

NEWS IN
brief

15th amendment discriminatory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of religious and indigenous communities staged a hunger strike in front of city's Central Shaheed Minar yesterday protesting the latest amendments to the constitution for being "discriminatory, communal and religion based".

Around 100 members of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad and Bangladesh Adivasi Forum staged their protest from 8:00am to 5:00pm. The protesters said the government betrayed the minorities and indigenous people through the amendments.

Sector Commander of the War of Liberation Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta, the parishad General Secretary Rana Das Gupta, Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad President Subrata Chowdhury and the forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong took part in the programme.

3 JCD men arrested

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested three Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists on charge of picketing during strike on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Two of them were arrested from Aziz Supermarket at Shahbagh intersection and another from Curzon Hall area in the morning.

JCD, student wing of the main opposition BNP, called a two-day strike in protest against the naming of an under-construction female student dormitory after Begum Sufia Kamal Hall instead of Begum Khaleda Zia Hall.

College girl dies of snake bite

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A female college student died from a snake bite followed by wrong treatment in the city's Meherchandi area yesterday.

The victim Jamila Akhtar Jhuma was in her first year at Arabic department of Rajshahi Government College and daughter of rickshaw-van puller Ketab Ali.

Her family said she was bitten by an unidentified snake around 10:00pm on Friday.

MOUCHAK-MOGHBAZAR FLYOVER

Tk 373cr deal with

S Arabia signed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An agreement of Tk 373 crore for construction of Mouchak-Moghbazar Flyover was signed between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia in Jeddah yesterday.

The total cost of the project is \$115 million or about Tk 830 crore and the partial expenditures of the project will be met from the money provided by Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), says a press release.

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith and Saudi Finance Minister Dr Ibrahim Bin Abdel Aziz Al-Assaf signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments.

Bangladesh Finance Minister is now on a six-day official visit to Saudi Arabia.

On the occasion, the two Finance Ministers discussed different issues related to bi-lateral cooperation, mutual interest, especially in the field of economic activities and investment.


In response to the request of Bangladesh Finance Minister to remove 5% tariff on the goods imported from Dhaka, the Saudi Finance Minister agreed in principle and advised to forward the request through Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) since the matter is under the purview of the organisation.

During the discussion, Muhith sought full support from his Saudi counterpart in order to ensure more Saudi investments in different development projects in Bangladesh. He also requested the Saudi Minister to use his good offices to impress upon the Saudi employers to employ more Bangladeshi professionals and workers.

The Saudi Minister expressed his full-satisfaction on the contribution of Bangladesh workforce to the development of the Kingdom.

Highly applauding the on going development activities under the leadership of present government, the Saudi Minister expressed his government's interest to take part in the development works of the brotherly country.

Muhit also held separate meetings with IDB President Dr Ahmed Mohammed Ali and CEO of Islamic Trade and Finance Cooperation (ITFC), added the press release.



WEATHER
TODAY

Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over all the seven divisions in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:16am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 33.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 23.4 degrees Celsius at Comilla.

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	28.2	23.9	93	83
Chittagong	28.8	24.0	96	94
Rajshahi	33.0	24.5	98	95
Rangpur	30.4	24.5	92	90
Khulna	30.5	26.3	92	94
Barisal	27.7	27.0	96	95
Sylhet	29.2	25.3	94	96
Cox's Bazar	30.0	24.5	87	88



Prof Veena Sikri, centre, speaking at South Asia Women's Network's (SWAN) annual conference hosted by Manusher Jonno Foundation at Biam Foundation in the city yesterday. On her right are Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury, Shiranee Tilakawardane, and Mariana Baabar and on her left are Shaheen Anam, Shinkai Zahine Karokhail, and Pramila Acharya Rijal. (Story on Page 20)

PHOTO: STAR

Make Prof Yunus Grameen Bank

chairman, speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Friends and fellows of Prof Muhammad Yunus here at a view exchange meeting yesterday demanded the Nobel winner's return to Grameen Bank as its chairman.

Kiuci Kawahito, professor emeritus of US's Middle Tennessee University (MTU), who presented the keynote paper, said they were course mate in MTU when Yunus was doing his PhD. Later Yunus joined MTU as a regular faculty member, he added.

Chittagong University and MTU are the two institutions where Prof Yunus has taught as a regular faculty member, said Kawahito, an American professor of Japanese origin.

"So far as I know him he has the sense of justice, honesty, fairness, and humanity".

"Life and philosophy of Prof Yunus" is now being taught as an academic subject in MTU, he added.

"I am very proud to be a colleague of Prof Yunus 40 years ago."

Prof Yunus founded a "new concept of business", that is social business, and he can be awarded with the Noble prize for the second time for this new idea, said Kawahito.

He opined that Prof Yunus should be brought back to Grameen Bank for the sake of the bank.

Former vice-chancellor of CU Prof Dr Alamgir Muhammad Sirajuddin said Yunus should be brought back in Grameen Bank as the chairman.

"...we want him in this position for our interest and for the interest of the bank".

Poet and journalist Abu Momen said Yunus always searched for ways to serve the country and its people and that is why he switched his profession from teaching to GB.

He demanded Prof Yunus' return to Grameen Bank as the chairman.

CU's Prof Dr Mahfuzul Huq Chowdhury and Eng Sultan Mahmud echoed the demand.

Eng Sultan said Yunus and Grameen Bank cannot be isolated from each other as the relationship between the two is like that of a father and a child.

