

NEWS IN *brief*

Album on Bangabandhu's China visit gifted to PM

UNB, Dhaka
Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Zhang Xianyong yesterday handed over to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina an album containing some rare pictures of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The pictures were taken during the Bangabandhu's visit to China in the 1950's.

Muggers stab two in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Muggers in separate incidents in the city's Badda and Jatrabari stabbed two people and snatched money and other valuables yesterday. The injured are bus driver Babul Miagh, 30, of Grameen Paribahan on Banani-Gulistan route, and staff Saddam Hossain, 18, of Rosy Dental Clinic at Elephant Road. Both were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with stab injuries on their abdomen.

Committee to revise Appellate Division rules formed

ASHUTOSH SARKAR
Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque yesterday formed a four-member committee in order to revise and update the existing rules of Appellate Division of Supreme Court (SC) and frame those in Bangla language, SC sources said. Headed by Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, a senior judge of the Appellate Division, the committee consists Justice SK Sinha, Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Nzmun Ara Sultana, also judges of the apex court. There is no time limit on the committee to complete the job, sources said.

Dhaka-Delhi border co-ordination meet begin

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi
Border guards of India and Bangladesh yesterday began five-day discussions on issues related to joint verification of unfenced gaps, maintenance of status quo in areas of adverse possession of land and implementation of joint border management plan. Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Chief Major General Rafiqul Islam, heading a 20-member team, discussed the issues with Indian Border Security Force (BSF) Director General Raman Srivastava, who heads a 23-member delegation, at the BSF headquarters here.

'Include Haijans, Dalits in census'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Dalit and Harijan community leaders yesterday urged the government to uphold their rights by including them in the upcoming National Population and Housing Census 2011, based on their profession. They said this at a press conference organised by Sharee at Jatiya Press Club in the city. Sharee Coordinator Umesh Shaha and Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad General Secretary Nirmal Chandra Das were also present.

Rehabilitation of Urdu speaking people demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Urdu speaking people yesterday demanded of the government to ensure their proper rehabilitation, welfare, education and treatment facilities. They made the demand at a meeting of Bangladesh Mohajir Welfare and Development Committee (BMWDC) at Segun Bagan in Chittagong yesterday. Md Shahjada Selim, joint secretary of BMWDC said the these people, for last 40 years, are living in inhuman conditions. Md Sajid Hossain, Md Saju, Md Jamal Uddin and Md Riya spoke at the meeting.



Common people form a human chain in front of Bangladesh Bank Training Academy in Mirpur of the city yesterday protesting removal of Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus from Grameen Bank. PHOTO: STAR

PM tarnishes image by removing Prof Yunus

Say JSD leaders
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has tarnished the image of the country and its judiciary through dishonouring Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus, said the leaders of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) yesterday. In a written statement, JSD President ASM Abdur Rob and General Secretary Abdul Malek Ratan, said Dr Yunus is an asset of the nation. With his micro-credit and social business theories, which are accepted worldwide, Yunus has now become a global asset, they said in a press release.

Upazila parishads not empowered: Dy Speaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Speaker Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali yesterday said the chairmen and vice chairmen of Upazila Parishads fail to carry out duties, as the parishads have not been empowered yet. Expressing his dissatisfaction over the current situation, he also said upazila parishad election and related activities have been done without adequate preparation. The deputy speaker made the remarks at a national level meeting titled "Decentralisation of finance: past, present, and future" organised by Rupantar, an NGO. Rupantar executive director Rafiqul Islam moderated the programme held at the National Institute of Local Government at Agargaon in the city, says a press release. Shawkat Ali said apart from establishing people's control in local development work, participation of the mass people in local government system has to be increased. He said it will be impossible to empower local government institutions effectively without decentralising finance. "Union Parishad is the closest organisation to the people, but it is still extremely neglected and remained ineffective," he said. USAID Mission Director Dennis Rollins said the government has to properly plan the financial decentralisation to make the local government bodies more self-reliant. They stressed formulation of a policy for financial decentralisation and said no significant step is implemented despite the government's vow to strengthen local bodies. They also said lawmakers speak about strengthening local government in rallies or discussion, but not in the parliament. Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru MP, Mir Shawkat Ali Badsha MP, Nani Gopal Mandal MP, Nazrul Islam Manzu MP, Sohrab Ali Sana MP, and Swapan Guha, another executive director of Rupantar, were among the speakers.

