



PHOTO: PID AND BNP
Visiting US Deputy Secretary of State James B Steinberg calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office, left, and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her party office, right, in the city yesterday.

US STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL MEETS PM Investment in power, gas sectors assured

UNB, Dhaka
US Deputy Secretary of State James B Steinberg has heaped high praise on Bangladesh's progress in human development, strengthening democracy and preserving human rights under the present government.
The praise followed when the visiting US State Department official paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the PMO yesterday.
Steinberg also assured the PM of continuing US support and assistance in Bangladesh's development sectors, including making investments in the power and gas sectors.
Briefing journalists after the meeting, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the prime minister and the US official stressed the need for closer ties and more concerted efforts between the two countries in various development sectors for their mutual benefit.
Azad said the PM urged the US government and entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh's development sectors, especially electricity and gas saying that a congenial atmosphere is prevailing in the investment sector in Bangladesh.
The US official eulogised Hasina's leadership in leading Bangladesh towards achieving food security for the population, and protecting them from the disastrous impacts of climate change.
Hasina and her government's move to eradicate corruption and uphold freedom of expression and freedom of the press was also hailed by the US official, Azad said.
On the terrorism issue, Steinberg thanked the PM for her bold stance for establishing peace by rooting out all types of terrorism, Azad said.
Ambassador-at-Large M Ziauddin, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary MA Karim, and Prime Minister's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman were also present during the meeting.

TRAGIC END OF A LOVE AFFAIR Boy beaten to death by girl's relatives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A teenage garment worker was beaten to death allegedly by the relatives of his girlfriend at Mohammadpur in the city on Wednesday.
Hearing the news of the death of Russel Mahmud, 17, an employee at a sweater factory in the area, hundreds of locals and his factory colleagues ransacked the house of the girl yesterday evening.
On Tuesday afternoon, Russel eloped with his fourteen-year-old girlfriend, the daughter of the owner of the house where he was a tenant.
The girl's uncles Salam, Aslam and Kamal along with hundreds of locals tracked down and picked them from Mohammadpur embankment around 2:00am on Wednesday, Russel's sister Kohinur Begum told The Daily Star.
They then sent the girl to her house and took the boy and his elder brother Rubel to a nearby building and beat up Russel in front of his brother, she said.
"Russel was missing since then. We found the body today [Thursday] at Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital morgue," Kohinur said.
Hospital sources said some unidentified people left the boy at the emergency department of the hospital around 10:30pm on Wednesday.
Russel's neighbours told The Daily Star that he had an affair with the girl for the last two years, but the girl's family is very rich while Russel's family is very poor. They said the girl's family owns a number of houses in that area.
Russel's father Selim filed a murder case with Mohammadpur Police Station accusing eight persons including Salam, Aslam and Kamal.
While visiting the girl's house, this correspondent found no male persons for comments and the females refused to make any comments.
Officer-in-Charge of Mohammadpur Police Station Bhuiyan Mahub Hasan said they were trying to arrest the accused.

DEFAMATION CASE Court extends time for Bashundhara's statement for 3rd time

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A Dhaka court yesterday asked Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan and other defendants in a Tk 200 crore defamation case to submit a statement by May 20.
Chairman and Managing Director of Mediastar Ltd and Transcom Group Latifur Rahman, and Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matiur Rahman filed the lawsuit against Bashundhara Group on November 22 last year with the 4th Joint District Judge's Court in Dhaka.
The court order came after a time petition was submitted for the third time on behalf of Sobhan and others yesterday.
In the petition, one of the counsels said they prayed for adjournment of the hearing, as they could not prepare written statements.
The other defendants include Senior Deputy Managing Director of Bashundhara Group Md Belayet Hossain, Bashundhara Chairman's Technical Adviser Latifur Abedin Hossain, Bashundhara Steel and Engineering Ltd Executive Director Maj (ret'd) Zahidur Rahman, and the group's 11 companies registered with the Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms.
On behalf of Matiur Rahman and Latifur Rahman, Dr Kamal Hossain and Associates filed the defamation suit on charges of publishing highly libellous advertisements and posters, and other malicious activities.
The defendants appeared before the court on January 27 and sought time until March 11 to submit a statement.
Later on March 11, they again sought time to submit the statement, upon which the court asked them to submit it yesterday.
The case statement said Bashundhara Group has been involved in malicious activities since October 13 last year to tarnish the image of the complainants.
Reports on the fire incident at Bashundhara City on March 13, 2009 were published in the media. The home ministry later formed a committee to probe the incident.
But Bashundhara Group filed a general diary and published libellous advertisements in some newspapers implicating the complainants (Latifur Rahman and Matiur Rahman) in the incident to tarnish their image.
The Bashundhara Group chairman was given the chance to offer apology but he declined, said the statement.

