

NEWS IN *brief*

**Bahrain FM calls on PM**

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina discussed the issues of human resources export and employment of Bangladeshis in Bahrain with Bahrain's Foreign Minister Shaikh Khaled Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa at her office yesterday.

Bilateral issues including trade and commerce between the two countries were also discussed as Shaikh Khaled paid a courtesy call on the PM. Some 140,000 Bangladeshis are now employed in Bahrain.

**BNP to resist 'controversial' acts: Moudud**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Moudud Ahmed yesterday warned that they will resist any government bid to do anything controversial in the name of constitution amendment to serve the ruling Awami League's interest.

The country has no constitution now, as nobody knows under which constitution it now runs, said the BNP standing committee member and former law minister.

Moudud was speaking at a memorial meeting in the city to mark the 4th death anniversary of former BNP secretary general KM Obaidur Rahman.

Standing committee member of the party Nazrul Islam Khan and Vice Chairman Shah Moazzem Hossain also spoke at the meeting organised by Obaidur Rahman Smriti Parishad. TM Giasuddin was in the chair.

Meanwhile, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the present government has so far killed about 5,000 opposition political activists.

He made the allegation at a discussion in the city in observance of the Independence Day, organised by Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal.

**ECO-friendly brick kilns to come**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government, under a five-year project, aims to introduce a new technology in the country's brick making industry to reduce environmental pollution and make energy consumption efficient.

Speakers said this at the project's inception workshop organised by the project's sponsor UNDP Bangladesh at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

The project aims at replacing the 150-year-old energy-intensive conventional brick with an energy-efficient and smokeless technology named Hybrid-Hoffman Kiln.

Styled by Improving Kiln Efficiency in the Brick Making Industry (IKEBMI), the \$ 3 million project will be a climate change mitigation step in Bangladesh to prevent emission of greenhouse gases, deforestation and land degradation caused by the traditional brick fields, said Stefan Priesner, UNDP Bangladesh resident representative.

IKEBMI Project Manager Khondoker Neaz Rahman said nearly 5,000 conventional fixed-chimney brick kilns across the country emit an estimated 6.4 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide annually. "Firewood constitutes one-third of the total fuel consumed in the industry, significantly causing deforestation and land degradation," he said.

**Khaleda performs Umrah**

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who is now in Saudi Arabia, performed holy Umrah in Makkah yesterday.

Khaleda along with her entourage started the rituals of Umrah at around 4:00am (Saudi local time), according to a message received in Dhaka. Khaleda is scheduled to return home on April 3.

**One gets 32 years' RI**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a man to 32 years' rigorous imprisonment for killing his wife in January 2009 in the city's Shah Ali area.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 handed down the sentence in presence of the convict Mohammad Masum.



Sammlito Sangskritik Jote holds a rally on Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday urging all to unite in protecting the rights and dignity of women.

PHOTO: STAR

**SCBA poll ends**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day polling of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) for its 14 executive posts ended yesterday afternoon with 2,085 lawyers casting their votes.

The second day polling started at 10:00am and continued till 5:00pm with a one-hour lunch break. Counting of the votes started around 8:00pm.

The main contenders in the poll are Awami League-backed Sammlita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad (SASP) panel and BNP-backed Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya Parishad (JAOP) panel.

Incumbent president of SCBA Khandaker Mahbub Hossain (JAOP) and its former president Abdul Baset Majumder (SASP) are contesting for the president post.

**Bangladesh aid in Japan**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A special aircraft (C-130) carrying relief materials supplied by Bangladesh government arrived at Narita Airport in Japan yesterday in response to the Pacific Ocean earthquake at Tohoku district.

The relief materials include 2,000 blankets, 500 pairs of rubber boots and 1,000 pairs of rubber gloves.

**Death anniversary**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the second death anniversary of Martin Uddin Ahmed,

founding managing director of Shahjalal Islami Bank, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at Banani in the city after Juma prayers today.

**AKM Abdur Rouf**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 11th death anniversary of AKM Abdur Rouf, calligrapher of the constitution of Bangladesh, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at flat 3/403 of Eastern Tower at Eskaton in the city.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

**Chehlum**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Chehlum Kohinur Haque (Kohi) will be held at her residence at

Uttara in the city today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at House No # 15, Road No # 17 after Asr prayers at Uttara in the city.

**22 Bangladeshis in Libyan jail freed**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-two Bangladeshi nationals, detained in Twaisha Jail, a Libyan detention centre, entered a Tunisian camp after their release yesterday, said a foreign ministry press release.

This is the first time Bangladeshi detainees were freed since deadly fighting began in the North African country. There is no official figure about the number of Bangladeshis still in detention camps in Libya.

The press release further said some 131 Bangladeshi nationals, including two families with their children, crossed over to Tunisia on March 30.

Around 801 Bangladeshi nationals are currently awaiting repatriation at Ras Jdir border point of Tunisia.

In order to repatriate the new arrivals, the foreign ministry said the Bangladesh government in coordination with International Organization for Migration (IOM) in taking necessary measures. Bangladesh Biman is providing extra flights to bring them back.

Meanwhile there was zero inflow of Bangladeshi nationals at Al Salloum border point in Egypt yesterday. The foreign ministry's consular team was asked to stay put at this point to facilitate repatriation arrangements of any Bangladeshi national crossing over into Egypt.

