

NEWS IN *brief*

Ershad hails prime minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday praised the prime minister for the cabinet approval of proposals of constitutional amendments maintaining the phrase "Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim" and keeping "Islam" as the state religion in the constitution. In a statement the former president said he welcomes Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the farsighted step she took respecting the religious sentiment. The chief of JP, an ally of Awami League-led grand-coalition, also congratulated all members of the cabinet for the approval of the recommendation abolishing caretaker government system. The cabinet on Monday approved the special parliamentary committee report containing 51 recommendations submitted in parliament on June 8.

Suspected Tahrir activist arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a suspected activist of banned outfit Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh after they brought out a procession yesterday noon near Jatiya Press Club in city. The arrestee Shahdat Hossain, 22, is a student of East West University. Police claimed Hossain admitted his involvement with the banned outfit during primary interrogation. Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said about 10-12 activists of the outfit brought out the sudden procession around 12:00pm. Police chased and foiled the procession when the activists tried to parade to Paltan.

2 episodes of Meena launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unicef launched two new episodes of Meena cartoons yesterday after a gap of seven years, says a press release. The two new episodes are Jadur Pathor (the magic stone), featuring a hand washing practices and Rupkathar Deshe Meena (Meena in fantasy land), which is about newborn care. Unicef Bangladesh produced five Meena cartoon films and six storybooks promoting hygiene, healthy behaviours for flu prevention, early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding, prevention of corporal punishment at school and households and infant and young child feeding. Meena is a 9-year-old animated character who speaks about important social issues in a way that is relatable to both children and adults.



Commuters experience a tailback due to a rally organised by BNP blocking road in front of its Naya Paltan office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

50 illegal structures knocked down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) demolished around 50 illegal structures -- some of them fully and some partly -- along the Dhaka embankment in the city's Mohammadpur yesterday. The reclaimed land will be handed over to Roads and Highways Department (RHD) for building a four-lane road along the 30 km embankment stretching from Swarighat in Lalbagh to Abdullahpur in Tongi, said Jyoti Prasad Ghosh, executive engineer of WDB. The eviction team targeted demolition along the entire four-kilometer stretch from Basila to Gabtoli but could knock down structures along one kilometre

stretch of the embankment due to densely erected structures on Water Development Board land. The demolished structures included portions of around 10 two-storey, one six-storey and 10 one-storey buildings and 30 makeshift houses, Joyti said. Yesterday's demolition was part of a week-long drive scheduled to be carried out along the embankment under Mohammadpur, Adabar and Uttara police stations until June 28. Shaheed Hossain Chowdhury, executive magistrate of Dhaka district administration, who is leading the drive, said they allowed some time to the management of a mosque for demolishing a part of the mosque built on the WDB land.

11,500 Yaba tablets seized, six held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective police and Rapid Action Battalion in separate raids yesterday arrested six persons and seized some 11,500 Yaba tablets in Bangshal and Shah Ali of the city. Mohammad Shahidullah, assistant commissioner of Detective Branch (DB), said they detained Abdul Karim, 48, Abdur Gafur, 47, and Sadek, 21, raiding a rented house at Siddik Bazar in Bangshal around 4:30am. The gang used to bring 2-3 consignments of Yaba tablets, arriving from Myanmar, to the city from Teknaf every month and sell them to retailers, he said. They sold two types of Yaba -- large pink tablets at Tk 220 and small tablets at Tk 150 apiece -- to the retailers, the assistant commissioner quoted Gafur as saying. Abdul Karim, who runs a cloth business at Siddik Bazar, told the interrogators that he brought the tablets with imported cloths from Myanmar, said the AC. In Shah Ali raid, Rab arrested Saiful Islam, 32, Mohammad Kamal, 15, and Mohammad Billal, 16, at a rented flat in middle Paikpara yesterday afternoon. Rab-3 officials said they also seized around 4,500 Yaba tablets from the three alleged drug peddlers.

**UP POLLS IN FENI
EC asks to withdraw DC, OC**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has recommended withdrawal of deputy commissioner of Feni district and officer-in-charge (OC) of Sadar Police Station for their failure to prevent deterioration of law and order in the union parishad elections in the district. The EC yesterday sent letters to the secretary to the public administration ministry and Inspector General of Police to this effect. Talking to reporters, Election Commissioner M Sakhawat Hussain said incidents of violence are being occurred due to administrative weakness. He said the EC also asked the ministries concerned to take measures to withdraw the two officials for their failure to check deterioration into law and order situation and post new ones there immediately. Earlier, the EC asked for transferring the superintendent of police of Noakhali. But the EC's recommendation was not followed. When his attention was drawn to it, the election commissioner said the EC Secretariat has sent letter for transferring the police official. But the police official wants to prove his efficiency and therefore he was not transferred, said Sakhawat.

