

NEWS IN *brief*

SC stays Pintu's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed till June 12 a High Court order that granted bail to former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu in a case filed in connection with the Palkhona carnage. Chamber Judge of Appellate Division Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order after hearing a petition filed by the government, seeking stay on the HC order. The judge also asked the government to file a regular leave-to-appeal petition with the court against the HC order by June 12. The HC on June 7 granted ad-interim bail to Pintu for six months in the case.

3 Shibir men held at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

Motihar police yesterday arrested three Islami Chhatra Shibir cadres in connection with the February 9 violence on Rajshahi University (RU) campus. They are Abdullah Al Muktasid, a third year student of Islamic Studies department, Zahangir Alam, a final year student of History department and Polash Boyragi, a final year student of Management department of the university. Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men caught them from different spots and handed them over to the police.

RUCSU election demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Cultural activists and left leaning political leaders and activists of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday demanded regeneration of Teacher-Student Cultural Center (TSCC) and holding Rajshahi University Central Student Union (RUCSU) election. The activists under a banner Central Sangskritik Jote brought out a procession at RU around 12:00 noon to press home their demands. Later, they submitted a memorandum to RU Vice Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan, who assured of looking into the matter.

Tremor jolts country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A light tremor of 4.5 magnitude jolted different parts of the country, including the capital, around 1:34pm yesterday. According to the Agargaon Met Office, Dhaka, the epicentre of the earthquake was in Rajbari-Faridpur border region, around 108 kilometers west from the capital. Our Jhenidah correspondent said two cycles of powerful tremor jolted Jhenidah district headquarters and Shimla-Rokanpur unions. Our Faridpur correspondent said the mild tremor jolted various parts of the district around 1:34 pm. Our Gopalganj correspondent said the residents of Singa of Kashiani upazila, Jolirpar of Maksudpur upazila and Satpar of Sadar upazila felt the jolt.

Career festival held at IUB

METRO DESK

A two-day long job fair titled 'Campus Career Festival' was ended on the permanent campus of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) in the city yesterday. School of Engineering and Computer Science of IUB and bdjobs.com jointly organised the programme. A number of companies such as Standard Chartered Bank, GPIT Solutions, TNT express, ACI Limited, Pran-RFL Ltd, Omega Real Estate Ltd, Energypac Power Generation Ltd participated at the fair.

Tk 50,015cr project to save rivers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith yesterday unveiled a budgetary allocation of Tk 50,015 crore of a 15-year strategic project for dredging and management of rivers. "Capital Dredging and River Management Strategy of Bangladesh" would ensure capital dredging and river management throughout the country including the rivers Gori, Ganges-Padma, Brahmaputra-Jamuna and Meghna, he said. The government will acquire 17 more dredgers to maintain navigability of inland rivers for an improved transportation system over water, he said. Of 36 dredgers in operation at presents, 14 are of Bangladesh Water Development Board, seven are of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority and 15 are from the private sector. Muhith also unveiled a development plan for flood control and drainage system over 124 square kilometers (km) of land in the eastern part of Dhaka city, popularly known as Eastern Bypass, within this fiscal year. Mentionable, over Tk 5,000 crore

was allocated in the 2010-2011 fiscal year for different river dredging projects. The government already drafted "Bangladesh Water Act, 2010" and took initiatives to amend "Water Resources Planning Act, 1992" for the entire development of water resources, said the minister. The government also plans to construct 1,760 km of embankment while repairing another 16,870 km. It would construct and repair 9,000 flood control structures, construct 285 km of concrete riverbanks and repair 405 km of existing riverbank protection structures in the 2011-2012 fiscal year, he added. Measures were already taken to construct Ganges Barrage in the South-Western region of Bangladesh to ensure integrated water management of the Ganges for the region's economic growth, poverty alleviation and environmental conservation, he said. Other initiatives include protecting landmass, cities and villages from river erosion and 13.47 lakh hectares of land from salinity, setting up two lakh freshwater sources and intensifying activities of Haor Board.

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Health sector won't see any qualitative change: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite an allocation increase of 5.8 percent from last fiscal year, the health sector will not see any qualitative change, fears experts. A total of Tk 8,827 crore of the revised budget was allocated for health and family welfare ministry for 2011-12 fiscal year, only 5.4 percent of the national budget. "Though per capita health expenditure increased to US \$7.6, it is still quite insignificant in context of bringing changes in the health sector... "especially when a large amount has to be shared over family planning and nutrition issues," said Dr Rashid E Mahbub, president of Health Rights Movement National Committee and former president of Bangladesh Medical Association. The health sector spends mostly for disease prevention and treatment and for medical education. But the budget is not enough

considering the need of developed treatment facilities and technology based medical education for a qualitative change, he said. At least three percent of the total Gross Domestic Product is needed, but with less than one percent, it is not possible to bring sustainable development, said the experts. Furthermore, the increased allocation will be of little help as Muhith said inflation rate would be eight percent this year, they added. Health ministry is not satisfied with the allocation especially when the government is focusing on ensuring people's primary health and developing tertiary level health sector. "We need six percent allocation of total Gross Domestic Product, that is Tk 48,000 crore. But this is not possible for the government, especially considering mounting pressure for allocating more on gas, electricity etc," said Joint Secretary (Administration) of health ministry Ashrafal Islam.

Digitisation of land in 3yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith in his budget speech yesterday hoped the land management digitisation process across the country would be completed within three years. "The whole land administration -- record preparation and preservation, change of land category, mutation and accounts of land revenues will be done in one office and land owners will be able to access related information from their homes," Muhith told the parliament. Reiterating his commitment to establish

a digitalised land management system, the minister said the government has taken the initiative to roll out the digitisation of land administration throughout the country under the public-private partnership. He said as part of the digitisation programme, 191 mouza-registers and mouza-maps of Dhaka city have been digitalised and posted on the website. Muhith proposed an allocation of Tk 2,189 crore for fiscal year 2011-12 comprising both development and non-development budgets for land management and housing sector.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Engr Emdad UI Haque, a former lawmaker of Kishoreganj, will be held at the Officers' Club in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release. He passed away at a city hospital on Tuesday at the age of 68.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the first death anniversary of Md Anwar Ullah, a former manager of Bangladesh Textile Mills, says a press release. On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his residence at Tongi in the city after Juma prayers today.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said. The sun sets in the capital at 6:45pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 37.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur. 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	33.3	26.3	72	73
Chittagong	27.7	24.8	95	83
Rajshahi	36.0	25.6	75	67
Rangpur	34.4	25.5	70	59
Khulna	35.6	26.6	77	69
Barisal	33.3	26.0	82	78
Sylhet	32.0	25.1	82	88
Cox's Bazar	28.4	25.2	97	89

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