

NEWS IN brief

PM goes to Cox's Bazar today

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will open an Air Force base at Cox's Bazar today. She is scheduled also to lay the foundation of a medical college and Cox's Bazar-Dohajari rail line in Jhilongjha and open upgraded function of submarine cable of Cox's Bazar Landing Station. The prime minister will hold meetings with officials and lawyers' coordination committee and address a rally at Park playground before her return to Dhaka in the afternoon.

Tk 22 lakh mugged from trader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown criminals snatched Tk 22 lakh from a businessman stabbing him in front of his residence in Chankharpool, Old Dhaka last night. The victim, Mohammad Alam, 48, owner of Saber Store at Moulvibazar in Bongshal, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and then to Pongu Hospital. He sustained serious wounds in both hands.

Abdul Baset, brother of the victim, said the miscreants intercepted Alam while he was returning home at Nababkatra in Chankharpool from his shop around 9:00pm.

The criminals riding a CNG-run auto-rickshaw carried Alam away and snatched the bag of money, said Baset.

"As my brother tried to resist the criminals, they stabbed him indiscriminately with machetes and sped away on the vehicle rubbing eye-burning ointment in his eyes." Pedestrians took the victim to DMCH, said Baset.

Meanwhile, muggers stabbed a vegetable trader and snatched "Tk 70,000" and his cell phone from him at Farmgate in the city early yesterday.

Mohammad Mamun, 25, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with several stab wounds.

Police said four muggers waylaid Mamun under a footbridge while he was going to Karwan Bazar from his house at West Nakhalpara for buying vegetables around 5:00am and snatched the money from him.

Greetings to new SCBA leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations including a political party in separate statements yesterday greeted the newly elected leaders of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).

Bangladesh Jatiya Party's (BJP) Chairman Andaliv Rahman and Secretary General Shamim Al Mamun in a joint statement said the victory of BNP-backed panel is the outcome of the failure of the government.

Association of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (ADEB) and Bangladesh Sommillito Diploma Peshajibi Parishad also issued separate messages.

Call to reject Apr 4 hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, a forum for secular Bangladesh and trial of war criminals of 1971, yesterday urged people to reject the hartal called by Islamic Ain Bastobayon Committee (IABC) on April 4.

The committee also called upon the government to arrest Fazlul Haq Amini, chief of IABC, for his utmost derogatory, provocative and ill-motivated remarks against country's constitution and matters that are pending at Supreme Court for disposal.

In a joint statement, leaders of the committee said Amini is preparing to create an anarchic situation in the country on the pretext of the education and women policy of the grand alliance government.

The committee's advisory council President Kabir Chowdhury, its Executive Council President Mohammad Gholam Rabbani and General Secretary Kazi Mukul signed the statement.

They said every peace loving person would be frightened in the way religious fanatic and fundamentalist Fazlul Haq Amini is delivering derogatory and provocative remarks one after another on the country's constitution.

"He [Amini] is also threatening to launch jihad to brew civil war in the country," read the statement.

"Amini and their collaborators cooperated with the Pakistani occupation army in 1971 in mass killing, rape and repression in the name of Islam. They also turned the country's madrasas into a den of militancy during the past BNP-Jamaat led four party government," said the statement.

The committee said the government should arrest those who do not abide by the country's constitution and verdict of Supreme Court and laugh at the achievements and spirit of our War of Liberation.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Dr Mozaharul Islam, former teacher of Cambridge University, the UK, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his residence in Khulna after Asr prayers. Relatives, friends, and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme to pray for salvation the departed soul.

Nadira Ahmed METRO DESK

Today is the 30th death anniversary of Nadira Ahmed, a Masters student of the department of Zoology of Dhaka University, says a press release.

She died in a tragic road accident in Sat Masjid Road in Dhaka. Relatives, friends, and well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Syed Farhad Reza, former postmaster general, will be held after Asr prayers at house no-35, road no-15 at Dhanmondi today, says a press release.

He passed away on Friday at a hospital in the city at the age of 68. He left behind his wife, one son and two daughters.



Different women organisations form a human chain at Muktagong in the city yesterday protesting tomorrow's hartal (April 4). PHOTO: STAR

Spain 'worried' about Yunus situation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Spanish government is "worried" about the situation regarding Grameen Bank and on the accusations against its founder and Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, the Europa Press article.

Soraya Rodríguez, Spanish secretary of state for international cooperation, expressed her government's concern at a press conference in Madrid of Spain on Friday, months before Yunus is to preside over the Global Microcredit Summit in Spain.

