



Hasina's birthday today

BSS, Dhaka

Different organisations have taken up various programmes to celebrate the 64th birthday of Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina today.

According to sources, Awami Jubo League has organised a discussion at the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) at 3:00pm today in the city to observe the birthday.

Awami League General Secretary and LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam will attend the discussion as the chief guest.

Bangladesh Awami Secchasebok League has also organised discussion on "Sheikh Hasina in the struggle for democracy and peace and development" at Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium in observance of the day.

Deputy Leader of the House and Awami League Presidium Member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury will be present at the function as the chief guest.

Industries Minister Dilip Barua; President of the Workers Party Rashed Khan Menon, MP; President of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Hasanul Haque Inu, MP; General Secretary of Bangladesh Communist Party (CPB) Mujahedul Islam Selim; Joint Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League Mahbubul Alam Hanif; Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Professor Dr MAAS Arefin Siddique; and Organising Secretary of Awami League AFM Bahauddin Nasim will be present as special guests.

Meanwhile, to mark the birthday of the prime minister, Bangabandhu Sanskrit Jote will bring out a rally from the Matshya Bhaban Gate of Ramna Park at about 11:00am, which will be led by its General Secretary Advocate Tarana Halim, MP, and named film actor Mohammad Faruk.

The "Sheikh Hasina Chetona Gabeshona Parishad" in collaboration with the people of Sakhipur-Bashail constituency will arrange a discussion at Poet Sufia Kamal auditorium at the National Museum.

The discussion would be attended, among others, by Suranjit Sengupta, MP; Rashed Khan Menon, MP; Hasanul Haque Inu, MP; Barrister Anisul Islam M a h m u d , M P ; a n d Asaduzzaman Nur, MP.

Besides, Bangladesh Enterprise for Development and Security Studies (BEDSS) has arranged a photo exhibition on the life and works of the prime minister at Bangabandhu Memorial Trust Complex at about 4:00pm. Barrister Fazle Noor Topsh, MP, will inaugurate the exhibition as the chief guest.

Two burglars arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) personnel early yesterday seized 70 tolas of stolen gold and Tk 17.20 lakh from the city's Kamrangirchar and arrested two alleged burglars in this connection.

The detained persons are Panna Khan, 25, and Fazlul Haque, 45.

According to DB officials, Panna was an employee of Hasi Jewellers at the city's New Market and Fazlul is his brother-in-law.

DB officials said the burglars stole around 250 tolas of gold and Tk 2 lakh from the jewellers on August 21 and the law-enforcers recovered 70 tolas of the stolen gold and the seized amount was obtained by selling gold.

DB officials said Panna was arrested from Dinajpur. On information from Panna, the stolen cash and gold ornaments were recovered from Fazlul's residence at Rasulpur village under Kamrangirchar Police Station in Dhaka.

Arrested Panna and Fazlul said they had sold a portion of the stolen gold and used the money in advance payment for a piece of land, DB official added.

DB suspects that an organised group of criminals might be involved in trading the stolen gold.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION LAW

Ship-breakers to face 10 years jail for pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A person involved in ship-breaking business would face punishment of up to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of maximum Tk10 lakh for polluting environment or causing health hazard, said a new provision included in the environment protection law.

The parliament passed a bill yesterday incorporating some other stringent provisions in the Bangladesh Environment Protection Act 1995 to prevent environmental disaster and expedite the government activities in this regard.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Hasan Mahmud proposed passage of the bill. It also included provisions for increasing punishment for various offences causing environ-

ment pollution.

An owner of ship-breaking yard, importer and owner of ship will be bound to ensure that environment will not be polluted and public health will not face any threat due to cutting of ships or through its hazardous waste, according to the new provision.

If anybody violates the provision for the first time, he will be punished with up to two years' in jail or a fine of minimum Tk2 lakh or both. For violating the law for the second time and onwards, he will be punished with up to 10 years' in jail and a fine of maximum Tk10 lakh or both.

An amendment to the environment law empowers the government to control production, processing, stockpiling, supplying, transporting, importing, exporting, dumping and disposal of

wastage hazardous to environment.

People responsible for violating this provision might be punished with up to 10 years' in jail or a fine of maximum Tk10 lakh or both.

According to provisions of the amended law, any individual responsible for cutting hills and grabbing water bodies will also have to face harsh punishment including jail for different terms.

The amended law empowers people and community, affected by environment pollution, to file cases with the environment court against any companies or organisation responsible for the pollution seeking compensation for the damage.

The director general of the Directorate of Environment can file case on behalf of the affected people or community.

An amendment to the environment law also made it mandatory to take environment clearance certificate from the environment directorate before setting up any industry or implementing any project.

Industries established before the introduction of new provision will also have to take environment clearance certificate.

The amended law also allows the government to declare any area as ecologically critical, considering its environmental importance and biodiversity, to protect the area.

