



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at an Iftar party hosted by Jatiyatobadi Swechhchasebak Dal at Mohanagar Nattya Mancha in the city yesterday.

Investigate allegation of training on militancy

Minister directs cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Social Welfare Minister Enamul Haque Mostafa Shahid yesterday directed the law enforcers to immediately investigate the allegation three Jamaat men of conducting training on militancy at three madrasas in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj district.

The directives came when vice-chairman of the upazila Parishad Fazlul Haque Chowdhury Selim made the allegation at a meeting of the district law & order committee of Habiganj with

its Deputy Commissioner Mahmud Hassan in the chair.

The three madrasas are Purbo Timirpur, Syedpur and Tahirpur madrasa.

The minister said the government is sincere and confident about the trial of the war criminals for the sake of ensuring justice. None can hinder the nation's much desired process, he added.

He said the opposition BNP and others are trying to create anarchy in the country but they can't organise the war criminals due to the active role of the law enforce-

ment agencies, including Rab and police.

Mostafa Shahid urged the freedom fighters and others to remain alert to the matter.

He said the law enforcers should also take more strict measures to save the reserved forests in Habiganj district.

Lawmakers Abu Zahir and Abdul Mazid Khan, BDR Battalion Commander Lt Colonel Nurul Huda, Pourashava Mayor GK Gous and Muktiyoddha Sangsad Commander Mohammad Ali Pathan also spoke at the meeting.

STUDENT-ARMY MEN CLASH AT DU JS body to probe incident

RASHIDUL HASAN

The parliamentary standing committee on education ministry yesterday formed a four-member sub-committee to carry out the final phase of investigation into the August 2007 violence between army personnel and students at Dhaka University.

The sub-committee was asked to find out the people responsible for the incident and suggest what action should be taken against them, said Rashid Khan Menon, chief of both the parliamentary body and the sub-committee, after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The JS body told the sub-committee to submit a report within the next two months to it which will then place the report before parliament, he said.

The three other members of the committee are lawmakers of ruling Awami League Mirza Azam, Biren Sikdar and

Shah Alam.

Last year, the parliamentary body on August 2 decided to investigate the much-talked violence during the past caretaker government, and on August 29 observed that several government agencies were involved in instigating the unrest on DU campus.

It also said the caretaker government should be blamed for the incident, as several civilian and army officials of the then administration took part in it.

Menon told The Daily Star that the main committee already verified different news clippings, photographs, video footage and news scripts of television and radio broadcasts relating to the incident.

"We also received a few intelligence reports from the home ministry and scrutinised them. But we want to investigate further," he noted.

If necessary the sub-committee would interview army personnel concerned,

members of different intelligence agencies and police. Besides, it would also talk to teachers and students who were subjected to brutality during the incident.

On August 20, the violence began when a few army men beat up three students and insulted a teacher during a football match on the university gymnasium field.

Thousands of DU students on the same day took to the streets protesting the incident and demanding withdrawal of the on-campus army camp and an apology from the troops.

There had been pitched battles between students and police forces for the next two days, which left over 250 people mostly students, injured.

As violence spread through educational institutions in the capital and elsewhere, the government imposed a curfew in the divisional headquarters and closed universities and colleges on August 22.

NUMBER OF HAJJ PILGRIMS INCREASES

Deal with six pvt airlines at final stage, says minister

UNB, Dhaka

The government is at the final stage of signing deals with six private airlines as 'third carriers' to carry hajj pilgrims this year as the number of hajj pilgrims sharply increased this year.

The third carrier comprising the selected six private airlines has primarily agreed to carry 26,042 passengers, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader told reporters at his office yesterday, after a meeting with representatives from the airlines.

This year around 94,000 persons will perform hajj which was 58,000 last year. Biman Bangladesh airlines will carry 40,000 pilgrims while Saudia Airlines 28,000.

"We've formulated a policy for the third carrier. They (six private airlines)

will sign an agreement with us under the policy...we've already given the draft policy to them," he said.

The private airlines that are likely to sign an agreement with the government are Al Wafer Air, National Air Service (NAS), a subsidiary of the Saudia National Air Services, Gulf Air, Kuwait Airways, Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways.

According to primary discussions, Al Wafer Air and NAS will carry 10,000 and 5,000 hajj pilgrims respectively while Gulf Air 7,000, Kuwait Airways 1,500, Qatar Airways 1,342 and Etihad 1,200.

Minister GM Quader said among the six private airlines, four airlines--Gulf Air, Kuwait Airways, Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways--will have transit but the duration of transit would be at most three hours.

"The remaining four airlines, including Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Saudia Airlines used to carry the pilgrims every year will have direct flights," he said.