"We hope that this undesired and complicated situation can come to a satisfactory conclusion for this important institution..."

"...and that the episode will be a part of the past when we are celebrating the Global Microcredit Summit in Valladolid," the secretary said.

The Global Microcredit Summit will be held in Valladolid of Spain from November 14 to 17 this year.

The Microcredit Summit Campaign is a project of RESULTS Educational Fund, a US based advocacy organisation committed to creating the will to eliminate poverty.

Launched in 1997, the campaign surpassed its original goal of reaching 100 million of the poorest families with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services within 2007.

Secretary Rodríguez spoke with Prof Yunus in early March and "transmitted to Prof Yunus the support of Spain and of so many other international development organisations during this difficult time," said the Europa Press article.

At the news conference, Rodríguez said Prof Yunus "has a trajectory of many years dedicated to the fight to end poverty". She insisted that the situation would be resolved before the summit, "which is inspired by and will be presided by him".

This support for Yunus came days after French Foreign Affairs Minister Alain Juppé strongly supported Grameen Bank in retaining its independence and demanded fair trial of the lawsuit filed by Prof Yunus.

The comments came following the Bangladesh government's decision to remove Prof Yunus from the post of managing director of Grameen Bank.

Dr Yunus was unceremoniously relieved of his duties on March 2 through a Bangladesh Bank letter on grounds that his reappointment was not done in line with the laws that govern the microfinance bank.

The move sparked outrage at home and abroad and prompted calls from the international community to reach a compromise.

Prof Yunus challenged Bangladesh Bank's decision at the Supreme Court that will hear his petition this week.

HSC exams begin April 5

UNB, Dhaka

Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent examinations will begin across the country on April 5 with a total of 7,79,441 examinees.

The number of examinees this year marked a significant decline as 9,13,683 students registered for the HSC and equivalent exams two years ago.

Some 134,242 students, approximately 18.19 percent of the registered students, are not taking part in this year's exams, according to officials.

Around 18.24 percent of the registered students dropped out in 2010 and 19.92 percent in 2009.

Educationists attributed the dropouts to socio-economic condition, early marriage, insecurity in attending classes in some cases, and failing to fill up the forms properly.

However, the number of candidates for HSC and equivalent exams increased this year compared to the last year. The total number of candidates for HSC and equivalent exams was 7,36,373 last year against this year's 7,79,441. Officials credited this to the various initiatives taken by the government.

Of the total examinees this year, 4,24,823 are male and 3,54,618 female. The examinations will be held in 2,074 centres across the country under 10 education boards including madrasa and technical boards.

The number of examinees is 6,29,619 in eight general education boards, 76,957 in madrasa board, and 68,961 under technical board.

The government has taken all necessary steps to hold the examinations in fair and peaceful manner.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid will brief the media today noon about the arrangements taken for exams.

The Daily Star-BSRM debate begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The inaugural ceremony of The Daily Star-BSRM national English debate competition was held at a tea garden in Kaptai, Chittagong yesterday.

Twelve schools and twelve universities from Dhaka and Chittagong take part in the contest arranged by Drishty.

M Nasirul Hoque, city editor of the Dainik Suprobhat Bangladesh; Biswajit Chowdhury, assistant editor of the Prothom Alo; Khorshedul Alam, presidium member of Bangladesh Economic Association; and poet Kamrul Hasan Badal were the guests at the programme.

Drishty president Masud Bakul chaired the inauguration followed by a colourful cultural programme, in which artistes from Kaptai Shilpokala Academy performed.

The final session of the debate competition will be held today at 10.30am at Theatre Institute, Chittagong (TIC).

Arrest of Ctg trader sparks protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Traders of Khatunganj besieged Kotwali Police Station for one and half an hour yesterday as police held one of their fellows on Friday night on "false charges".

The traders also brought out a procession and kept businesses shut at Khatunganj for hours, protesting the arrest of Mir Md Hasan, proprietor of Hossain and Brothers.

Led by General Secretary of Khatunganj Trade and Industries Association Syed Sagir Ahmad and local councillor Nurul Hoque, about 100 traders laid siege to the police station from 10:00am.

They alleged the law enforcers had demanded Tk 20 lakh from Hasan to solve the case.

However, Hasan was released yesterday morning after giving an "undertaking".

On Friday night, Minoti, wife of Mridul Chowdhury, had filed a case accusing Hasan, his brother Mir Md Hossain and 10 others of beating her son Biswajit and locking him in their business.

