



A delegation of 'Friends of Bangladesh' led by President of Parliamentary League of Japan Shin Shikurui calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite in Tokyo yesterday. (Story on page 1)

ONE TAKA COIN BB advice to people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday urged everyone not to pay heed to baseless rumours regarding one taka golden metallic coin and advised not to get involved in such trade.

People are being cheated and victimised by a group of people who are involved in trading of such coins at higher prices, the bank observed.

The central bank, terming such trading as a punishable offence, said authorities concerned have already been directed to take steps in this regard, said a press release.

Why the metallic coin which hardly costs Tk 0.78, containing copper, brass and tin, is being traded at such high price is beyond comprehension, said the press release.

The one taka golden metallic coin, as it has been observed, traded at much higher prices recently at different parts of the country.

Prepare to fight harassment

Speakers urge women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday called upon the women across the country to take necessary measures and preparations to stand against all kinds of violence and sexual harassment.

Women should be gallant and learn the art of self-defence to tackle any situation, they said.

The speakers told a press conference titled "Say no to violence against women: Be a real man" held at the Hotel Sonargaon in the city.

Bangladesh Musical Bands' Association (BAMBA) in association with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the government organised the press conference ahead of a concert to be held at the Army Stadium marking the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women on December 3.

"Stalking is, by no means, a new phenomenon in Bangladesh," said Ayub Bachchu, popular musician and member of executive body of BAMBA.

"We have seen mischievous youths

standing in street corners and whistling to young girls in many neighbourhoods in the past. But what is happening now has gone beyond mere mischief or irritation," he said.

The speakers said the term "eve teasing", as journalists say it, is too soft of a word to describe the torment and distress experienced by the young women.

"This is one of the worst forms of sexual harassment and calling it 'eve teasing' does not help the average citizen understand the gravity of the problem," said Hamin Ahmed, president of BAMBA, "Girls are committing suicides and many parents have also lost their lives due to these stalkers."

They urged everyone to create awareness so that the youths learn to respect women as motherly figures.

"Brother, you did not fall down from the sky," said Ayub Bachchu addressing the youths, "You had a mother, and these women will be mothers some day" - This message needs to be instilled in the minds of the youths."

This is the message of the concert that

will be held at the Army Stadium on December 3, they said.

"This is a concert with a message," said UNFPA Representative Arthur Erken, "and the message is to say no to violence against women. This message is bigger than the concert itself."

Information Secretary Hedayetullah Al Mamun was also present at the programme.

Twelve major band music groups of Bangladesh will perform at the concert, which will be a non-profit programme sponsored by the UNFPA. All proceedings from ticket sales would go to the UNFPA fund to raise awareness regarding sexual abuse, violence and stalking.

The twelve band groups including LRB, Miles, Souls, Warfaze, Artcell and Aurthohin, will also compose a theme song to mark the event and raise awareness regarding the issue of violence against women, the speakers said.

The theme song and awareness programme on the issue will be broadcast through various media, they added.

Brick fall kills woman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was killed yesterday as a piece of brick fell on her head when she was passing under a six-storey building being constructed at Banashree in the city.

The deceased was Parvin Akhter, a domestic help of Mohammad Babul from Block-I, Road-6 of the area.

Officer-in-charge Nazim Uddin of Khilgaon Police Station said two construction workers of the building rushed Parvin to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.



US official Alyssa Ayres in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alyssa Ayres arrived here yesterday for a five-day visit.

During the visit, she will hold meetings with politicians, senior public officials, civil society groups, entrepreneurs and media, said a press statement of the US Embassy in Dhaka.

Alyssa Ayres will also visit a USAID Integrated Protected Area Co-Management project in Sylhet and meet the alumni of US Embassy exchange programmes. She will depart on December 2.

CU VC Abu Yusuf passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dr Abu Yusuf, vice-chancellor of Chittagong University, passed away at Chittagong Medical College Hospital last night at the age of 67.

Prof Yusuf, also a teacher of Islamic History department of the university, had been suffering from cardiac problem with other complications for the last four months.

Family members of the deceased said Yusuf was rushed to CMCH when he collapsed at his Hathazari residence around 10:00pm. He was declared dead at around 11:10pm.

Prof Yusuf left behind one daughter and wife to mourn his death.

Meanwhile, CU authorities have declared a three-day condolence at the institution for the sudden demise of Yusuf. All classes and examinations of the university scheduled for today have been suspended.

The first namaj-e-janaza of Yusuf will be held on the university campus after Zohr prayers and the second one at Zamiatul Falah Mosque in the port city after Asr prayers.

He will be buried at the CU central mosque graveyard. Yusuf, also an organiser of the war of liberation in 1971, took the charge of vice-chancellor of CU on February 25, 2009.

