

NEWS IN *brief*

Chief justice leaves hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque yesterday left hospital as his health condition improved. Justice Khairul Haque was admitted to the hospital with high blood pressure on Sunday midnight. The chief justice told The Daily Star over cell phone that he felt better, but weak.

"Doctors have released me from hospital, suggesting me to take rest much," he said.

The chief justice was also suffering from heart and diabetes problems. He may join the office today.

Delwar's condition improves

UNB, Dhaka

The condition of ailing BNP secretary general Khandaker Delwar Hossain has improved slightly. Delwar is now under treatment at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore.

BNP sources said the artificial respiratory support was withdrawn from Delwar yesterday morning and now he can perform his breath naturally.

On March 3, Delwar was admitted to the city's Square Hospital and kept on artificial respiratory support at the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital.

On March 4, he was taken to Singapore by Air Ambulance and admitted to the Mount Elizabeth Hospital.

Fire guts Tk 10 lakh valuables

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A surgical scientific shop was gutted in a fire at Murni Plaza of Probortok intersection in the port city yesterday.

Fire brigade sources said the fire was originated from electric short circuit of Rowshan Enterprise of Murni Plaza around 12:20am and soon burnt down valuables worth around Tk 10 lakh.

Three units from Chandanpura Fire Station rushed in and doused the flame around 12.30am after two hours, the sources added.

50-passenger ship to be built for Ctg boat club

BSS, Chittagong

Western Marine Shipyard Ltd (WMSL) will build a 50-passenger vessel for Chittagong Boat Club.

The 30-meter long double hull passenger ship will cost Tk 5 crore to build. The shipyard is expecting to deliver this exclusive vessel to Chittagong Boat Club by January 2012.

According to the shipyard sources, the vessel would be operated by Western Marine Services Ltd in coastal and inland waters within the zone of the Karnaphuli River up to Kutubdia channel.

The keel laying ceremony of the vessel will be held at its yard at Patiya tomorrow. Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Zahir Uddin Ahmed will attend it as the chief guest.

Jakarta keen to increase ties with Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indonesia is eager to intensify bilateral cooperation in all existing fields, especially in the field of education and culture, said Indonesian ambassador to Bangladesh Mirzal Zainuddin.

The ambassador was addressing at a programme for distributing the holy Quran to a madrasa on the embassy premises yesterday.

The Indonesian ambassador handed over three sets of the holy Quran in Braille system for the blind students to SM Akkas Ali of Amrul Kashba Madrasa at Atrai in Naogaon.

Later, the ambassador also handed over some traditional kites to the President of Dhakabashi.

Counsellor of the Indonesian Embassy Tri Surya and Second Secretary Tri Wulandari and other officials were present on the occasion.



Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rangpur division in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Offices said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:04pm and rises tomorrow at 6:13am. Country's highest temperature 34.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Khepupara and lowest 13.0 degrees at Srimongal.

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	19.0	57	72
Chittagong	30.5	17.4	57	37
Rajshahi	32.5	14.9	53	25
Rangpur	28.2	16.8	75	54
Khulna	32.7	16.2	44	36
Barisal	33.0	16.5	61	46



A scene of a street theatre organised by Supra during its human chain programme at Shahbagh in the city to mark the International Women's Day yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

KILLINGS IN 1971 BNP lawmaker sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Abdul Momen Talukdar Khoka, a BNP lawmaker from Bogra, was yesterday sued for killing two freedom fighters during the Liberation War.

Freedom fighter Md Subed Ali filed the case with Senior Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Bogra.

On receiving the complaint, Judge Sabina Yesmin directed the officer-in-charge of Adamdighi Police Station to record the case.

In his statement the plaintiff alleged that Khoka along with the Pakistani army abducted freedom fighters Monsurul Haq Talukdar and Abdus Sattar on the way to their home in Komorpur village. They took the two to a Pakistani camp.

Hearing the news, Tobibor Rahman Talukdar, father of Monsurul Haq, rushed to the camp and found Peace Committee chairman Abdul Majid Talukdar and his son Khoka torturing the freedom fighters.

When Tobibor requested Majid to release his son, Majid threatened to kill him and drove him away.

On November 24, 1971, two or three days after the abduction, Khoka shot dead a few freedom fighters, including Monsurul Haq, Abdus Sattar, Abdul Jalil and Altaf Hossain, underneath the Kharir Bridge in Adamdighi Bazar area around 11:00am, said the case statement.

Contacted over the phone, Khoka told The Daily Star that the case was false and motivated.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Kudrat E Khoda, president of Satkhira district JSD (Rob), passed away due to cardiac arrest at a private hospital in Keshabpur of Jessore on March 7 at the age of 60, says a press release.

He left behind his wife and one daughter.

He was buried at the family graveyard at Munjitpur.

Govt plans law to save arable land

BSS, Dhaka

The government is planning a law to protect the agricultural land in the country, with a provision of at least two-year imprisonment and penalty of Tk 50,000 to Tk 10 lakh for violation of the law.

This was disclosed at the meeting of Land Use Implementation Committee under the ministry of land in the city yesterday with the Minister M Rezaul Karim Hira in the chair.