The third carrier will arrange Halal food and Bangla-speaking cabin crew for the passengers.

Each passenger under the third carrier will have to pay the same airfare, which is \$1,350 and the six airlines under the third carrier will have to give \$150 to Biman Bangladesh Airlines as the royalty per passenger.

The government earlier fixed \$1,350 as per head cost of airfare. Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Saudia Airlines used to carry Hajj passengers every year. Hajj flights will start from October 8 while they will start returning to the country from November 22 to till December 21 this year.

Tk 1 crore for Bangabandhu Memorial Trust

UNB, Dhaka

Basic Bank Limited yesterday donated Tk 1 crore to Bangabandhu Memorial Trust.

Members of board of directors of the bank led by its Chairman Abdul Hye Bachchu handed over the cheque to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the prime minister's office in the morning.

The prime minister thanked the bank, saying everyone in society has to work hand in hand to remove socio-economic problems of the mass people.

Hasina recalled that she and Bangabandhu's younger daughter Sheikh Rehana had donated their paternal house at Dhanmondi-32 to the trust and turned it into Bangabandhu Memorial Museum for the people.

"Since its establishment, Bangabandhu Memorial Trust has been playing a remarkable role in education and social welfare," said the prime minister.

She added that the memorial trust is going to set up a hospital in Gazipur after the name of Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib. It has also introduced a stipend for meritorious students of the sociology department of Dhaka University after the name of Sheikh Kamal and Sultana Kamal.

Besides, another stipend at the University Laboratory School after the name of Sheikh Russel has also been introduced.

She said the trust has been providing stipends regularly to 1200 poor and meritorious students annually and financial support to those who were injured in the August 21 grenade attack.

Besides, a large number of families, who lost their loved ones and property during the misrule of BNP-Jamaat government, are also being aided by the trust.

The prime minister also mentioned the recently organised free medical treatment programme of the trust under which some 10 lakh patients have been given quality treatment.

Strengthen local govt for disaster management

Advise development experts

DU CORRESPONDENT

There is no alternative to strengthening local government bodies for proper implementation of plans and initiatives to reduce risks of natural disaster in the country, said local government representatives and development experts yesterday.

They urged the government to undertake effective initiatives to strengthen local government bodies to face upcoming challenges of natural disaster due to global climate change.

They were speaking at a discussion organised by Rupantor, a development organisation, on strengthening local government in implementing activities to cut disaster risks at the city's National Press Club.

Addressing as chief guest, Director of the Office of Democracy and Governance of USAID Kevin Sturr said rate of natural disasters has increased as a consequence of global climate change and Bangladesh is one of the victims.

He said it is important for the government and non-government bodies to run the disaster risk reducing activities in Bangladesh by taking various plans.

Role of local governments in implementing the initiatives to reduce the risk is very important, he added and stressed strengthening the local government bodies in Bangladesh.

Development expert Mahmudul Islam said as Bangladesh is a disaster prone country, it is important to undertake proper plans and initiatives to face natural disasters.

Vice-President of Municipal Association of Bangladesh Abdul Baten said local government bodies especially the union parishads could play an effective role in implementing disaster management initiatives.

President of Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum Mahbubur Rahman Tulu suggested formation of a special fund to implement disaster risk initiatives identifying the most vulnerable areas.

3 Rab officials sued in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Editor and publisher of a Sylhet-based Bangla weekly yesterday filed a case against three officials and 20 to 25 unnamed personnel of Rab on charges of harassing and arresting him, and looting his house in September 2008.

Tarekuzzaman, the then deputy commander of Rab-9, and Shariful Islam and Amzad Hossain, the then deputy assistant directors, are among the accused in the case filed with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Sylhet.

Magistrate Md Amir Uddin directed the Kotwali Police Station to investigate the complaint and submit a report by October 18.

Faruque Ibne Ambia alias Alamgir, editor

and publisher of the 'Thames Surma', alleged that a team accompanied by the three Rab officials forcibly entered his house in Shahjalal Upashahar on September 14, 2008.

Alamgir in the complaint said that the Rab personnel planted Yaba tablets and porn CDs in a room of his house and then arrested him on charge of peddling drugs.

The law enforcers took away the mobile phone of his wife and vandalised the house, he added.

Following the arrest, Rab sent press releases to all local newspapers of the district headquarters describing him as a Yaba peddler to besmirch his reputation, alleged Alamgir.

Alamgir was released after a 22-hour detention in a Rab office.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Atif Rahman Bipu, son of Rezaur Rahman, managing director of

Bengal Airlift Group, will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city tomorrow after zohr prayers, said a press release.

