

NEWS IN *brief*

BCSIR awarded 'Center of Excellence for South Asia'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) achieved recognition as Center of Excellence for South Asia from USA-based Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT).

COMSAT accorded the recognition on BCSIR's 14th annual conference at Bogota of Colombia from May 26 to 27, 2011, says a BCSIR press release.

This achievement now grants BCSIR researchers access to international standard data, including the latest obtained through satellite, with help from COMSAT.

COMSAT also invited BCSIR Chairman Prof Dr S M Imamul Huq to attend its next 15th annual meeting in Istanbul on May 2012.

Man killed falling down in cargo hold

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A staff of a ship died after falling down in a ship's cargo hold at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port in the port city yesterday.

The deceased Abu Hanif, 55, an assistant cook of Hong Kong flag carrying ship MV Sarim, is a resident of Begumganj of Noakhali.

The victim was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

ATTACK ON MAYOR 9 AL men charged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Nine Awami League men were charged yesterday for an attack on the mayor of Sarishabari municipality of the district on Friday.

Mayor Foyjul Kabir Talukder Shahin, also general secretary of upazila unit Jubo Dal, filed the case with Speedy Trial Tribunal of Jamalpur.

The accused are Delkhus, 35, Abdus Sattar, 32, Shahidur Rahman, 35, Nur-e-Alam Babu, 37, Mukul, 23, Abdul Mannan, 37, Saidur, 28, Sultan Alam, 28, and Rafiqul Islam, 32, of Kamrabad village under Sarishabari upazila. They all are activists of upazila unit Awami League.

Judge Rashed Talukder of the court ordered the officer-in-charge of Sarishabari Police Station to take legal action after investigation.

As per the case statement, the nine AL men waylaid Shahin Friday night near Shimla Bazar when he was returning home from a village arbitration at Charia of the upazila. They demanded Tk6 lakh toll from him.

As Shahin refused to give the money, the AL men beat him up and left him injured on the spot.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gives away prize to a winner of an art and essay competition for children at a function at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday on the occasion of World Environment Day 2011. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PID

HARTAL IN DISTRICTS Over 100 hurt, 40 picked up

STAR REPORT

Nationwide hartal, enforced by BNP and Jamaat yesterday, was observed in most of the districts peacefully with a few stray incidents of scuffle with police.

Over 100 people were injured in the districts during the hartal hours while police picked up about 40 persons.

In Chittagong, police picked up six persons from the port city on charge of picketing and damaging vehicles, said Chittagong Metropolitan Police sources.

A scuffle between the pickets and police also occurred in front of Nasiman Bhaban in the city leaving 28 people, including seven policemen, injured.

OC (Kotwali) Abul Kalam Azad, SI Habib and five constables were given treatment in Police Hospital.

Twenty-one injured activists of BNP, including Dr Shahadat Hossain, Mosharrif Hossain Dipti, Rosy Kabir, Jelly Chowdhury and councilor Monwara Begum Mani, were given treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

BNP city unit Secretary Shahadat Hossain alleged that police held five persons from their "peaceful rally." He claimed that some 50 BNP men were injured as police charged baton on them.

During the hartal, cargo loading and unloading in Chittagong port remained normal but no delivery took place, said the port sources.

Trains and aircrafts left the port city with fewer passengers than other normal days while educational institutions and main shopping malls remained closed during the hartal.

In Sylhet, police picked up 10 persons, including four BNP and five Jamaat activists, from the city.

In Barisal, pickets damaged four rickshaws and one tempo.

In Rangpur, 10 people, including ASP Rashidul Hoque, were injured in a clash between police and BNP men at Grand Hotel point. Police lobbed ten rounds of tear shells to disperse pickets.

In Rajshahi, no vehicle was on the roads while classes and examinations at the educational institutions could not be held.

But a tense situation was prevailing in the city over the Saturday's pre-hartal violence at Shaheb Bazar that left 30 people injured.

Police held some 15 persons after a case was filed against 300 BNP men in connection with the violence.

In Noakhali, police held 14 people from the district and fired 15 rounds to dispersed pro-hartal activists who vandalised five trucks at Afania Bazar in Begumganj upazila at about 10:00am.

