

NEWS IN *brief*

Matia donates her land to PM

UNB, Sherpur

Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury has donated her land to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for use by Awami League (AL) for the development of the party.

Matia recently bought two pieces of land - decimal 10 at Jalalpur mouja under Nakla pourashava at Tk 4.05 lakh and decimal 9 at Shimultala mouja under Nalitabari upazila at Tk 2.52 lakh. Both the lands were handed over to the prime minister Sheikh Hasina after signing necessary deeds and documents.

Sub-registrar Golam Rabbani Akhand confirming matter said the transfer deeds were made on February 9 and 12.

Meanwhile, party sources said that the construction work has begun on these lands to build AL office.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will remain the owner of the land.

'Increase tax on local cigarettes'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An anti-tobacco social organisation yesterday demanded increasing tax on locally made cheap cigarettes, as the cheaper cigarettes are the cause of cigarette consumption rise.

At a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the city Ananya Social Foundation Chairman Md Mujibur Rahman Khokon said the consumption of cigarettes rose by 2,500 crores cigarettes in the past five years.

The huge rise of the number of cigarettes consumption is caused by the rise of unusual rise of sale of cigarettes, which are sold at Tk one, says a press release.

Syad Marghub Morshad, former chairman of BTRC, was present at the press conference.

3 BSMMU staff suspended for assaulting journo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) authorities yesterday suspended three of its class IV employees for assaulting a journalist of the daily Janakantha.

A three-member committee, headed by Associate Professor of Physical Medicine department Dr Moniruzzaman, was also formed to investigate the incident.

Journalist Hamid Uz Zaman Mamun in a written complaint alleged that he sought treatment at the BSMMU outdoor yesterday morning for his wife. When she came nearest to the service, a class IV employee asked her to go to another queue and stand behind. As Mamun protested, a group of class IV staff scolded and assaulted him.

Professors' forum formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Professors' Forum (BPF) was formed in the city yesterday to help educational development in the country.

An eleven-member adhoc committee was also formed at a meeting at Baitul Aman Housing in Adabor.

The members include Ali Akbar Khan Dollar, convenor; Gopal Chandra Debnath, member secretary; Siddikur Rahman Khan, joint member secretary, and Ibrahim, treasurer.

Tajuddin trust fund formed at DU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Tajuddin Ahmad Trust Fund" was established at Dhaka University (DU) yesterday in memories of late Tajuddin Ahmad, the first prime minister of Bangladesh and a key organiser of the Liberation War of 1971.

Sharmin Ahmad, eldest daughter of Tajuddin, handed over a cheque of Tk 10 lakh to Dhaka University Treasurer Prof Mizanur Rahman to set up the fund.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed, Prof Dalem Chandra Barman, Tajuddin's daughters Simin Hossain Rimi and Mahjabin Ahmed were also present at the event held at the VC's office.



A child admires products on sale yesterday at a ten-day "Baishakhi Fair", that began on Bangla Academy premises in the city on April 14, organised by Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation and the academy.

PHOTO: STAR

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 15th death anniversary of Kazi Nuruzzaman, a former member of Dhaka Bar Council and vice principal of Saadat University College in Tangail, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Ajit Kumar Dutta

METRO DESK



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Ajit Kumar Dutta, a freedom fighter and

former chief accountant of The Bangladesh Observer, says a press release.

On the occasion, special prayers will be offered and recitation from the holy Geeta will be arranged for salvation of the departed soul at his residence at 23, Shrish Das Lane, Luxmibazar in the city.

Dr Manjula Anwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the second death anniversary of Dr Manjula Anwar, a freedom

fighter and wife of Dr Syed Anwar Ali, the primary convenor of the Kalurghat Betar Kendra, says a press release.

On the occasion, qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at her residences in Dhaka, Chittagong and Gopalganj.

Azam Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Muhammad Habil Uddin, a teacher of Dhaka Public College, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfil and qurankhwani will be held at his residence at Hatpagla village of Fulpur in Mymensingh.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Shahadat Hossain Bulbul, son of Ahmed Baksh of Joypara,

Dohar, will be held at Swapna Sadan apartment, 67/8, Kakrail Pioneer Road in the city after maghrib prayers today.

Shahadat Hossain passed away on Friday.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Asian migrant workers deprived of health rights

Say migration, health experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asian migrant workers' health rights are seriously being violated, leaving them vulnerable in the receiving countries. This issue must be made a top priority, said migration and health experts yesterday.

