

With the coming of the summer season, jackfruit trees in the city are beginning to bear Bangladesh's national fruit. This one on Dhaka University campus has around 200.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA



BNP disrespects constitution

Says Hanif

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif yesterday said the main opposition BNP "disrespected" the constitution by urging the government to dissolve the parliament and form a constitutional assembly.

"BNP does not believe in the constitution; so its leaders have come up with an unrealistic idea of forming of a constitutional assembly after dissolving the parliament," Hanif told reporters at AL president Sheikh Hasina's political office at Dhanmondi in the city.

BNP Acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on Thursday asked the government to quit and form a constitutional assembly through a fresh election to make necessary amendments to the constitution.

Hanif said the fascistic character of BNP has been disclosed through the demand that also proves the party does not believe in the clause of the constitution that reads "people of the state are the ultimate source of power."

Hanif alleged that BNP is trying to destroy the existing stable political situation after spreading propaganda against the government.

He also criticised the BNP leaders who have spoken against the initiative for the constitutional amendment.

He said the parliamentary special committee should go ahead according to rules if the main opposition does not show interest to talk to the committee members.

AL organising secretaries BM Mozammel Haque, Abu Sayeed Al Mahmud Swapan, and Khalid Mahmud, among others, were present during the media briefing.

Coast guard man injured in gunfight with pirates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Coast Guard member was bullet-hit in a gunfight between Coast Guard personnel and a gang of pirates in the Meghna river in Ramgati upazila of Laxmipur on Thursday night.

The fight ensued when the pirates attacked a Singapore-flagged ship on its way to Singapore via Chittagong.

Injured Able Seaman Redwan was taken to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he was doing fine.

The ship -- FV Victory -- came under attack around 10:30pm at Char Gajaria when it was returning from Ghorashal after downloading some equipment for the Ghorashal Power Plant, Commander M Mamunur Rashid told The Daily Star.

"A team of Coast Guard rushed to the spot and fired around 20 shots," he said.

The pirates, however, fled on their engine boat.

Some 20 to 25 pirates forced their way aboard the ship and tried to loot it but failed, sources said.

BSF kills cattle trader

UNB, Sathkira

A Bangladeshi cattle trader was shot dead yesterday by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at Gazipur border in Sathkira Sadar upazila.

The deceased is Shahadat Hossain, 35, son of Karim Morol of Bharukhali village in the upazila.

Locals said BSF fired at Shahadat, leaving him wounded while he along with 15/20 other cattle traders was returning home from India with cows.

Other traders rescued and rushed him to a local clinic in critical condition.

Awareness stressed for thalassemia prevention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday underscored the need for awareness measures to prevent hereditary form of anemia-thalassemia, a blood disorder, in the country.

It is 25 percent likely that a thalassemia baby will be born if both the parents are carrier of thalassemia, said Dr Manjur Morshed, a professor of haematology.

"We can prevent its spread by stopping marriage between the carriers," he said and suggested everyone, before getting married, to test if he or she carries thalassemia.

Dr Manjur also advised not to confuse a thalassemia patient with a thalassemia carrier who can lead a normal life without any complications unlike a patient.

A patient needs bone marrow transplantation, the only way and too expensive treatment, to cure thalassemia, he said.

So it is better to take initiatives to prevent its spread through awareness programme, the haematologist told the conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

Bangladesh Thalassemia Foundation (BTF) organised it to reveal its activities on the eve of World Thalassemia Day tomorrow with the slogan, "Equal Chance to Life."

BTF Secretary General Dr Abdur Rahim, in a reply, said a thalassemia patient can survive through regular blood transfusion.

He urged the government to formulate policy to ensure blood availability for the patients as well as creating awareness among the people.

Free access to US market sought

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh sought again duty free access to the US market, saying the US Congress has an important role to play in this regard.

"Congress should also renew the US GSP facilities in its present form," Bangladesh Ambassador to USA Akramul Qader said during a meeting at the Capitol Hill Thursday with Congressman Dave Camp (R-MI) who is also the chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee in the House of Representatives.

The ambassador said GSP expired in December 2010 and requested Congressman Camp for its renewal by the US Congress without any amendment so Bangladesh gets full benefits in exporting all items covered by the facilities under GSP.

In response, the Congressman Camp assured to work on the issues, especially on GSP renewal, in consideration of protecting Bangladesh interest.



A few of the 225 working children who watched "Amar Bandhu Rashed", a movie based on Bangladesh's War of Liberation, at a cinema hall in the city. Manusher Jonno Foundation took up the initiative on Thursday to disseminate the spirit of the war and patriotism amongst them. The movie's director Morshedul Islam described stories behind the making of the movie to the children before the screening. Of the children, five were physically challenged, says a press release.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Australian held at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Airport Armed Police arrested an Australian citizen from Shahjalal International Airport on Thursday on charge of illegally carrying currencies of different countries.

Police said they arrested Christopher Pitter Giri, 50, from the second boarding bridge around 12:15pm while he was on way to board a Bangkok bound flight of Thai Airways.

Mohammad Moinuddin, a sub inspector (SI) of Airport Police Station, said Giri was acting suspicious, prompting law enforcers to search his luggage where currencies worth around Tk 9,143,245 of eight countries including Bangladesh were found.

The SI said Giri was now in jail custody and police filed a case.

Giri claimed he was legally carrying the currencies.

Combating climate change global responsibility

Says Quazi Kholiquzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Combating climate change is a global responsibility and all countries must act collectively to protect the world, said Dr Quazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, coordinator of Bangladesh Climate Change Negotiation Team, yesterday.

He was delivering a lecture titled "United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Climate Change Negotiations: Present Status and Future Prospect" at Syed Ahmad Hossain Memorial Lecture-2011.

United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) organised the lecture at Bangladesh National Scout Bhawan in the city's Kakrail.

He said though adaptation is the priority for a country like Bangladesh, these countries cannot continue adapting and adjusting for years on end even with strong international support.

"According to Global Climate Risk Index 2011, Bangladesh is in fact the most vulnerable country. The cause lies with the developed countries but countries like Bangladesh, which is not responsible for it whatsoever, suffer the most."

"Climate change is also a justice issue. The global society must perform global responsibility through actions at local, national, regional and international levels in order to protect itself and the planet Earth from a catastrophe," he said.

Kholiquzzaman, also chairman of Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation, said there is high level of commitment in Bangladesh within and outside the government to manage climate change effectively to minimise its impacts.

Prof Salahuddin Ahmed, former president of UNAB, chaired the session while UNAB Secretary General Syed Mohammad Sahed was present.

Daily Star PSK union committee formed



Monirul Islam Minhaj Uddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new executive committee of The Daily Star Press Sramik Karmachari Union for 2011-2013 session was formed yesterday with Md Monirul Islam Bhuiyan as president and Md Minhaj Uddin as general secretary.

The 10-member committee was formed unanimously at a meeting held at The Daily Star Centre with the union's outgoing president Md Zakir Hossain Mollah in the chair.

Other office-bearers are Vice-presidents Md Shamim Chowdhury and Md Zakir Hossain Khan; Assistant General Secretary Md Yousuf Ali; Organising Secretary Md Elias; Treasurer Md Saiful Islam and members Md Abul Hashem, Asimuzzaman Joy and Safayet Hossain Manik.

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