division Samity organises a discussion marking the death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque. Venue: Sena Kalyan Bhaban auditorium. Time: 4:30pm.

HIGHER EDN FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE University to be set up in Rangamati: Minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A public university will be set up in Rangamati to facilitate higher education for indigenous people living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid at a seminar yesterday.

The university campus will be built in a way that will resemble the distinctive nature of hill tracks, he said, adding that the students from the indigenous groups will feel like home at the university.

The education minister said this at a seminar marking the

Global Action Week on Education. Research and Development Collective (RDC) organised the seminar in association with Oxfam at the National Press Club in the city.

Speakers at the seminar talked about different problems of students from ethnic groups in getting admission in universities. Their problems in primary and secondary level of education were also discussed at the seminar.

"Students from indigenous communities who get admission in universities get chance in low profile subjects which have little use in their practical

lives", said Rabindranath Saren, general secretary of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad.

"We have so much diversity in our society which should be used as a strength to develop our country," said Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, vice chancellor of Dhaka University, who was a special guest at the event.

Prof Dr Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, vice chancellor of Jagannath University, Prof Dr Pias Karim of Brac University, Prof Mesbah Kamal, general secretary of RDC, indigenous groups leaders and students spoke at the seminar.

'Promote environmentally sustainable transport'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Promoting environmentally sustainable transport (EST) is a must to mitigate adverse environmental and health impact in the city, said the speakers at a national workshop and policy dialogue yesterday.

The EST includes non-motorised vehicles, bicycles, pedestrianisation schemes and vehicles with less emission of pollutants, they added.

Held at Hotel Sheraton Winter Garden in the city, the workshop was organised jointly by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Environment with the support of SIDA, GTZ and the Japanese environment ministry.

Experts at the workshop said continuous increase in the number of motorised vehicles in Asia is one of the major factors behind the growing problem of air pollution.

With the expansion of

urbanisation, the city has seen an unprecedented growth in motorisation, which led to severe emission, road accidents and traffic congestions, they added.

The speakers said motor transport is the second largest source of Greenhouse gases in the world.

They said developing countries are likely to be the largest sources of transport sector emissions in the world within 2010.

Air pollution also causes numerous health hazards, they said, adding that infants and children are the most vulnerable to air pollutants.

The speakers said the EST such as non-motorised vehicle is not only environmentally friendly but also the cheapest mode of transport.

It is also the safest, as it has less road accident possibility and does not create pollution-related health hazards, they added.

Speaking as chief guest Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandaker BU, minister for planning, said, "For implementing the National Strategic

Transport Plan in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner, integration of environmental issues into transport planning is a must."

Hasan Mahmud, state minister for foreign affairs, said the potentiality of public transport systems such as railways and waterways has never been explored.

Both the systems can provide environmentally friendly as well as cheapest facilities, he added.

Md Mostafizar Rahman, state minister for environment and forest, said, "The EST is no longer an option, but a necessity for ensuring a healthy, clean and safe living environment for our future generation."

Kazunobu Onogawa, director of UNCRD, Stefan Priesner, country director of UNDP, CRC Mohanty of UNCRD, ASM Ali Kibria, secretary to communication ministry, Dr Mihir Kanti Majumder, secretary to environment ministry, and Nojibur Rahman, director general of environment department also spoke.

HC quashes arms cases against Dipjol, his wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday quashed two arms cases against film actor and Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) ward councillor Monwar Hossain Dipjol, in which he was sentenced in absentia to 24 years' imprisonment by the trial court.

A HC bench of Justice AFM Abdur Rahman and Justice SM Emdadul Huq also quashed an arms case against Dipjol's wife Romana Monwar who was jailed for seven years by the trial court.

The HC verdicts came upon three separate quashment petitions filed by Dipjol and his wife.

Their counsel Advocate Khandker Mahub Hossain told newsmen that the HC quashed the proceedings of

the cases against his clients as they had placed valid licenses against their arms and ammunition.

On December 10 last year, Dipjol, also a BNP leader, was sent to jail, a day after he was arrested from a house at Adabar in the capital after two years in hiding.

Dipjol, who went into hiding after January 11, 2007, was earlier given 45 years' imprisonment for possessing illegal firearms and ammunition and dodging income tax while his wife Romana, now on bail, was given seven years' jail for the same offences.

Dipjol is now facing numerous charges including terrorism, extortion, illegal grabbing of government land, tax evasion and murder.

Slum dwellers vandalise 20 vehicles near Bangabazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some agitated dwellers of Babupura slum vandalised over 20 vehicles in front of Bangabazar in the city yesterday over money transaction and a trader and a slum dweller.

During the incident, shops at Bangabazar and adjacent markets were shut down and traffic movement came to a virtual halt for over one hour.

Ismail Hossain Bachchu, secretary of Dhaka Zila Sramik Union of Road Transport Workers, said a group of 50 to 60 slum dwellers led by Nurul Amin, Belayet Hossain, Khorsheed and Babul, equipped with rods and sticks tried to attack the traders at around 2:00pm, but they chased the attackers.