Rtv district correspondent Monir Hossain and cameraman Moshir Rahman were injured by the pickets while taking video footages.

Police charged batons on a BNP procession at Dattarhat at about 9:30am that left 10 people injured.

In Narayanganj, 10 BNP men were injured as police charged batons on them in DIT Commercial area in the town at about 6:30am. Police picked up nine people from the spot.

In Narsingdi, 20 people were injured during a clash between police and BNP men at Bazirmore in the town. Police held five people from the spot.

In Netrokona, at least 30 BNP men were injured in separate clashes with cops in Kalajuri upazila and the district town.

Faruque Ahmed, JCD General Secretary of Barhatta upazila, was held during the hartal.

In Gaibanda, 20 passengers received minor injuries as pickets ransacked six trucks and night coaches and pelted brickbats at them near Sathi Cinema Hall at Palashbari Upazila.

Demise of Azam Khan condoled

METRO DESK

President Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia and other socio-political organisations in separate messages expressed their deep shock and sorrow at the death of Pop Guru Azam Khan.

BSS reports: Zillur his message said Azam Khan had made pop music popular in the country through introducing a new trend of songs during the post-liberation period of Bangladesh.

The president said contribution of Azam Khan in cultural field would be ever memorable by the nation. The country has lost a valiant freedom fighter and popular singer at his death, he said.

Zillur prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Hasina her message said, "Singer Azam Khan has played a notable role in flourishing a healthy culture that would inspire generation after generation."

The prime minister said the nation would recall with gratitude his contribution as a veteran freedom fighter and a pop legend.

Our staff correspondent says: BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said, "Azam Khan fought for the War of Liberation and made his position among the people by his music."

She said he added new dimension to Bangla song.

Former president HM Ershad said the contribution of Azam Khan to the liberation war and music will be remembered for decades.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board expressed deep shock and bereavement at the passing away of legendary musician and pop idol Azam Khan.

A registered club cricketer Azam Khan's love and passion for the game of cricket is well documented and he was a staunch supporter of the Bangladesh Cricket Team. Bangladesh cricket will remember him as a shining symbol of inspiration.

Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Gono Forum, Jubo Forum, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Japan-Bangladesh Friendship Hospital, Bangladesh Protiva Bikash Society and Zia Sena also mourned his demise.

Azam Khan passed away at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) yesterday morning at the age of 61.

The country's legendary pop star Azam Kahn who had been suffering from oral cancer was on life support at the city's Square Hospital since March 27 and shifted to CMH on Wednesday.

REDUCING EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

Enforcement of building code essential

Experts tell Prothom Alo discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Enforcement of building code, appropriate design and soil testing are vital for construction of buildings to reduce damage from earthquakes in the country, said experts at a discussion yesterday.

"The foremost task is to enforce Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) accordingly across the country to reduce the severity of disaster," said Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, an eminent civil engineer and president of Bangladesh Earthquake Society.

Bangla daily Prothom Alo and the society jointly organised the discussion "Earthquake Risk and Preparedness" at the daily's office in the city marking the earthquake in Assam on June 12, 1897.

Buildings constructed on filled-up wetlands along Dhaka's periphery are extremely vulnerable to earthquakes,

said Prof Jamilur.

Referring to three major earthquakes in Haiti, Chile and Fukushima in recent past, he said a total of 11 earthquakes, measuring four and above on the Richter scale, were felt in Bangladesh over the past decade.

Over 90 percent buildings in the country, including 1.40 lakh in the city, were built without any supervision of engineers and architects. Moreover, Rajuk is inadequate in terms of manpower and logistics to enforce building rules and BNBC in the city, he said.

Of the city's 3.26 lakh buildings, 72,000 may collapse during an earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale triggered by Modhupur geological fault line, said Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, urban risk reduction specialist of Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme.

There are three geological active

fault lines including Modhupur, Dauki and Eastern Boundary that may trigger major earthquakes with an epicentre within Bangladesh, he said.

Number of risky buildings is increasing consistently, as there is no competent supervision on design and construction except for divisional towns in the country, said Abdul Malek Shikder, superintending engineer of Public Works Department.