New English language test for people to join partner in UK

METRO DESK

A new English language requirement will be introduced today for non-European migrants who, as of today, apply for a visa to go or remain in the UK as a partner or spouse of a British citizen or person settled there.

Applicants will need to show that they can speak and understand English to a basic level. They will usually meet this requirement by passing an English language test with a UK Border Agency-approved test provider. The list of approved test providers and further guidance is available on the UK Border Agency's website.

Applicants are required to pass this language test before they apply for a visa and submit an original test certificate with their visa application.

It is also possible to meet the English language requirement by having an academic qualification equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in the UK. Applicants will need to supply the original qualification certificate with their visa application.

The new language requirement is intended to help migrants integrate into British society -- to open up more opportunities, help prevent exploitation, and allow them to benefit from, and contribute more to their communities.

This English language requirement does not apply to visitors or the spouses and partners of those in the UK on a temporary visa, such as workers and students under the points based system.

Dhaka committed to uphold int'l peace, security

Says president

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday said Bangladesh, as a peace-loving country, is always committed to upholding the international peace and security.

The president made the remark while inaugurating the four-day-long 16th Annual Conference of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC) in the city's Radisson Hotel.

Defence Adviser to the Prime Minister Maj Gen (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique and Chief of Army Staff General M Abdul Mubeen spoke at the programme, organised by Bangladesh Army in collaboration with Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training (BIPSOT).

Addressing the function, Zillur mentioned in conformity with the spirit of the constitution, Bangladesh has always responded positively to the United Nations' call for strengthening world peace and stability.

He said with professionalism and perseverance Bangladesh peacekeepers have set an excellent professional mark worldwide and so far, Bangladesh has taken part in 45 peacekeeping missions in 30 different countries.

"Now, we are the highest troops-contributing country in the world. The contributions of our peacekeepers are highly acclaimed globally,"

Hanif's death anniversary observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday observed the fourth death anniversary of Mohammad Hanif, the first elected mayor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and an Awami League leader.

Four years back on this day, Hanif died at the city's Apollo Hospital due to a prolonged illness and multiple organ failures.

Jatiya Ganatantrik League organised a discussion meeting at the Maitri auditorium in Mukti Bhaban in the city.

Former home minister Mohammad Nasim attended the discussion as chief guest. Speakers at the discussion said Mayor Hanif was an exceptional politician. He saved Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from August 21 grenade attack by forming human shield.

Jatiya Ganatantrik League and Bangabandhu Shangkritik Parishad placed a floral wreath at the grave of Hanif at Azimpur at about 8:00am.

Bangabandhu Shangkritik Parishad also offered special prayers at the grave of Hanif.

CRIMINAL CASES Most anticipatory bail petitions not entertained

Say pro-BNP SCBA leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The pro-BNP faction of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) yesterday alleged that most of the High Court (HC) benches are not accepting petitions for anticipatory bail in criminal cases, which is "illegal and against the justice."

The HC benches are refusing to entertain the petitions for anticipatory bail following an Appellate Division verdict that in June this year prohibited the HC to direct the accused persons to surrender to the trial courts, said SCBA President Khandker Mahbub Hossain.

He told reporters at SCBA's south hall yesterday afternoon. Khandker Mahbub urged the chief justice to take measures so that the HC benches accept the petitions for anticipatory bail, and grant bail to the accused people against whom there is no specific allegation.

SCBA Secretary Bodruddoza Badal also spoke at the briefing. Meanwhile, Attorney General Mahbub Alam countered the statement of SCBA president, saying that the HC has not stopped granting anticipatory bail to the people.

He told reporters at his office that granting bail or refusing to grant bail is the discretion of the HC.

The SCBA president's statement is confusing and misleading, said the attorney general.

Misleading AIDS info dangerous for nation

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Disseminating accurate information on HIV/AIDS and their usage in daily life are the key to prevent spread of the deadly disease, panelists told a roundtable yesterday.

As there is no treatment of the disease, prevention is the only way to ward off the fatal infection, they said, adding that wrong or misleading information about it can turn out to be dangerous for the nation.

The HIV situation in the country, however, is far better than in neighbouring countries with the prevalence of HIV/AIDS one percent, they said, stressing the need for continuing the prevention programmes.

Speakers also noted that media has an immense role in filling the information gap and making the young people aware of how the killer virus is transmitted.

The roundtable titled "Jante hobe-janate hobe" (Know and



Participants at a roundtable titled "Jante hobe-janate hobe" (Know and let know) jointly organised by the daily Prothom Alo, Prothom Alo Bandhushava, National AIDS/STD Programme and Save the Children at the daily's office in the city yesterday.

let know) was jointly organised by daily Prothom Alo, Prothom Alo Bandhushava, National AIDS/STD Programme and Save the Children at Prothom Alo's office in the capital.