However, being chased by the traders, the dwellers went berserk at nearby Fulbaria bus stand damaging 12 buses, three private cars and four motorbikes, he added.

The attackers left the scene as around 100 transport workers chased them, Bachchu mentioned.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Rezaul Karim of Shahbagh Police Station told The Daily Star that the scuffle ensued at

around 1:00pm at Bangabazar between a trader and a slum dweller over money transaction.

Some transport workers said few days ago, they handed four snatchers, who were residents of the slum, over to the police as they had committed crimes, including snatching, in the bus stand area at nights.

They suspected that the snatchers of the slum led the attack to take revenge.

1,030 Phensidyl bottles seized

UNB, Khulna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized 1,030 bottles of Phensidyl syrup from a truck on Khulna-Satkhira highway in Dumuria upazilayesterday morning.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team intercepted the Khulna-bound truck, coming from Satkhira, in front of Dumuria College around 7:30am and seized the consignment of contraband syrup.

They also arrested truck driver Masum Mollah, 30. He was being interrogated at Rab-6 office in the city as of filing of this report at about 3:00pm.

Camel jockeys to get compensation next month

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladeshi children used as camel jockeys will be given compensation next month as the United Arab Emirates government has completed its final list of such children on March 15.

As many as 879 Bangladeshi children will get a total of \$14,36,299 (about Tk 10.6 crore) as compensation from the UAE government, officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs told BSS yesterday.

They said the UAE government signed an agreement to this effect with Bangladesh in 2007. Under this agreement, Bangladeshi children aged below 18 will be given compensation as they were used as camel jockeys since 1993 in the UAE.

An administrative board was already formed comprising a joint secretary and a deputy secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs and a representative of the Ministry of Home of the UAE government to look into this matter, the officials said.

The total compensation money has already been deposited with the Bangladesh Embassy in the UAE and the children will get \$1,000-\$10,000 depending on their mental and physical damage, they said.

FM leaves for Norway today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni leaves Dhaka for Norway this morning on a three-day official visit.

She will participate in a conference on climate change at Tromsø on April 28, says a press release.

Dipu Moni will also hold a bilateral meeting with Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Store in Oslo. She will deliver a speech at Centre for Peace Studies of Tromsø University and Institute of International Relations.

The foreign minister will leave Norway on April 28 for Cuba to attend the conference of foreign ministers of Non-Aligned Movement countries.

30 shanties gutted in Agargaon fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 30 shanties burned down in a devastating fire at a slum at Agargaon BNP Bazar the city last night.

Fire service sources said the fire broke out around 9:00pm from a burner.

The fire firefighters struggled for over one hour to put out the fire.

Meanwhile, agitated slum dwellers staged a demonstration alleging that a vested group set fire to the shanties deliberately.

Locals said that the slum was known as a 'drug zone' where contraband drugs are sold openly.

JS body asks hajj agencies to explain irregularities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary standing committee at a meeting yesterday decided to summon officials of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) and the government officials concerned to explain various irregularities in hajj management.

"We have summoned the HAAB and other officials related to hajj to come before the committee in its next meeting and explain why such irregularities are taking place," said Majibur Rahman, chairman of the committee on religious affairs ministry, while talking to reporters after the meeting at the parliament building.

The committee also decided that it will recommend taking stern actions, including cancellation of licence of hajj agencies, if the association does not give satisfactory reply.

"Every year irregularities are taking place in hajj management. Hajj agencies breach contract with the hajjis and take higher house rent in Madina and Makkah," he said.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Nahem, a one and a half-year-old boy, has been suffering from heart disease since his birth, says a press release.

He is undergoing treatment at Suhrawardy Hospital in the city.

Doctors said Nahem needs urgent operation which will involve Tk3 lakh.

But it is not possible to afford such expensive treatment for his father Abul Kalam, a day labourer of Ullapara village under Choudagram upazila of Comilla district.

So he has appealed to generous people and organisations for financial assistance to save his son.

Contributions can be sent to Abul Kalam, Savings Account No 69172, Islamic Bank Bangladesh Ltd, local office Dhaka.

Interested persons can also call at 01813303848 to contact his family members.

Nahid Sultana

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Nahid Sultana, a first-year student of Chatmohor Mahila Degree College in

Pabna, has been suffering from acute myeloblastic leukemia (blood cancer), says a press release.

The 21-year-old girl is now undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in the city.

Doctors said Nahid needs advance treatment which will involve a big amount of money which is not possible for her family to afford.

So she has appealed to well-off people for financial assistance to save her life. Contributions can be sent to Salahuddin Sarker, Savings Account No 002-0310053035, Mutual Trust Bank, Motijheel Branch, Dhaka. Interested people can also call at cell phone 017179881221 or 01723667277.



Directorate of Family Planning and UNFPA jointly bring out a colourful procession marking the Family Planning Service Week at Shahbagh in the city yesterday.