Meanwhile, the parliament passed another bill amending non-government primary teachers' Welfare Trust Act 2000. Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Amin proposed passage of the bill.

5 injured as BCL, Shibir clash at IU

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

At least five activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) were injured in a fierce clash at Islamic University (IU) yesterday.

Campus sources said a group of BCL men locked in an altercation with some Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists around 12:30pm and drove them out of the campus for delivering anti-government speech at a rally.

Shibir activists of IU, reportedly led by its president Shahinor Rahman, rushed to the spot protesting the incident.

Later, around 100 Shibir activists trooped out of Saddam Hossain Hall and Ziaur Rahman Hall at about 1:30pm and attacked BCL

activists with lethal weapons. The clash caused injury to Shahinor and Masud Hossain of ICS and Ashiqur Rahman Japan and Zohurul Islam of BCL.

As the ICS men were being driven off they opened fire wounding Rintu, a BCL activist, in the left leg.

Rintu is currently undergoing treatment at Faridpur Medical College Hospital while Masud has been admitted to Kushtia General Hospital.

Meanwhile, police detained around 20 Shibir activists but later released them in the presence of Mahbubul Arefin, proctor of IU.

"The situation is currently under control," the proctor said.

Additional police were deployed on the campus to avoid further incidents.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses a reception hosted in her honour by the United States unit of Awami League in New York on Sunday. (Story on Page 1)

Child drowns as launch hits boat in Buriganga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A child drowned, a college girl and a youth went missing, and five others were injured after a launch rammed a boat in the Buriganga river near Sutrapur area last evening.

The deceased was Fardia Akter, 7, daughter of Mohammad Firoz of Kaliganj in South Keraniganj while her relative and college student Shoma Akter, 18, and Bidyut, 30, remained untraced till filing this report at 9:00pm.

The injured are Qazi Jubayer, 32, his wife Shumi Akter, 23, and his six-month old daughter Shara, his sister-in-law Ruma, 26, and his mother-in-law Ayesha Begum, 42. They received treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Qazi Jubayer said they were returning home from Lalkuthir Ghat at Sutrapur by a boat at around 6:30pm after attending a wedding ceremony of his sister at Sutrapur Community Centre.

The boat, carrying the eight people, capsized near the Ghat after the launch hit it, he said.

The nearby boatmen recovered six of them, he said adding the locals and boatmen tried to find Shoma but failed.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT TO STUDENTS Submit report on steps, HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the government to submit a report to it within two weeks on what steps it has taken regarding the incidents of corporal punishment against students in schools across the country between March and July this year.

An HC bench of Justice Md Imman Ali and Justice Obaidul Hasan passed the order in response to a pending writ petition jointly filed by human rights organisations -- Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK) and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

The rights groups filed the petition with the HC on July 18 challenging the systematic failure of the government to take action against repeated and severe incidents of corporal punishment, including caning, beating and chaining of children by teachers in schools and madrasas.

The petition was filed following the reported suicide of a 10-year-old boy, a student of a government school in Mymensingh, in July this year after he had been beaten by a school teacher, and in the wake of dozens of such cases being reported in media over the past year.

Meanwhile, the ministry of education yesterday submitted a report to the HC stating that it has issued a circular prohibiting corporal punishment mentioning actions against those responsible. It said the education ministry has also decided to formulate guidelines to prevent and prohibit corporal punishment against students, and prepare a training manual for teachers. It has also taken steps to initiate inquiries into the allegations of corporal punishment.

The Madrasa Education Board also submitted another report saying that it has held inquiries into three incidents as alleged by the writ petitioners, based on the media reports, including one of a girl who was caned with pushing a pen in her eye for not wearing the school uniform (described as a borkah).

The madrasa board has directed its officers to file a report on the action taken against those responsible within seven days, it said.

The HC fixed October 14 for further hearing on the matter. Barrister Sara Hossain and Advocate Abanteer Nurul appeared for the petitioners while Deputy Attorney General Motahar Hossain Sazu represented the education ministry and Barrister Mynul Hasan stood for the madrasa board.

UN secretary general hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An independent child's charity organisation working worldwide, Save the Children, yesterday hailed United Nations secretary-general for putting child and maternal mortality at the top of the global agenda.

Jasmine Whitbread, the organisation's international chief executive officer, said, "UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon deserves credit for putting child and maternal mortality at the top of the global agenda."

In a press release, Whitbread added, "Yesterday's announcement pledges 40 billion US dollars, but it is not clear how much of this is genuinely new and how governments will be held to account if they fail to deliver."

According to her, this collective commitment is a beginning, but we will not be able to reach goal without a major surge of political energy.

"The commitment made yesterday wouldn't have happened without millions of people calling for action before UN Summit," she said. "Those people can take real pride in what they have achieved today. But we owe it to every mother and child that this commitment ends up in real progress."