They said in most cases, migrants work under pressure and in exploitative conditions, resulting in health hazards, but both the sending and receiving countries lack appropriate migration health policies.

The observations came at a discussion on health challenges for Asian migrants at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city organised by International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The discussion comes ahead of the Colombo Process, an alliance of 11 Asian labour receiving countries, scheduled to hold its fourth ministerial meeting from April 19 to 21.

Regional migrants' rights body CARAMASIA, Human Rights Watch and Migrants Forum Asia held a separate meeting of civil society groups on the issue at Hotel Sundarban in the city yesterday and today.

"Facts show that migrants often

under-utilise health services for different reasons that result in their vulnerability and can be defined as barriers to the health care access," said Jaime F Calderon, regional migration health manager of IOM.

The reasons include poverty, stigma, discrimination, social exclusion, language and cultural differences, separation from family and socio cultural norms, administrative hurdles and legal status, he said.

Furthermore, due to lack of inclusion in insurance schemes, migrants may pay for their health services out-of-pocket. As services are expensive, migrants tend to forego basic primary care and hence face preventable morbidity and mortality, he said.

"Migrants often delay seeking care until health conditions reach an advanced stage. This ultimately leads to higher cost to the migrant and the health system, increases risk of permanent disability or death and public health consequences," Calderon said.

Speakers said domestic female workers, who are not recognised by national

labour laws in receiving countries, are even more vulnerable. If they are found HIV positive or pregnant, they are deported.

Migrants also go through mandatory medical tests and are even detained if found pregnant and HIV positive, which is a clear violation of human rights, they added.

Pointing to regional cooperation, IOM Regional Representative Rabab Fatima said healthy migrants are assets for better productivity and so both the countries involved should come up with stronger policies, which cater to migrant health issues.

Health Secretary Humayun Kabir said Bangladesh could do a medical check up of the returnees to help protect their families from communicable diseases.

While health insurance for the migrants is not possible, the government could consider having health insurance for their families, he said.

Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khan and UNAIDS Regional Partnership Advisor Dawn Foderingham also spoke.

Road crash kills 5

UNB, Chuadanga

At least five passengers were killed and 50 others injured as a bus skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch at Kuralgachhi in Damurhuda upazila yesterday.

The deceased are Anwar Hossain, 40, Ashraf Ali, 38, Rashedul Islam, 36, Rezaul Karim, 45, and Sanwar Hossain, 23. They were all residents of Bagdanga village of Maheshpur, Jhenidah district returning home after attending the public meeting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Mujibnagar.

Sajjad Hossain, witness of the tragic accident, said the Darshana-bound bus from Mujibnagar met with the fatal accident as the driver in his bid to save a goat on his way lost control over the steering and fell into the ditch. Three persons died inside the twisted vehicle.

Shahidul Islam, a survivor, said about 100 people traveled in the bus to Mujibnagar under the leadership of Shahidul Alam Khan MP of Jhenidah-3. After the meeting they were returning in the same bus.

Anniversary of flag hosting at Kolkata today

BSS Dhaka

The nation is set to recall the historic flag hoisting at Bangladesh Mission in Kolkata today.

On this day in 1971, the then deputy high commissioner in Kolkata M Hossain Ali along with 65 officials and staff of the mission declared their allegiance to the Mujibnagar government by hoisting its red-green national flag atop the mission.

"It was a historic event in the struggle for independence of Bangladesh which served as a source of inspiration for the freedom fighters," a foreign ministry spokesman told the news agency yesterday.

The mission, he said, was later used as the secretariat of the provisional government and all activities of the government were conducted from there.

"The mission played a crucial role in creating world opinion in favour of Bangladesh's independence by maintaining diplomatic activities with the outside world," he said.

Defamation case against Inu dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed a defamation case hours after it was filed against Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haque Inu on charge of making derogatory remarks about late president Ziaur Rahman.

Finding no elements of defamation Metropolitan Magistrate Mostafa Shahriar Khan dismissed the case.

Advocate Raihan Morshed, a lawyer of Dhaka Judge's Court, filed the case with the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in the morning.

According to the complaint, Inu at a public meeting at Kataribazar in Rangpur on April 3 said military dictators Ziaur Rahman and Khandakar Mushtaq Ahmed had destroyed the spirit of Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Two killed in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Two persons were killed and 15 others injured in a clash over breeding of fish fries on a piece of land at Hamidchar under Chandaon Police Station yesterday.

The dead, identified as Abdus Sabur, 45, and his nephew Mohiuddin, 25, were residents of Hamidchar and engaged in fish farming.