Steps being taken to beef up security for JS Bhaban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A committee to ensure the security of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban at a meeting yesterday took several decisions to beef up security in and around it.

It decided to ask a filling station at Mirpur Road near the parliament building to relocate within one month.

It also formulated a guideline for journalists, asking them not to carry mobile phones at the parliament gallery.

The committee also asked the Public Works Department (PWD) to shift its 'unnecessary offices and staffs' from the House.

"We have ordered PWD to take necessary steps to relocate Talukdar Filling Station situated on the west side on Mirpur road within one month in a bid to ensure security of parliament," said Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali, chairman of the committee, while talking to reporters at his office in parliament building after the meeting.

"The committee finds that the filling station is a threat to the House as it deals with fuel and gas," Shawkat, also deputy speaker of the House, added.

"We have also asked PWD to shift its unnecessary staffs and offices from the House immediately," he said.

Shawkat said the committee also formulated a guideline for journalists covering the proceedings of the House.

"Journalists have to carry accreditation card while entering the House and they will not be allowed to take mobile phone with them at the parliament gallery," he added.

He, however, assured journalists of taking alternative measures when they told the deputy speaker that it would be difficult for them to do their job without mobile phone in the parliament gallery.

Replying to a question, he said, "We are under threat and all intelligence agencies are cooperating with us in facing it."

Chief Engineer and Additional Chief Engineer of PWD and officials concerned were present at the meeting.

JS body takes step to resolve 27th BCS exam issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary standing committee at a meeting yesterday formed a sub-committee to find out a way to resolve the 27th BCS examination issue in line with the prime minister's assurance given to its candidates who were dropped from the list of successful candidates.

The five-member committee, headed by lawmaker ABM Ghulam Mostafa, has been asked to submit its report to main committee within one month.

The prime minister has referred the matter to us and instructed us to resolve the problems in line with her assurance," Khandaker Asaduzzaman, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the establishment ministry, told The Daily Star after the two-hour meeting at the parliament building.

The committee also asked another sub-committee to submit its recommendation on annual performance appraisal report (APAR), a new system to evaluate performance of the government officials in lieu of present annual confidential report.

"We have asked the sub-committee to place a position

paper in the next meeting," he said.

Deputy leader of the House and committee members Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, ABM Ghulam Mostafa, HN Ashiqur Rahman, MA Mannan and Barkatullah Bulu were present in the meeting.

'EC does not want to use old laws'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda has said the Election Commission (EC) is no more interested in holding election using old laws.

He said this when he came to visit the land for election office at Narayanganj Bandar upazila parishad yesterday.

The CEC said loan defaulters, bill defaulters and persons holding a post would not be allowed to participate in election for another post.

A law to this effect would be passed in the next budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad, he added.

WEATHER TODAY

Heatwave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Also, there are chances of rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind at one or two places over Chittagong division, Met Office said.

Prevailing moderate to severe heatwave over Khulna division and the regions of Dhaka, Faridpur, Madaripur, Patuakhali, Rajshahi and Ishwardi and mild to moderate heat wave over the regions of Tangail, Sandwip, Sitakunda, Comilla, Chandpur, Feni, Rangamati and the rest of Rajshahi and Barisal divisions may continue, it said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, it added.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:26pm today and rises at 5:26am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 42.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 22.2 degree at Srimongal.

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	38.7	26.8	48	23
Chittagong	34.3	26.8	80	70
Rajshahi	40.4	22.5	43	21
Khulna	40.5	26.5	69	31
Barisal	37.0	26.5	75	52
Sylhet	35.5	24.5	61	54
Cox's Bazar	34.8	26.5	74	77

BNP dismisses FM's statement as untrue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday dismissed Foreign Minister Dipu Moni's statement as untrue.

On her return from Saudi Arabia on Saturday, the foreign minister at a press conference at Zia International Airport said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's meeting with the Saudi king is the first meeting of a Bangladeshi premier with the king in the last seven years.

At a press briefing held at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office in the city, former foreign secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, also an adviser to the BNP chairperson, said at least four meetings were held in Saudi Arabia and Kuala Lumpur between former premier Khaleda Zia and the Saudi king between 2004 and 2006.

He said the government must be careful while giving information regarding crucial issues, as Saudi Arabia is a special friend of Bangladesh.

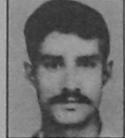
Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Khodeza Khatun, mother of Deputy Chief Reporter (Bangla Service) of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Khairul Alam Bakul, passed away at her son's residence at Rampura in the city on Saturday night at the age of 85.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 38th death anniversary of Capt Aftabul Qader Bir Uttam, a martyr of

the Liberation war, says a press release.

He was killed during a fight with the Pakistani occupation forces at Mahalchhari in Khagrachhari district.

On the occasion of his death anniversary, a discussion and milad mahfil will be held at the Liberation War Museum at 4:00pm today.

Umme Salema Khatun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