Some lawyers stop police from enforcing HC order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of lawyers of the Supreme Court yesterday obstructed police who went there to stop construction on the roof of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) office building. A police team went to the SCBA building around 11:30am to prevent erecting rooms on the 50-year old building as per a High Court directive, according to some lawyers. The pro-BNP lawyers then brought out a procession on the SCBA premises protesting entry of police and chanted slogans against the judges of HC, who passed the order. An HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain on March 6 issued a suo moto order directing Public Works Department (PWD) to immediately stop the construction. It also issued a rule upon the authorities concerned of government and SCBA president and secretary to explain why the construction should not be declared illegal. The order came following a report of The Daily Star headlined "SCBA erecting rooms on old building 'illegally'". Dr Belal Hossain Joy, a SC lawyer, placed the report seeking an HC directive to stop the construction. SCBA President Khandker Mahub Hossain told reporters that police entered the SCBA premises illegally and without permission from the chief justice or him. Police cannot interfere with the SCBA's construction, which is now a subjudice matter, he said. SCBA Secretary Bodruddoza Badal told The Daily Star that they have already finished the construction of structures, and there is no effectiveness of the HC order. PWD's Chief Engineer Dewan Mohamad Yamin, however, said a team of PWD yesterday stopped the work of vertical extension of SCBA building. "We stopped the construction works following the High Court order," he said.

Optimum press freedom exists in country: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the present government ensured optimum level of press freedom. The present Awami League government believes in freedom of press and expression, she said when chief editor of Ananda Bazar Group of Publications, Kolkata Avik Sarkar and his wife called on her at prime minister's office (PMO). Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the PM recalled the help and assistance of the then Indian government, its people and the Indian soldiers who gave their lives during the War of Liberation.

Court directs exhuming Redwanul's body

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the district magistrate of Pirojpur to take an initiative to exhume the body of Dhaka University student Md Redwanul Islam to ascertain whether he died in a road crash. Redwan's friends claimed that he was allegedly beaten by a group of Himalaya Paribahan staff and was later pushed under a running truck in Motijheel that caused his death. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Enamul Haque passed the order of exhumation after Motijheel Police Station Sub Inspector Samir Chandra Sutradhar, also investigation officer of the case, submitted a petition on Tuesday. Meanwhile, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique has handed over a cheque of Tk 2 lakh to Md Alauddin, Redwan's father, at a function held at his residence yesterday.

Fr Stephan dies in road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Father Stephan Gomes CSC, a catholic priest and former vice principal of Notre Dame College, was killed in a road accident in Rajshahi yesterday. He was 75. Eyewitnesses said a motorcycle hit him from behind around 9:30am while he was crossing Rajshahi-Chapainabaganj bypass road, on the way to a patient's house near Dingadoba Church to serve communion and special prayers. He was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital with critical injuries on the head and later shifted to Square Hospitals Limited in the capital where doctors declared him dead at 5:30pm. Brother Leo J Pereira CSC, principal of St Joseph Higher Secondary School, said Fr Stephan served as a professor of Social Work Department of Rajshahi University before he joined the college.

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Musa Ibrahim, Fazlul Kabir Sina and Lipton Sarkar flash V-signs before starting a swim across Bangla Channel between Teknaf's Shah Pari to Saint Martin's Island yesterday. Musa and Lipton successfully crossed the channel while Fazlul had to give up half way due to muscle cramps. PHOTO: COURTESY

DHAKA TODAY

Free Screening
Bangladesh Glaucoma Society will arrange a free glaucoma screening. Time: 9:00am, Venue: National Eye Science Institute.

Meeting
Gonojagaran Sanghati will hold a solidarity meeting. Time: 3:00pm, Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Meeting
Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will hold a meeting. Time: 3:00pm, Venue: Nagar Bhaban.

Rally
Sharee will organise a colourful rally. Time: 11:00am, Venue: Central Shaheed