Prof Dr Sikander Khan, Prof Dr Irshad Kamal Khan, Adv Salehuddin Haider Siddiquee and Prof Rowshan Ara Hanif were present, among others, in the meeting.


Alauddin Al

Azad's death

anniversary

today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the second death anniversary of eminent novelist, poet, and academic Dr Alauddin Al Azad, says a press release.

On the occasion, Dr Alauddin Al Azad Foundation will hold doa and milad mahfil and distribute food among poor orphans.

Born in 1932 in Raipura of Narsingdi, Alauddin Al Azad was a professor of Bangla literature.

He participated in the 1952 language movement and took the initiative to release the first bulletin of Ekushey (February 21).

Dr Alauddin Al Azad wrote short stories, novels, poems, and literary criticisms. His works have been published in many languages.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Shahiduzzaman, a freedom fighter and father of Shahjahan Sohel, general secretary of Sadullapur Press Club, passed away at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 66, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and two daughters.

He was buried with state honour at his village home at Kazibari Santola after namaz-e-janaza.

Sadullapur Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Upazila Awami League, Sadullapur Press Club and Sadullapur Chamber of Commerce and Industries condoled his death.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offers prayers after laying foundation stone of Sheikh Russel Govt High School and Begum Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib Govt College at Hazaribagh in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

AGREEMENT ON TEESTA WATER SHARING

Interests protected in draft

Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has finalised the draft of the agreement on water sharing of the Teesta river with neighbouring India with Bangladesh's interests "adequately protected", State Minister for Water Resources Mahbubur Rahman said yesterday.

The agreement may be signed during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Bangladesh at the end of this year, he said. "...And the government is very much conscious to protect the country's interests in the agreement".

Mahbubur Rahman was talking to reporters after the inaugural session of Regional Water Expert Group Workshop organised by the environment and forests ministry at a city hotel yesterday.

Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Environment and Forests Dr Hasan Mahmud said Bangladesh will raise voice for its "just share" in the trans-boundary rivers during the upcoming Climate Summit-2011 to be held in Bhutan this November.

About ongoing bargaining with India on water sharing, he said, "Now we have had political understanding and better cooperation between us. Equitable water availability is necessary for both of us. We hope to reach a consensus over the issue."

In the Bhutan summit, Bangladesh will talk about necessary measures so that water-sharing activities of one country do not inflict loss on the other.

Presenting the keynote paper, Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman said 92 percent of the total water of the Ganges, Meghna and Brahmaputra rivers flow over the country into the Bay of Bengal, causing excessive flood and massive siltation.

So effective plan should be charted for total river basin management of this region, he added.

Prior to the Bhutan Climate Summit-2011, four eastern Himalayan countries including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal jointly launched the two-day workshop yesterday to develop an eastern Himalayan regional roadmap on water security.

Environment and Forests Secretary Mesbah ul Alam chaired the inaugural session attended by representatives from the countries.

4 DHAKA RIVERS

Govt asked

to follow HC

directives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A human rights and environmental organisation yesterday served a legal notice on the authorities concerned and 12 high officials including six secretaries for violating the High Court's directives to protect four rivers surrounding Dhaka city.

Adv Manzill Murshid, Supreme Court lawyer, sent the notice on behalf of the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), asking the authorities to take steps in line with the HC directives within seven days or a "contempt of court" case would be filed against them.

Served the notice are the secretaries of planning, environment, shipping, communication, finance, and water resources ministries; chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA); director general of Land Record, Environment; and deputy commissioners (DC) of Dhaka, Gazipur, and Narayanganj.

An HC bench on June 25, 2009 issued a set of directives asking different government authorities to evict all structures, temporary or permanent, within the boundary of the Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag, and Balu rivers and mount pillars specifying their boundaries by November 30, 2010.

But the government failed and filed a time petition. Then another HC bench extended the deadline to May 30, 2011.

As the HC directives remain still unexecuted, the HRPB served the legal notice.

An HRPB press release said the notice was sent, as the authorities did not take action to carry out the HC order within the given time, which "constitutes contempt of court".

Attack on DU

VC condemned

DU CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations including Dhaka University Teachers Association and Bangladesh Chhatra League yesterday demanded exemplary punishment of those who hurled crackers at Dhaka University (DU) Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique on Friday.

Leaders of the organisations condemned the incident and demanded arrest of the persons responsible within 24 hours.

Speaking at a rally organised by DU Mass Communication and Journalism Alumni Association at the base of Aparajeya Bangla, Dr Sheikh Abdus Salam said the VC was attacked before.

He stressed the need for ensuring safety on the campus to stop recurrence of such incidents.

The department teachers Mofizur Rahman, Dr AJM Shafiqul Alam Bhuiyan and Dr Abul Mansur Ahmed also spoke at the programme.

DU officers' associations and Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation also protested the incident.

A case was filed with Shahbagh Police Station in this regard accusing former JCD president Azizul Bari Helal, JCD Central President Sultan Salauddin Tuku and General Secretary Amirul Islam Khan Alim, DU Unit Joint Convener Obaidul Haque Nasir and Dr Surya Sen Hall Unit former general secretary Karim Sarkar.



Film screening

Rainbow Film Society will organise a film screening; Venue: National Museum; Time: 5:00pm.

Cultural programme

Steps Towards Development will hold a cultural programme; Venue: Chhayanaout Sangskriti Bhaban; Time: 4:00pm.