Death anniversary Syed Mozammel Huq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the 26th death anniversary of Justice A b d u l J a b b a r Khan, former speaker of Pakistan National Assembly, says a press release.
On the occasion, a special doa and milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Baheerchar under Babuganj upazila in Barisal and fatiha will be offered at his grave in Dhaka.
Syed Mozammel Huq
METRO DESK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the 15th death anniversary of Syed Mozammel Huq, special correspondent of Bangladesh Sangbad Sanstha (BSS), says a press release.
He also worked for the Time Magazine and Oil and Gas Journal.
On the occasion, a Qurankhuni will be held and foods will be distributed among the poor.
Dr Syeda Latfe Saba
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Dr Syeda Latfe Saba, a social worker and wife of Enamul Haque Babul, president of Bangladesh Electronics Spares Parts Merchant Association, says a press release.
On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at her residence at Eudora Lane Wood, House # 33 (Kha), Road # 12A, Dhanmondi R/A in the city after Maghrib prayers.
Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the milad.
Mahmood Al Noor Tarek
METRO DESK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the first death anniversary of Advocate Mahmood Al Noor Tarek, says a press release.
On the occasion, milad mahfil and doa will be held at his residence. Foods will be distributed among the destitute on the Zila School premises in Mymensingh and at Aostradhar orphanage.
Arju Miah
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the first death anniversary of Arju Miah, member of Choto Khatra Champatali and Soarighat Banik Samity, says a press release.
On the occasion, doa and milad mahfil will be held at Boro Vat Mosque at Lalbagh after Asr prayers.
Qulkhwani
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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Qulkhwani of Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury, former general manager of Bata Shoe Company Bangladesh Limited, will be held at Baridhara DOHS Mosque in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.
He passed away on April 17 at the age of 72 at his residence in the city.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mugger shoots college student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A student of Tejgaon College was shot while trying to catch a mugger at West Monipur in the capital's Mirpur yesterday.
Police arrested mugger Sohel, 22, and recovered a pistol.
Victim Walid Ibn Siddique (Shawon), a second year student of marketing department, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet wound in his jaw.
Shawon said he was playing cricket with his friends at Maikwala Masjid Lane in the afternoon when he heard a hue and cry and saw three armed muggers running down the lane with a mob chasing them.
He hit the fleeing Sohel with his cricket bat, prompting Sohel to fire at him, he said, adding that after firing three shots, the magazine of the thug's pistol dropped to the ground.
In spite of his injuries, he caught Sohel and handed him over to the police.

18 frauds held at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday detained 18 frauds in the Shahjalal International Airport (SIA) area on charges of mugging, cheating and harassing the passengers and visitors.
Rab-1 officials said a team led by Ahsanul Kabir conducted the raid from 5:30am to 7:30am and arrested 18 people.
Earlier on April 20, the Rab personnel arrested 12 people on the same charges.
Talking to The Daily Star, Maj Ahsan Kabir said they have launched the special drives against such crimes as part of the security measures at the airport as well as to reduce the sufferings to the passengers and visitors.

