

NEWS IN *brief*

SC hearing on fatwa adjourned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The Supreme Court yesterday adjourned till March 9 the hearing on the appeal filed against the High Court verdict that declared fatwa illegal.
 A six-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque adjourned the hearing.
 Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday placed submission in favour of the High Court (HC) verdict, while Advocate Nazrul Islam made arguments on behalf of his clients who filed the appeal against the HC verdict.
 The Appellate Division on March 1 started hearing the appeal against the HC verdict.
 On January 1, 2001, the HC declared illegal all punishments in the name of fatwa. The verdict came following a hearing on a suo moto HC ruling after a report on Hilla marriage (marriage with a third person) was published in a newspaper.
 Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Ain O Salish Kendra argued against fatwa before the HC.
 Maulana Mufti Mohammad Toyeeb and Abul Kalam Azad challenged the HC verdict at the apex court the same year.

PM goes to Khulna tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be visiting Khulna tomorrow.

During her visit to Khulna the prime minister would formally commission naval ship Bijoy and Dhaleshwari at Mongla seaport. She would also officially inaugurate 'Steel Cutting Ceremony' and 'School of Logistics and Management' at Khulna Shipyard to build five patrol crafts at Khulna Shipyard.
 Later, she would formally resume the operation of People's Jute Mills Limited at Khalishpur in Khulna.
 The prime minister will also speak at a rally organised by local Awami League at Khalishpur Provati School ground.

Supervisor dies under piling pillars

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 A site supervisor was killed and a worker injured as pillars being used there fell on top of a labour shed at the construction site in the city's Gulshan yesterday.
 The supervisor Waliur Rahman, 23, was asleep inside the shed when the pillars fell. The worker Mohammad Kamal, 23, was injured while trying to lift the pillars, said the site engineer Nurunnabi.
 The accident occurred as workers were trying to remove three pillars at the site on Road no-2 in Gulshan-1 where a ten-storey building, Rosa Bella, was under construction, he added.
 He said both the injured were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Waliur dead around 11:00am.

Challenged CU students demand 5pc quota in govt jobs

CU CORRESPONDENT
 Special needs students of Chittagong University (CU) yesterday demanded five percent quota in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), judicial services, and other first class public jobs.
 Disable Student's Society of Chittagong University (DISSCU) made the call at a news conference at CU Central Students Union (CUCSU) building.
 Visually impaired Zahirul Islam, president of DISSCU, also said they face huge difficulties in carrying out studies, as they lack enough reading materials.
 DISSCU general secretary Md Belal Uddin read out a written statement and placed a 12-point demand.
 The demands include that the government keep orphans out of quotas reserved for the challenged students, provide them free education and necessary study materials, increase amount of stipend, and prepare short syllabus for students unable to speak or intellectually challenged.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka
 Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions and the region of Mymensingh in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.
 Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.
 Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.
The sun sets in the capital at 6:02pm today and rises at 6:17am tomorrow.
 Country's highest temperature 34.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 12.0 degrees Celsius at Ishwardi.
 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 | 31.6 | 17.0 | 41 | 34 |
| Chittagong | 31.8 | 17.3 | 46 | 37 |
| Rajshahi | 32.5 | 13.8 | 58 | 45 |
| Rangpur | 30.1 | 15.8 | 74 | 53 |
| Khulna | 32.7 | 16.0 | 68 | 54 |
| Barisal | 32.3 | 14.6 | 57 | 58 |



Sheikh Rehana, younger sister of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, lays the foundation stone of Sheikh Kamal Krira Complex on Abahani Limited premises in the city yesterday.

Sheikh Kamal Krira Complex foundation laid

UNB, Dhaka
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she and her sister Sheikh Rehana are constantly thinking on ways to build a poverty and hunger-free Bangladesh.
 Hasina, holding back tears, made the remark while addressing a function marking the laying of the foundation stone of Sheikh Kamal Krira Complex on Abahani Limited premises in the city.
 Rehana laid the foundation stone and unveiled the design of the sports complex named after the eldest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
 The sports complex will be built as one of the finest centres in South Asia.
 The 726,665 square feet complex contains Abahani Club of 69,223 square feet, an exclusive member health club of 140,357 square feet, a convention centre of 155,585 square feet and a car parking area of 361,500 square feet.
 The prime minister said the sports complex would be of international standard and provide outstanding sports and health facilities to people including women and children.
 "We do not want any sporting club to close for lack of facilities. We want standard clubs in the country," Hasina said. She hoped that Abahani would turn into an international standard club in the future.
 Hasina expressed her commitment to spread competitive sports across the country through inter-school tournaments. "Only sports can build our young generations with a strong mind and body," she said.
 Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Abahani Ltd's Chairman Salman F Rahman, its Director-in-Charge Kazi Shahed Ahmed and Adviser to Abahani supporters group Kazi Abdul Hakim addressed the function.