One Bangladeshi national still remains missing in Hania of Crete in Greece.

**Building code to be enforced strictly**

Says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will bring all the new buildings across the country under Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) to minimise the fatalities of earthquake.

"We will take required steps so that the authorities strictly follow the building code both in urban and rural areas", said Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque.

"It will reduce the casualties of natural disaster especially earthquake," he said while addressing as the chief guest a seminar at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

Titled "Disaster preparation at every house saves lives and livelihood," it was organised by Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) to mark the National Disaster Preparation Day 2011.

Razzaque said his ministry has already identified the city's 70,000 buildings that need to be retrofitted to make those structures tolerant to moderate earthquakes.

He stressed the need for initiating pre-calamity preparation to minimise the casualties of natural havoc that constantly hits the country.

The minister also announced to construct more cyclone centres across the country.

About price hike of rice, he said, "I cannot avoid my responsibility of this failure. But the country people did not face Monga during my term of office."

On the government's disaster mitigation steps, he said the ministry has trained 62,000 volunteers and provided them with equipment of Tk 70 crore to minimise the casualties.

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam presented the keynote paper.

Disaster Management and Relief Division (DMRD) Acting Secretary M Aslam Alam chaired the seminar addressed by National Disaster Management Advisory Committee Chairman MA Kashem, among others.

Covers of two books titled "Standing Orders on Disasters" and "National Plan for Disaster Management 2010-2015" were unveiled in the function.

The minister also distributed award among the winners of children art competition on natural disaster.

**BDR MUTINY**

**29 defence witnesses give depositions**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eleven defence witnesses gave depositions in favour of six suspected accused of Sector Headquarters of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) while 18 defence witnesses gave depositions for 11 suspected accused of 24 Rifle Battalion yesterday.

One of the defence witnesses, Maj (ret'd) Abu Sayeed Reza gave statement for Sepoy Al Helal at the Special Court-11 set up at the entertainment centre of 13 Border Guard Battalion in Pilkhana. The court was adjourned till 9:00am of April 6.

Meanwhile, the Special Court-7, trying the mutineers of 24 Border Guard Battalion at the Darbar Hall in Pilkhana, adjourned the trial proceeding till 9:00am of April 11.

A total of 73 people including 57 army officers were killed during the mutiny at the BDR headquarters on February 25-26 in 2009.

**Martial law to be imposed in absence of CG system**

Says Jurist Mahmudul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent Jurist Mahmudul Islam yesterday told the Supreme Court (SC) that martial law would be imposed in the country due to existing situation and mentality of politicians if the caretaker government system is cancelled.

The system was introduced for the interest of democracy and holding free and fair elections, he said.

Mahmudul was placing submission as amicus curiae (friend of court) during hearing of an appeal filed against a High Court verdict that declared valid the 13th amendment to the constitution allowing elections under the caretaker government.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque held the hearing for 7th day and will resume on April 3.

Mahmudul said republican character of the state was not damaged due to the 13th amendment.

Elected representatives do not run the country during the caretaker regime in the interest of democracy and free and fair elections, he said.

**1,432 Bangladeshi peacekeepers honoured**

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations has honoured 1,432 Bangladeshi peacekeepers for their dedicated service to peace in Liberia.

Top UN envoy in Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Loj hailed the outstanding role of Bangladeshi peacekeepers who are courageously playing role in dealing with the security and humanitarian challenges arising from the deteriorating political situation in Ivory Coast.

The soldiers from Bangladesh have risen to every challenge they have faced since arriving in Liberia, the UN envoy said while honouring the peacekeepers with medals at a function in Liberia's central city of Gbarrnga.

"Bangladeshi soldiers are assisting Liberian authorities in managing border security and dealing with the influx of Ivorian refugees," she pointed out, noting that the peacekeepers from Bangladesh have, since the political deadlock in Ivory Coast, increased their patrols along the Liberia-Ivory Coast border, in addition to taking on extra tasks aimed at addressing the needs of the refugees.

Highlighting the humanitarian spirit of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers, the SRS described the Bangladeshi as "very accommodating and not known to turn down any request," saying they have brought a "truly human face to peacekeeping."

The Bangladeshi Peacekeepers have undertaken a wide range of humanitarian activities including the introduction of new technologies to local farmers, equipping young people with vocational skills, and rehabilitating roads and bridges.

Liberia's Foreign Minister Toga McIntosh, Deputy Defense Minister for Operations Danesius Sebwe, Director of Mission Support Hubert Price, Sector A Commander Brigadier-General Salihu Zaway Uba and Sector B Commander Brigadier General Md Mozammel Hossain were, among others, present at the function, said an ISPR release.

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**Rise in temperature likely**  
UNB, Dhaka  
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over all the seven divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.  
Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.  
The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:51am tomorrow.  
Country's highest temperature 34.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 18.2 degrees Celsius 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	27.5	20.2	90	81
Chittagong	28.5	19.5	74	94
Rajshahi	33.0	20.5	79	55
Rangpur	24.2	19.8	90	79
Khulna	33.0	21.0	76	81
Barisal	31.1	21.0	91	89
Sylhet	23.5	19.2	92	85
Cox's Bazar	31.2	21.5	78	89

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