C'wealth ministers meet May 16

UNB, Dhaka
Health ministers from the 54-nation Commonwealth will meet in Geneva on May 16 to examine progress made towards achieving the MDGs and to discuss the challenges and opportunities that countries will face in the next five years to achieve the targets.
The theme of the meeting, which takes place on the eve of the 63rd World Health Assembly, is 'The Commonwealth and the Health MDGs by 2015', a release of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London said yesterday.

PM visits late Nasrine's house

BSS, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the residence of late Nasrine R Karim, daughter of former Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, at Dhanmondi to see her body reached here from London yesterday.
Hasina stayed seeking times of the coffin of Nasrine and offered munajat some eternal peace of the departed soul.
She also talked to bereaved family members and consoled them.
Nasrine R Karim, an eminent fashion designer, died in London on April 14.

4 held with firearms, bullets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Rapid Action Battalion recovered four firearms, 351 rounds of bullets and arrested four alleged illegal arms traders at Ghatarchar in Keraniganj yesterday.
The arrestees were identified as Zakir Hossain, 26, and Mohammad Sumon, 28, Mohammad Munna, 20, and Mohammad Morshed, 29.
At a press briefing at Rab-2 office at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Commanding Officer Lt Col Ali Raza Khandoker said a team of Rab arrested the four with the firearms and bullets raiding the office of Ghatarchar Autorickshaw Samity in Keraniganj.

CPB condemns attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday condemned the attack on a National Oil and Gas Protecting Committee procession in front of Dhaka College, says a press release.
CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a statement said the people's revolution to solve the gas, electricity and water crisis cannot be prevented with this kind of attacks.
They demanded immediate arrest of the persons responsible for the attack. They warned the government that a repeat of the Kansat and Shanir Akhra incident would occur if the gas, water and power crises are not solved immediately.

Reception to Prof Zillur

DU CORRESPONDENT
The English Department of Jahangirnagar University yesterday accorded a grand reception to former teachers of the department Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui and poet Mohammad Rafiq on their winning the Swadhinata Padak and Ekushey Padak respectively.
At the programme held at the university's senate hall, Vice Chancellor Dr Sharif Enamul Kabir said Prof Zillur and Prof Rafiq have enormous contributions to the welfare of the country and they have made the JU family proud by winning the national awards.
Prof Hayat Mamud and Chairman of English Department Masrur Shahid Hossain also spoke, says a press release.

US dy secy of state calls on Khaleda

Talks bilateral issues
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Deputy Secretary of State James B Steinberg paid a courtesy call on BNP Chairperson and Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office yesterday.
During the meet, they discussed present bilateral relationship between the two countries. Financial and commercial ties between Bangladesh and the US also came up in the 30-minutes talks yesterday evening.
Briefing newsmen after the talks, BNP Vice-president Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury said Steinberg recalled Khaleda's contribution as the former prime minister in forging bilateral ties between the two nations.
He also said the US deputy secretary of state recalled the friendly relation between Bangladesh and the US during the tenures of Khaleda and late president Ziaur Rahman and hoped in future the relation will strengthen. Shamsur Mobin said Steinberg mentioned Bangladesh's improvement in different sectors particularly in women empowerment, economy, health and education and recalled Khaleda's leadership as the former prime minister in this regards.
He said Khaleda mentioned US financial assistance to Bangladesh and expected more help for duty-free access of Bangladeshi goods to the US market. She expressed her desire to work with the US government and US Congress in this regard.
Regional issues also came up in the discussion.
Steinberg said Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) will enhance the scope of economic and social development in the region.