Minoti told The Daily Star that her husband, owner of Gobinda Store at



Agitating traders lay siege to Kotwali Police Station in Chittagong city yesterday protesting the arrest of one of their fellow businessmen. PHOTO: STAR

Khatunganj, and son bought a D/O (delivery order) letters of sugar worth Tk 78 lakh on credit from Hossain and Brothers a month ago and later gave five different cheques to pay off the debt.

"As the cheques were bounced on March 23, they [Hasan and Hossain] pressed us for a cash payment while my son sought several days more," Minoti said.

The two brothers called Biswajit to their business centre on March 30.

There they beat him, locked him in after taking his signature on a blank paper. They also took away his two mobile phone sets.

In the case statement, Minoti also alleged Md Amin, a broker of the Hossain and Brothers, along with a group of eight to nine went to their residence at Patharghata on March 31 and took away 10 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 5 lakh in cash, five passports, a cheque book and some other papers.

Following the case filing, police raided Hossain and Brothers on Friday night. Later, Hasan came to the police station to talk about the police drive.

OC Abul Kalam Azad of the police station said police did not pick Hasan. Rather, he himself came to them. Police detained Hasan after he was locked into an altercation with them.

The police officer denied allegation of demanding money from Hasan and alleged that some traders offered him bribe for not filing the case.

About the police raid, the OC said they found nobody at the store.

Biswajit, however, declined to comment and Minoti said her son was too terrified to say anything against Hasan.

Contacted, Hasan said the family members of Biswajit brought the false allegations against him only to avoid repaying the loan.

"We filed a general diary against Gobinda Store on Friday afternoon," claimed Hasan and alleged that Biswajit remained hiding in a local hotel since March 31.

About the allegation of looting, he said the family gave them the cash, the ornaments and the papers as a security against the loan.

'Call off the hartal'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Joy Bangla Sangskritik Oikya Jote yesterday in a protest rally called upon Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ) to cancel tomorrow's (April 4) hartal, saying that there is nothing in the national women development policy that conflicts with Islam.

The Sangskritik Jote leaders also reminded of IOJ that the main opposition party does not support the hartal, says a press release.

The organisation held the rally at its city office chaired by its president Salauddin Badal.

EVACUATION FROM LIBYA IOM appeals for fresh \$160m cash

UNB, Dhaka

The IOM on Friday made the fresh and third appeal for US\$ 160 million to international community for conducting the second phase of evacuation and assist thousands of migrants including Bangladeshis fleeing Libya everyday amid continued unrest.

The organisation has been evacuating people from Libya in cooperation with UNHCR and different governments including Bangladesh.

A release of IOM issued here yesterday said it took over the overall border camp and evacuation responsibility from UNHCR on 28 March.

The appeal is to respond to current and possible future transit and evacuation of all

nationals fleeing Libya, it added.

With the said amount the IOM will be able to evacuate 75,000 people more, who manage to escape the violence in Libya, and assist those groups inside Libya where possible.

The Bangladesh government and the World Bank are in the process of finalising a US\$ 20 million project, which is expected to ease the pressure partially by paying for the already incurred cost of evacuating Bangladeshis and their rehabilitation.

In one month from 01 March, more than 30 thousand Bangladeshis living and working in Libya have returned to Bangladesh. IOM assisted the return of 28,329 Bangladeshis.

Rajuk asked to remove sand from Dumni Khal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Environment (DoE) on Thursday ordered Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) to remove sand from Dumni Khal by April 14, otherwise would take legal action against Rajuk.

Rajuk filled up Dumni Khal with sand to build a link road to connect Purbachal satellite town with the city.

DoE Director (Monitoring and Enforcement) Mohammad Munir Chowdhury served the notice to the director concerned of Rajuk on March 13, says a press release.

Mentionable, a total 500 acres of land has turned into marshlands due to this earth filling.

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally with hail at places is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Comilla in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:15pm today and rises at 5:49am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 19.2 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

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	32.4	23.0	85	62
Chittagong	29.8	23.5	79	78
Rajshahi	36.5	23.2	78	54
Rangpur	29.8	20.2	92	75
Khulna	33.5	24.5	83	58
Barisal	32.6	22.0	83	57
Sylhet	29.0	19.2	87	71

Instant energy, Instant recharge

DHAKA TODAY

Human chain
Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote will form a human chain. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Recitation competition
Robi Axiata Ltd will organise a poem recitation competition. Venue: Spectra convention centre, Gulshan-1, Time: 12:15pm.

Conference
Asia Pacific Consultants Pry Ltd will arrange an international conference on globalisation of pharma industries. Venue: Bangabandhu International