Boutique staff beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An employee of a renowned boutique was allegedly beaten to death by his employer at an apartment in city's Dhanmondi Sunday night.

Dhanmondi Police broke into the house yesterday afternoon and recovered the body.

Haider Ali Shaad owner of Valinda allegedly flogged Nurun Nabi, 28, to death and fled leaving the body inside a bathroom of the house.

Shaad and his two brothers Babu and Rakib also confined, Jahir, another employee and nephew of the victim inside a bedroom before leaving the house.

Shaad tied the victim's hands and stuffed his mouth with cloth before hitting him severely with a stick in presence of his brothers Sunday afternoon, Jahir told The Daily Star. Shaad accused Nurun Nabi of embezzling Tk 20 lakh and demanded to account for the missing money.

The neighbours said they did not hear any noises while the crime was being committed as the victim was unable to cry out for help.

Jahir said before leaving they locked the house from the outside and threatened to kill him if he attempted to escape.

Supervisor of the apartment complex Mohammad Amin said, Babu and Rakib left the apartment at 10pm on Sunday but Shaad left around 2am.

On Monday morning, Shaad made a phone call at Nurun Nabi's village home at Ramganj in Laxmipur district telling them Nabi had died and the body was lying inside the apartment.

Maya Begum, Nurun Nabi's sister said her brother was married and his wife was expecting a child in a month.

Shaad rented an apartment on the 2nd floor of the six-storey building at road 6A, Dhanmondi, for his youngest brother who was a university student, while he himself lived at another place with his family, said Jahir. No woman lived in the flat. Nurun Nabi used to bring the sales proceeds of the shops to the house every evening.

Officer-in-Charge of Dhanmondi Police Station Md Shah Alam said the police are trying to track down Shaad and his two brothers who are on the run.

Citizen charter can better govt service: Secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The establishment ministry secretary yesterday said citizen charter could be a device to build bridge between government service providers and consumers.

The service providers can serve remarkable role in improving the standard of service by earning trust and satisfaction of people, added Iqbal Mahmud, the secretary.

According to him, it is the responsibility of government officials to win people's trust through service.

Iqbal said this while addressing a workshop on "Citizen charter to improve the standard of service" in Sylhet, says a press release.

The workshop was held under a project -- Civil Service Change Management by the ministry. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is giving the technical support for the project.

Local government representatives and officials of different districts took part in the workshop. Divisional Commissioner Golam Rabanni presided over the programme.

TROPICAL DISEASES Conference begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scientists, health experts, policy makers and development partners will meet in a two-day conference in Dhaka, starting from tomorrow, to discuss the issues of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) and climatic change challenges in the country.

National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM) authorities made the announcement at a press conference at its auditorium yesterday.

The Second International Conference on Climate Change and Neglected Tropical Diseases, to be held in Dhaka, will have foreign participants coming from Germany, Australia, Japan, England, Indonesia, Malaysia and India.

The participants will discuss the magnitude of spread of the NTDs in the country, find out ways to eliminate NTDs, and also discuss the possible directions to face the challenges posed by climatic changes.

At the press briefing, NIPSOM officials said millions of people in Bangladesh are

affected by various NTDs including malaria, filariasis, visceral leishmaniasis (VL) and dengue.

In Bangladesh, 13 districts are known to be endemic for malaria, 34 for filariasis, and 45 for VL, while dengue is found in all divisional headquarters, they added.

They said 300 to 700 of the 70,000 to 80,000 malaria-affected people die every year, and more than 98 percent of such cases are reported from its 13 endemic districts.

Director Dr Moazzem Hossain and other high officials of NIPSOM were present at the press conference.

Chinese embassy visa section closed today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the China National Day. Marking the day, Visa Section of Chinese Embassy will remain closed, says a press release.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saniul Sadat Hossain, son of Engineer Belayet Hossain and Azadi Hossain of

House 8, Road 12, Sector 1, Uttara in the city, passed away at his residence due to a cardiac arrest in the early hours of September 26 at the age of 28.

He was buried the same day at the Civil Aviation Graveyard.

He left behind his father and mother, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

Saniul worked at Information Solutions Limited, a unit of Genesis Technology Group, and was one of the proprietors of Hubble Bubble cafe in Gulshan 2 and Mynt lounge in Banani.

His nakhwani will be held at Mynt lounge, at House 153 (4th floor), Road 11, Block E, Banani in the city, after Asr prayers on October 1.

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

WEATHER TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:49pm today and rises at 5:49am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and Mongla and lowest 24.2 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

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

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



State Minister for Home Shamsul Huq Tuku speaks at a meeting with the officials of district administration at the deputy commissioner's (DC) office in Pabna yesterday. On his right is prime minister's adviser HT Imam.