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CHILD LABOUR 'Ratify ILO convention'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Speakers at a seminar yesterday underscored the need for ratifying the International Labor Organisation (ILO) Convention concerning the minimum age for admission to employment to eliminate child labour.
ILO Convention 138 pursues a national policy designated to ensure the effective abolition of child labour, yet total eradication of child labour is unrealistic at this moment due to poverty.
The observations came at a national seminar on 'Importance of Ratification of ILO Convention 138 to Eliminate Child Labour in Bangladesh' organised by Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) at Biam Foundation in the city.
While presenting the keynote paper, Abdul Hye Mondal, senior research fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said the ILO convention recognises and addresses three major concerns about child labour - protection of children, children's development and economic and labour market impacts on child labour.
"Consequently, it contributes to healthy growth of the disadvantaged children at work and eventually to growth of full-blown labour force, which is central to national development," he added.
Speaking as the chief guest, Md Nurul Haque, secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, said initiatives have been taken to create proper ground for ratification of ILO 138.
A national policy on eradication of child labour has also been devised with a view to eliminating child labour from the country.
Sophia Mar, chief technical adviser, ILO Bangladesh, said there are policies and strategies that preserve child rights, but those need to be implemented and government and non-government organisation work together to this end.
Mahmudul Kabir, country director, TdH-Netherlands, said only ratification does not have any merit, rather its implementation is more important to stamp out child labour from the country.
"Investment for children should be increased for making a change of the current situation of child labor in the country," he added.
Edward Thomas Espay, country director, Plan Bangladesh, and Wahida Banu, chairperson of BSAF, also spoke.

Many war criminals fleeing country Says facts finding committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
It is possible at this moment to arrest around 20 alleged war criminals on the basis of evidence and documents, Dr MA Hasan, convener of War Crimes Facts Finding Committee WCFFC, said yesterday.
"Many identified war criminals are fleeing the country since there is no vigilance against them," he said.
Hasan told this to reporters after handing over a short list of some alleged war criminals along with documents to the war crimes investigators at their Old High Court Building office yesterday morning.
The committee also submitted books, a list and a sketch map of some Baddhabhumis (killing grounds) in Dhaka, photos of victims and offenders, clippings of the daily Ittefaq, the daily Purbadesh and the Dainik Bangla published in 1971.
He, however, did not disclose the names, and whether they are involved in any political party.
Chief Investigator Abdul Matin, however, said the fugitives who committed crimes against humanity during the liberation war could be tried in absentia.
Earlier on April 4, the WCFFC submitted a list of 1,775 alleged war criminals and accounts of their role during the liberation war to help investigators.
On March 25, the government announced a special tribunal, prosecution team and the investigation agency to try the war criminals.

Chehlum

METRO DESK
Chehlum of KG Mustafa, a Language Movement veteran, renowned journalist and former ambassador will be held at his residence 'Elora' 5/7 Sir Syed Road, Block-A, Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.
On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held.
KG Mustafa passed away due to old age complications at a city hospital on March 13 at the age of 84. Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the chehlum.

Obituary

A RU CORRESPONDENT
Prof Alhaj Abdul Jabbar Khan, former treasurer and former teacher of Economics Department of Rajshahi University, passed away at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) on Wednesday night.
He was buried at his family graveyard after namaz-e-janaza after Zohr prayers on the university central mosque premises.
Vice Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan, Pro-VC Prof Muhammad Nurullah and Treasurer Prof Abdur Rahman consoled his death and prayed for salvation of the departed soul. Teachers, students of economics department and several socio-cultural organisations also consoled the death.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the region of Comilla in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.
Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.
Mild to moderate heat wave sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Dhaka, Tangail, Faridpur, Rajshahi, and Ishwardi may continue.
It said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.
The sun sets in the capital at 6:23pm today and rises at 5:30am tomorrow.
Country's highest temperature 39.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 20.8 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.
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	36.1	28.5	71	69
Chittagong	32.2	27.4	69	76
Rajshahi	39.8	27.4	80	50
Khulna	36.8	28.5	70	66
Barisal	34.2	28.6	77	80
Sylhet	30.1	20.8	88	75
Cox's Bazar	34.4	27.2	63	74

Newspaper holiday May 1

BSS, Dhaka
Newspapers Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) will observe May 1 as a holiday on account of historic 'May Day'.
In accordance with a decision of the executive committee of Noab, no newspaper will, therefore, be published on May 2 (Sunday), a Noab press release said yesterday.