Brig Gen Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah, director general of Fire Service and Civil Defence; Md Abu Sadeque, director of Disaster Management Bureau; and Prof Mehedi Ahmed Ansary, director of Buet-Japan Institute of Disaster Prevention and Urban Safety; also spoke at the discussion moderated by the daily's Joint Editor Abdul Quayum.

6 car lifters held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Six members of a car lifting gang were arrested along with a stolen micro bus from Chittagong on Saturday.

A Noha microbus was stolen from the house of Manik Miah at Kuchai Saarping village in Sylhet on May 20.

As Manik filed a case, police arrested three people from Jaintapur Tea garden area on May 31 in this regard.

Following their confessional statement, Dakshin Surma police launched a drive in Haliashar area of Chittagong on Saturday.

They arrested Jahsinm Uddin, Gias Uddin, Yusuf Ali, Abu Taleb, Shahab Uddin and Alauddin.

They were sent to jail hajat yesterday after they were produced before the court.



Visitors view photographs at an exhibition "Bay of Bengal in Focus" at Drik Gallery in the city's Dhanmondi yesterday organised by Safety Assistance For Emergencies.

PHOTO: STAR

UNDP assures help to fight climate change

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Representative Robert Juhkam yesterday said the UN's development network is with Bangladesh in its efforts to combat climate change and environmental issues.

"It is a well known fact that Bangladesh is not to blame for climate change and yet, it is the most vulnerable country, and also a vocal advocate of other vulnerable countries.

"A lot needs to be done in the issue," he said.

He was addressing a seminar jointly organised by environment

ministry; Department of Environment (DoE); UNDP Bangladesh; and British Council, Bangladesh in the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre observing World Environment Day 2011.

Speakers there urged the government to take effective steps in cleaning rivers around Dhaka and strengthening water transportation infrastructure in and around the city to ease traffic jams.

They also stressed on the need to attract more tourists to visit the Sundarbans and alternative employment opportunities for people living in forest regions.

"The (environment) ministry

took initiatives to provide diverse employment opportunities for communities living in the forest region," said Dr Hasan Mahmud, state minister for environment, while speaking as the chief guest.

He hoped to see results in this regard within the next year or two.

Two papers "Forests: Global Snapshot International Initiatives to Conserve Forest Ecosystems" and "The Role of Forest Ecosystem in Our Life" were presented at the seminar.

Over five percent of national GDP comes from the forest sector while some two percent of the population is employed in activities related to forests, said speakers.

With greater development and preservation activities, the country's forests may become even a bigger economic, social and environmental force, they added.

Many organisations across the country also organised a host of programmes to observe the day.

DoE, Chittagong organised a rally from MA Ajj stadium's gymnasium premises to Muslim Institute in Chittagong. Speakers there said environmental science should be included in primary school syllabus as a subject.

Ramna Park Federation of Workers Association also brought out another rally in the city led by Industries Minister Dilip Barua.

BNP leader Milon freed

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Former state minister for education ANM Ehsanul Haq Milon was released from Comilla jail yesterday after serving 470 days in 24 cases, confirmed his wife Nazmun Nahar Baby.

Milon, also international affairs secretary of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, was sent to jail on March last year in a case. 20 cases were filed against him in the last 13 months.



Seminar

Equitybd will organise a seminar; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Drawing competition

Save The Environment Movement will hold a children's drawing competition; Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy; Time: 3:30pm.

Rally

Communist Party of Bangladesh will organise a rally; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 12:00noon.

Discussion

Research and Development Collective will hold a discussion; Venue: CIRDP auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Dialogue

Brac University will organise a dialogue; Venue: Brac University; Time: 3:30pm.

Discussion

Dhaka Wasa Sramik Union will hold a discussion; Venue: Wasa Bhaban; Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion

Bangabandhu Society will organise a

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY
100% GLUCOSE

No change 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.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi and Pabna and it may continue.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:44pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.2 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	35.5	28.3	80	57
Chittagong	33.0	26.8	78	71
Rajshahi	37.2	23.9	80	65
Rangpur	34.5	23.4	67	67
Khulna	36.2	28.0	74	63
Barisal	35.3	27.4	74	67

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