Before burial, the body Atif Rahman will be taken to his residence at KR Villa, House # 305, Block # C, Shafayet Road, Bashundhara R/A at 11:00am for holding his first namaz-e-janaza and later Bashundhara Islamic Research Centre (Mosque) for second janaza.

He will be buried at Banani graveyard in the city today after Juma prayers.

All relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to join Atif's qulkhwani and pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Nazmul Hasan Jahed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qulkhwani of Nazmul Hasan Jahed, former legislative for Habiganj-2 constituency, will be held today after Asr prayers at 75, Brac Centre, Mohakhali in the city.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Nazmul Hasan passed away last Monday at a city hospital.

Begum Munira Atiq

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Begum Munira Atiq, wife of Lt General (Retd) M Atiqur Rahman, will be held at Gulzar-e-Rahmat, House 98, Road 25, Block-A, Banani in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Munira passed away at Combined Military Hospital on August 18. She was buried at Army Graveyard at Banani.

Amend constitution on basis of present context

Says shipping minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan stressed the need for amendment to the constitution on the basis of present perspective and circumstance of the country.

It is not possible to restore the '72 constitution completely because it has been 38 years of the nation since that constitution was passed. So its construction should be amended on the basis of present perspective, he said.

The minister made the comment while speaking as the chief guest at a seminar titled 'Bangabandhu's Bangladesh: Organisation of state and its background' organised by

Proshika, a centre for human development, at the city's Cirdap auditorium yesterday, said a press release.

He strongly criticised the previous government for distorting history, saying that the evil forces would not get any scope for doing so again.

Presenting the keynote paper Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan said it would not be possible to establish a non-communal democratic country without trying war criminals.

Proshika Chief Executive Mahbub-Ul-Karim presided over the seminar while the daily Bhorer Kagaj Editor Shamol Dutta moderated it.

HAOR REGION EC allocates €3.8m for flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The European Commission (EC) allocated 3.8 million euros in emergency humanitarian aid to support an estimated 300,000 farmers affected by flash flooding in Bangladesh's north-eastern haor region.

The action was launched in late July for six months, said a European Union press release yesterday.

"This support shows our commitment to target humanitarian assistance for poor Haor residents -- the most vulnerable communities most affected by the early flash flood," said Dr Stefan Frowein, the EU ambassador to Bangladesh.

He said it complements our long-term development cooperation in the area under the Food Security for the Ultra

Poor in the Haor and the Haor Initiatives for the Sustainable Alternative Livelihoods projects.

The EU press release further said the haor people are mainly dependent on a single annual rice crop. Since April, the flooding has destroyed rice crops of 200,000 hectares of land. According to estimates, the flood has destroyed some 75 percent rice crops, the release said.

The EC has decided to finance the emergency food assistance to vulnerable families, who have lost their crops and have no alternative livelihoods, the EU said adding that the funds are channelled through the EC's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection.

Concern Worldwide, ActionAid, Save the Children UK, Islamic Relief and Care UK will implement the action.

150 sued for attacking cops, snatching gun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khilkhet police filed a case on Wednesday night accusing around 150 people, including 128 anonymous persons, for attacking a police team and snatching a firearm on Tuesday.

The police were yet to recover the looted pistol. "We are trying to recover the firearm and arrest the other suspects," said the Deputy Commissioner of Gulshan police AKM Hafiz Akhter.

A police team came under attack on Tuesday when they

went to Nikunja area to arrest a group of stalkers for allegedly teasing two sisters Shakira Khatun Mitu and Sanjida Nasrin Simu for the last one year and a half.

Police picked up 32 people on Wednesday for their suspected involvement in the attack. Among the detainees, 11 were produced before the Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday for remand while the rest were freed after scrutiny.

Denying the bail prayer, the court sent them to jail.



Bir Shrestha Matiur's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 39th death anniversary of Shaheed Flight Lieutenant M Matiur Rahman Bir Shrestha, one of the most valiant heroes of the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

On this day in 1971, Matiur Rahman piloted a T-33 trainer aircraft from Karachi, Pakistan, towards India in an attempt to defect from the Pakistan Air Force to join the liberation war.

He couldn't complete his desired mission, as the plane crashed when other pilot Rashid Minhas tried to prevent him. He was buried in Pakistan.

The remains of Matiur Rahman was flown to Dhaka from Pakistan on June 24 in 2006 and laid to rest at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in Mirpur on the following day.

Matiur Rahman was awarded the title Bir Shrestha, the highest gallantry award for heroic achievement in the liberation war. An air base in Jessore is also named after him.

WEATHER TODAY Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong, Rangpur, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over Barisal, Chittagong and Rangpur divisions, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:28pm today and rises at 5:36am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.2 degrees Celsius at Rangpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)