EU keeps eye on change in ACC act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The European Union is keeping an eye on the proposed amendment to Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004 as it believes corruption adds huge cost to development of any country.
 Newly appointed EU Ambassador to Bangladesh William Hanna said this at a press conference in the capital yesterday.
 "We are against corruption and aware of the ongoing discussion on this matter," he added.
 The envoy of EU, a major development partner of Bangladesh, observed that corruption is a hindrance to prosperity and distracts development.
 Replying to a question on the role of microfinance in alleviating poverty and recent 'removal' of Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus from Grameen Bank, Hanna said his experience in Africa and Latin America makes him believe microfinance is certainly an important instrument in development.
 "The EU opposes extra-judicial killing... I think the government's electoral manifesto also includes zero tolerance to it," added the Irish-born diplomat.
 He was in a jubilant mood receiving greetings from journalists over the win of Ireland against England in a Cricket World Cup match on Wednesday.
 The ambassador pointed out that Bangladesh's export to EU is expected to grow even faster against the last year's estimate of six billion euro.
 Stressing improved business climate, he also noted that more countries, particularly the Scandinavians, are interested to invest in Bangladesh.
 "When they invest, they look into the whole picture of a country," noted the envoy.
 Hanna expressed EU's intention to facilitate village courts to ensure rural people's access to justice.
 He also mentioned the EU would maintain its support to projects targeting the most vulnerable groups of people to improve earnings, access to housing, water, sanitation, food, education and healthcare.
 In his written statement he pledged EU's continued backing for democracy, human rights and good governance.

Call for global voice to ensure migrants' safety

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 There should be a global voice for ensuring safety of migrants, with both the sending and destination countries taking responsibility, migration experts and law enforcing officials opined yesterday.
 They were exchanging views on a study titled "Labour forms of human trafficking in Bangladesh" conducted by Winrock International, a non-government organisation, with the support of USAID, at the city's Brac Centre Inn.
 They added that the government should enact a specific law against human trafficking, as there is none present to address human trafficking and related criminal acts like kidnapping, wrongful confinement or forced labour.
 Speakers also alleged that, on an average, nine migrant labourers die everyday and their families receive no compensation.
 Usually destination countries do not conduct investigation, as Bangladesh could not coerce them, they added.
 In reply, Kamal Uddin Ahmed, joint secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs, said the law ministry is enacting an anti-trafficking law to safeguard people seeking jobs abroad.
 Bangladesh, as a host of upcoming fourth ministerial conference of Colombo Process, a forum of manpower exporting Asian countries, will ask member countries to ensure "migration with dignity" for Bangladeshi migrants, he added.
 Those who survived the ordeal should be provided psychological counselling and mental support to resolve their problems in livelihood, they said.
 The study, conducted in Dhaka, Comilla, Sylhet, Laxmipur, Nilphamary and Cox's Bazar districts, focused on 63 adult males who were able to return after being trafficked.

Obituary



METRO DESK
Fatema Akhter, wife of late magistrate AKM Mominul Islam, passed away due to old-age complications on February 27 at the age of 72, says a press release.
 She left behind her four sons and three daughters.
 Her qulkhwani will be held at her residence after Asr prayers tomorrow (Saturday).

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK
Qulkhwani of Iffat Ara Awwal, wife of late AKM Abdul Awwal, will be held at her residence at House No # 23, Road No # 9/A, Dhanmondi RA in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.
 Iffat Ara passed away on February 28 at the age of 82.
 She left behind her five sons and four daughters to mourn her death.

CHT REGIONAL COUNCIL HC verdict stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The Supreme Court yesterday upheld its chamber judge's order that stayed a High Court verdict declaring Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Regional Council illegal and unconstitutional.
 A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque also allowed the government and CHT Regional Council's Chairman Jyotirindro Bodhipriya Larma to move separate appeals with this court against the HC verdict.
 The stay order will continue till disposal of the appeals.
 The apex court passed the order after granting separate leave to appeal petitions filed by the government and Jyotirindro Bodhipriya Larma, popularly known as Santu Larma, against the HC verdict.
 Following two separate writ petitions filed by Bangalee settler M Badiuzzaman and SC's pro-Jamaat lawyer Tajul Islam, the HC on April 13 last year declared the CHT Regional Council illegal and unconstitutional.

DHAKA TODAY

- Human chain**
Bangabandhu Sanskritik Jote will form a human chain. Venue: In front of National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.
- Painting exhibition**
A solo painting exhibition by Murshida Arzu Alpina will be launched. Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dhanmondi, Time: 5:00pm.
- Seminar**
Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Muktijudher Prajanma will arrange a seminar. Venue: Lake Shore hotel, Gulshan-2, Time: 3:00pm.
- Roundtable**
Bangladesh Youth Forum will hold a discussion. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:00pm.

Mirpur police SI found bribed

COURT CORRESPONDENT
 The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has found a sub-inspector (SI) of Mirpur Police Station involved in taking Tk 5000 as bribe from the complainant of a case.
 ACC Assistant Director Jahangir Alam, also the investigation officer of the case, yesterday submitted the probe report against SI Rakibul Hassan to the Dhaka Senior Special Judge's Court for taking into cognizance the charge against him.
 Jahangir in his report said he investigated the incident of taking bribe by Rakibul from Ferdous Ara, complainant of another case to arrest the accused. During the investigation, Jahangir recorded statements of Ferdous Ara and 14 others and found Rakibul involved.
 ACC Assistant Director Anwarul Haq filed the case on December 19 last year with the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka against Rakibul for committing such offences.
 After the hearing, Judge (vacation) Mohammad Abdul Mazid recorded statement of the complainant, took the charges into cognizance and directed the ACC to investigate the matter and submit a report on the issue.

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