Abdul Latif Mia, the team leader of coastal land zoning project, presented the draft of the law styled "Protection of the Agricultural Land and Land Use Act-2011".

Over the shrinking of arable land in the country, concern was expressed at the meeting with a strong view that the country needs to formulate the law immediately for protecting arable land, since per capita arable land has reduced to 17 decimal, and within 2050 it would decline further to 8 decimal for the expected 300 million people.

President for climate tolerant crops

BSS, Mymensingh

President Zillur Rahman yesterday called upon new agriculturists to invent climate and salinity tolerant varieties of paddy and vegetables for maintaining the country's food production coping with climate changes.

"The new varieties would have to reach to the farmers," he said while presided over the sixth convocation of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU).

During the convocation, 5,992 students were conferred bachelor degrees, 6,438 masters, and 263 PhD degrees for the academic years from 2002 to 2010.

Agriculture Policy Director of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Dr Prabhu Pingali, gave the convocation speech. BAU Vice Chancellor Prof MA Sattar Mandal also spoke.

DHAKA TODAY

Human chain
Transparency International Bangladesh will form a human chain. Venue: In front of National Press Club, Time: 10:30am.

Seminar
Water Resource Ministry will organise a seminar. Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Time: 9:00am.

Roundtable
Nagorik Forum will arrange a roundtable. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:30pm.

Cultural programme
Action Aid Bangladesh will organise a cultural programme. Venue: Shishu Academy auditorium, Time: 9:00am.

Human chain
International Trade Union Confederation- Bangladesh Council will form a human chain. Venue: In front of National Press Club, Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop
Microcredit Regulatory Authority will hold a workshop. Venue: 11th floor, 62/3,



State Minister for Environment and Forests, Dr Hasan Mahmud, inaugurates the mobile voting campaign for the Sundarbans in front of the Jatiya Press club in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

INT'L WOMEN DAY OBSERVED

Call to stop fatwa against women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If women move forward in unison, no force in the world would have the audacity or power to get in their way, speakers told a discussion yesterday.

While women are mothers, sisters, friends or co-workers to everyone, they are human beings above everything else. And they should be treated and respected as human beings and equal members of the society, they said.

The opinions came from the second national conference of Trinamul Nari Uddokta Society held at Chhayanat Sanskriti Bhavan coinciding with the International Women's Day 2011.

The speakers demanded recognition to the house aides saying that 90 percent countries are yet to recognise housemaids as workers despite their contribution to the national economy.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir, veteran media personality and an adviser to Ekushey Television Atiqul Haque Chowdhury, and representatives from women's rights organisations from India, Pakistan, and HongKong, among others, spoke at the programme.

Many socio-cultural, human rights and other organisations also took a host of programmes to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the International Women's Day with demands of equal rights, end to violence against women, and stop to religious edicts.

Directorate General of Women Affairs organised a discussion titled "Women development and empowerment" on the directorate general premises at city's Baily road to mark the day.

Director General of the directorate, Mohammad Ashraf Hossain, said for increased female participation in decision-making, the country needs a robust legal infrastructure and skill development programmes for women.

The Directorate General of Women Affairs observed the day in 412 upazilas of 64 districts with the help of the non-governmental organisations.

Development Organisation of the Rural Poor (DORP), United Federation of garments Workers, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), Biplobi Nari Sanghati, Centre for Women And Children Studies (CWCS), and Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), among other organisations, also organised elaborate programmes to observe the day.

Every year, International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8 across the world.

The United Nation's global theme for the day this year is: "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women".



Some 7,026 temporary workers of Roads and Highways Department stage a mass strike in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding regularisation of their jobs.

PHOTO: STAR

RU student commits 'suicide'

RU CORRESPONDENT

A student of Rajshahi University (RU) allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Sahakul Islam alias Sohag, 18, a second year student of Public Administrative department, son of Idil Mondal of Gurudaspur upazila in Natore. He was a resident student of Ziaur Rahman Hall.

Police said Sohag might have taken poison following a love affair with a girl at his village.

Sohag's roommate Aktar Hossain said Sohag went his home on Monday and took poison around 9:00pm.

As his condition deteriorated, he was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he died at about 10:00pm.

Chhatra Front demands expulsion of BCL attackers from Buet

BCL beats another front activist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and activists of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), a left-leaning student body, yesterday demanded expulsion of the culprits who attacked the party men on Monday night at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

They placed the demand at a press conference at Modhur Canteen of Dhaka University (DU).

Meanwhile, BCL activists beat another leader of SCF on Buet campus last evening, while he was distributing leaflet against BCL.

The injured is Shahdat Hossain Niloy, vice-president of SCF of Dhaka University (DU) unit. In protest of this attack, SCF staged demonstration rally at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) last evening.

On Monday night, BCL men severely beat Buet unit Chhatra Front convenor Gautam Kumar Dey of Computer Science and Engineering department, and its activist Mamun Morshed Khan, of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering department.

Progotishil Chhatra Jote, an alliance of left-leaning student bodies, also brought out a procession and held a protest rally on DU campus demanding punishment to the culprits.

Meanwhile, leaders of Gonotrantik Bam Morcha, in a statement demanded immediate arrest of the attackers.