A group of residents of Hamidchar were locked into a clash with another group of nearby Bolihat area at about 6:00pm over occupying a piece of land for breeding fish fries, police sources said.

Both the groups fired several shots during the clash which lasted for about half an hour.

Of the injured, four were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital with injuries of bullet and sharp weapons. Sabur, who sustained bullet injuries, died at the hospital.

Woman killed by husband

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was strangled allegedly by her husband at the capital's Pallabi yesterday.

Salma Begum, 26, wife of Shafiqul Islam, along with her minor son used to stay at her sister's house as Shafiqul did not bear any expenses of his family, said her nephew, Mosharraf.

Victim's sister Ruma said Safiqul came to Pallabi on Saturday night. Around 8:00am Ruma found the couple's room locked from the outside and found the body on the bed after breaking the lock.

Next hearing on April 25

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two more prosecution witnesses yesterday gave their statements before a Dhaka court in connection with a money laundering case against BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko, and Ismail Hossain Saimon, son of former shipping minister late Akbar Hossain.

The witnesses are Mohammad Khademul Bashar, project director of New Mooring Container Terminal of Chittagong Port Authority and Habibur Rasul, assistant chief of the same project.

Judge Mohammad Mozammel Hossain of the Special Judge Court-3 recorded statements of the witnesses and fixed April 25 for the next hearing of the case.



BNP leader Dastagir passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Senior vice president of Chittagong city unit BNP and former Deputy Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Dastagir Chowdhury passed away due to cardiac arrest on his way to the city from Dhaka yesterday.

He was 58. He left behind his wife, one son and two daughters.

He was rushed to the Apollo Hospital in Dhaka after a massive cardiac problem. The doctors declared him dead there around 9:30am, said BNP Chittagong city unit General Secretary Dr Shahdat Hossain.

Dastagir took part in the liberation war in 1971. He was an activist of the then Biplabi Chhatra Union.

Freedom fighter Dastagir was a leading sports organiser in the port city and also the former general secretary of Chittagong Zila Kriya Sangstha. He was the former vice president of Bangladesh Football Federation too.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at BNP office at Nasiman Bhaban in the city at 3:00pm while another janaza at the Jamiat-ul-Falah National Mosque after Asr prayers today.

Badal Chandra

CU CORRESPONDENT

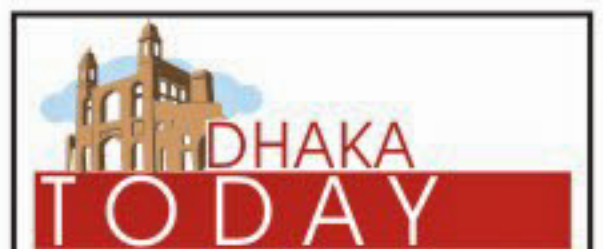


Badal Chandra Chowdhury, a retired official of Bangladesh Railway and

father of Junior Reporter Prabir Barua Chowdhury of The Daily Star, chittagong office, passed away at Chittagong Medical College Hospital due to cancer and kidney failure yesterday at the age of 71, says a press release.

He left behind his wife and three sons.

His funeral will be held at the Buddhist cremation center near Chittagong University today.



Discussion

Karmajibi Nari will hold a discussion; Venue: organization premises; Time: 12:00noon.

Seminar

General Pharmaceutical Ltd will organise a scientific seminar; Venue: Sheraton Hotel; Time: 12:30pm.

Discussion

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Parishad will hold a discussion; Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity; Time: 10:30am.

Human chain

Jatiya Mahila Sangstha will organise a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Handicap International, Bangladesh will hold a discussion; Venue: LGED auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Meeting

Prime Insurance Company Limited will organise its annual general meeting; Venue: BIAM Auditorium; Time: 11:00am.

Discussion

Jagrata Janata Forum will organise a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 4:00pm.

Programme

HSBC will hold a programme on Rabindranath Tagore; Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre; Time: 6:30pm.

Rally

Leprosy Patient Welfare Association will organise a rally; Venue: Muktangan; Time: 8:00am.

Exhibition

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Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Mild heat wave may sweep over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna and Srimongal.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:21pm today and rises at 5:35am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 20.4 degrees Celsius at Tangail.

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	34.8	21.8	52	52
Chittagong	31.6	25.5	69	76
Rajshahi	34.5	22.5	78	75
Rangpur	32.7	22.2	70	59
Khulna	35.6	25.5	77	53
Barisal	34.7	24.5	73	63

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