"Information is the main vaccine against the disease," said Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed, director of HIV/AIDS department of Save the Children, USA.

Talking about government

measures, he said Bangladesh is the most successful country in Asia and second in the world in preventing HIV/AIDS. The knowledge about the disease has increased; usage of condoms has doubled and the topic has been incorporated in school curriculum from grade 6 to 12, he added.

Prothom Alo Joint Editor Abdul Qaiyum said the disease

spreads mainly for lack of awareness. The infection rate of AIDS is increasing in Asia while it is decreasing elsewhere in the world, he added insisting that awareness is a must to fight it.

Hasan Mahmud, deputy programme manager of National AIDS/STD Programme of the government, said government has

SUNDARBANS RESOURCES Equal rights of women demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop demanded equal rights of women and men to the resources of the Sundarbans, pointing out that women often face attack, discrimination, and harassment while collecting the forest resources.

They also demanded of the government to give state recognition to the profession of the forest people whose livelihood depends on the forest resources.

BARCIK, a non-government organisation, held the national workshop in Shatkhira on the equal rights of women and men to the Sundarbans' natural resources.

Prof Dr Maleka Begum of women and gender studies department of Dhaka University spoke as the chief guest.

Prof Maleka said the recent proposals for building rail lines near the Sundarbans will put the forest resources at risk adding that all should voice against the railway establishment.

Director of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA), Syeda Rizwana Hassan, Hannana Begum, director of Bangladesh Bank board directors, and Aparup Chowdhury, joint secretary of the environment and forest ministry also spoke at the workshop.

\$7m Korean support for two projects likely

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Korean government is considering a grant of 7 million US dollars for implementation of two projects in the field of ICT and vocational training in Bangladesh.

According to Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Bangladesh office sources, a three-member team of Korean delegation has completed their feasibility survey for the two projects titled "Enhance the Vocational Training Capacity of Technical Training Centre, Chittagong" and "Establishment of ICT and Web-based Learning System in Bangladesh Open University."

The projects will be implemented with TTC, Chittagong and Bangladesh Open University (BOU).

Both the projects will be implemented with the financial assistance of KOICA. KOICA would like to provide grant assistance about USD 4 million for modernisation of Chittagong TTC with developed infrastructure facilities and modern machinery and equipment for skill development training.

To help establish "Digital Bangladesh", KOICA is interested to provide USD 3 million grant assistance to the BOU as per its request.

British Council to hold 4-month Tagore festival

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The British Council will celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Nobel Laureate Poet Rabindranath Tagore through a four-month long festival to be held in between next February and May.

The festival programmes include a fashion show, a creative writing workshop, a music show on TV and a dance drama.

The British Council unveiled the festival plan at a press conference here yesterday.

On February 12, the festival titled "Rediscovering Tagore" will kick off with a creative writing workshop.

During the festival, a Tagore Music Show on Channel i will focus on educating Tagore's western influences through music performance as well as a music competition for youths in collaboration with Shurer Dhara music school led by noted musician Rezwana Chowdhury Bonny. Channel i will invite UK musicians to work with Bangladeshi musicians in the show.

Besides being a poet, novelist, musician, painter and playwright, Tagore also was a very fashionable man. So, On April 21, there will be a Tagore inspired fashion show.

As a centre piece of the festival, Tasher Desh (Land of Cards) one of Tagore's most famous dance operas, will be staged on April 22.

At the press launch, noted British-Bangladeshi dancer and choreographer Akram Khan made a special appearance to exchange his views on the festival.

DU Ga unit result published

DU CORRESPONDENT

Result of Ga unit (business studies faculty) admission test of Dhaka University was published yesterday.

The result is available on the official websites of the university. www.admission.univdhaka.edu or www.gauunit.univdhaka.edu

A total of 2,893 admission aspirants have come out successfully in the examination out of 28,991 examinees this year.

Only 930 among the successful students will be enrolled in the subjects of the faculty under the session 2010-11, says a press release.

The two-day interview for the distribution of the subjects among the successful candidates will start on December 6.

The Ga unit admission test was held on November 26.

DU postpones tomorrow's exams

DU CORRESPONDENT

All the examinations of Dhaka University scheduled for tomorrow (Tuesday) have been postponed due to an unavoidable circumstance, says a press release.

New dates for the postponed examinations will be announced soon while the examinations scheduled after Tuesday will be held as per the earlier schedules.

Death anniversary of Capt Mozammel Hossain, a valiant freedom fighter, said a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at Hossain Nagar Baitus Mozammel Jame Masjid at Savar EPZ link road.

Foods will also be distributed among the destitute.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the milad. Four brothers and one brother-in-law of Capt Mozammel sacrificed their lives during the War of Liberation in 1971.



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Capt Mozammel Hossain, a valiant freedom fighter, said a press release.