Minister's remarks in JS protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 45 leaders of different left-leaning students' organisations yesterday protested the statement of State Minister for Environment and Forests Hasan Mahmud. The leaders in a joint statement protested the remarks made by Hasan Mahmud in parliament against the 19 June hartal called by the National Committee for Protection of Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port and its committee members, said a press release. Among other signatories are Nur Ahmed Bokul, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Belal Chowdhury, Manobendra Dev, Ragib Hasan, Imam Gazzali and Minar Ahmed.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the eighth death anniversary of To Lamoti Halder, mother of Chaitanya Chandra Halder, court correspondent of The Daily Star, says a press release. Recitation from the Geeta, kirtan, discussion and a prayer session will be held at her village home at Nayakandi of Bajitpur under Rajoir in Madaripur.

Another runway at airport on cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to construct another parallel runway at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport to keep pace with the growing aviation industry. Besides, the government has also planned to increase the number of boarding bridges to 24 from the existing eight. Civil Aviation and Tourism minister GM Qader yesterday told The Daily Star that he has already asked Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport Construction Cell and the chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) to conduct a survey to learn whether another runway can be built on the western side of the existing 1,500 feet runway.



Birk Niebel, minister for economic cooperation and development of Federal Republic of Germany, and Andris Piebalgs, European commissioner for development, call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PID

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop
South Asia Partnership Bangladesh will organise a workshop. Venue: 20-21, Karwan Bazar, Time: 9:30am.

Seminar
Retired Police Officers' Welfare Association Bangladesh will arrange a seminar. Venue: Telecom auditorium, Rajarbagh, Time: 10:30am.

Award giving
Patua Quamrul Hassan Art School will hold an award giving ceremony. Venue: Public Library auditorium, Time: 5:30pm.

Workshop
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank will jointly organise a workshop. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel, Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Jagapa Chhatra League will arrange a discussion. Venue: Jatiya Press Club, Time: 10:30am.

Workshop
International Business Forum of Bangladesh will hold a workshop. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel, Time: 11:00am.

Research presentation
Oxfam and Csl will jointly present a research paper. Venue: Oxfam office, Banani, Time: 11:00am.

Rally
Rumanar Jonno Nay Bichar Mancha will hold a candle light rally. Venue: Raju Bhaskorjo, Dhaka University, Time: 7:00pm.

Reception
Urban Study Group will arrange a reception programme. Venue: National Museum auditorium, Time: 6:30pm.

Protest rally

Increase researches to create specialist docs

President tells first BSMMU convocation



President Zillur Rahman gives away certificate at the first convocation of BSMMU at Bangabandhu International Conference Center in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA NEWS

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman has called for increasing medical research activities at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) to help create world-class specialist physicians. "I hope the researches to be conducted from the institute will not only bring benefits for the patients but will also play important role in the medical arena of the world," he said. The president gave the call while presiding over the first convocation of the BSMMU at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center in the city yesterday. Health Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haque, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Health Adviser to the Prime Minister Prof Dr Syed Modasser Ali, Chairman of the University Grants Commission Prof Dr AK Azad Chowdhury and BSMMU Vice-chancellor Prof Dr Pran Gopal Datta spoke on the occasion. Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqi was the convocation speaker. Addressing the convocation, President Zillur stressed the need for building resistance against those dishonest and profit-hungry people who use chemicals to ripen fruits, as such fruits cause serious health hazards. At the convocation, the president handed over crests to five eminent physicians who were conferred honorary PhD degrees by the BSMMU. They are National Prof Dr Nurul Islam and Dr MR Khan, and Prof Dr Sheikh Ali Ashraf, Prof Dr Golam Rasul and Prof Dr AKM Nazrul Islam.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital at 6:49pm today and rises at 5:12am tomorrow.** Country's highest temperature 35.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.5 degrees Celsius at Cox's Bazar and Rangamati. 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	32.9	26.0	79	78
Chittagong	31.2	25.5	83	78
Rajshahi	35.0	25.6	92	86
Rangpur	34.4	26.7	79	81
Khulna	31.8	24.9	92	92
Barisal	31.6	27.0	88	80
Sylhet	34.0	26.5	79	70