

NEWS IN *brief*

YKK distributes computers

METRO DESK
YKK Bangladesh, a Japan-based global zipper manufacturing company, distributed five sets of computers to the Koitta Girls' High School at Saturdia in Manikganj yesterday.
The distribution programme was a part of the company's corporate social responsibility, says a press release of YKK.
Kosuke Miimi, managing director, Yuji Yamase, factory manager and Masud Karim, general manager of the company, were present at the programme.

Betel nuts seized

CU CORRESPONDENT
A patrol team of Coast Guard recovered 1,692 kgs of betel nuts worth about Tk 6,76,800 from Diamond Cement Factory area of Karnaphuli Police Station in the port city yesterday.
The team conducted an anti-smuggling drive and seized the illegal betel nuts from a mud-house around 1:30am, says a press release.
Sensing the presence of the Coast Guard, the smugglers fled the scene leaving the nuts.

NSU orientation held

METRO DESK
The orientation ceremony for newly enrolled undergraduate students of fall 2011 semester of North South University (NSU) was held at its Bashundhara premises yesterday.
NSU Board of Trustees Chairman Mohammed Shajahan was present as the chief guest while NSU Vice Chancellor (VC) Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqi chaired the ceremony.
Pro-VC Dr SAM Khairul Bashar, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Dean Prof Dr ATM Nurul Amin, School of Business Dean Dr A Hannan Chowdhury, School of Arts and Social Sciences Dean Dr Atiqur Rahman, Life Sciences Dean Dr Donald James Gomes, Registrar-in-Charge BM Isa, the proctor, chairs of different departments, students and guardians were present on the occasion.
Shajahan welcomed the newly enrolled students. Dr Hafiz thanked the guardians for their trust in NSU and said NSU is the only private university in Bangladesh to fulfill University Grants Commission's requirements.



Sacked employees of National University along with their children stage a demonstration in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding their reinstatement. PHOTO: STAR

Hartal if agitation obstructed: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP Acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said programmes like hartal and blockade will be declared if the government obstructs their upcoming agitation programmes.
Addressing a joint meeting at Nayapalton office, he said Khaleda Zia, the party chairperson, will declare programmes like road marches, demonstration, and rallies during the September 27 rally.
"The city will be paralysed by observing Dhaka blockade if the government tries to obstruct these peaceful programme", Alamgir was quoted as telling the meeting.
The meeting source said some leaders criticised few senior leaders

for making 'objectionable' statements, which they think went against the party interest.
Alamgir asked the leaders to take highest preparation for the

ities do not allow them to use Palton Maiden for the public meeting.
The meeting source said the BNP high-ups invited like-minded parties to attend the rally.
brought out to protest the anti-state deals signed with India, destroying democracy and the constitution.
"Caretaker government system has been removed from the constitution. Our right to talk has been snatched away. There is no time to sit idle. All have to come to street to resist these. Otherwise our existence will be threatened", he said at the meeting.
Dhaka University Teachers for National Interest, a pro-BNP teachers body, organised the meeting at Jatiya Press Club in the city.
Alamgir said a new war has been launched to save the country and democracy, and everyone has to participate in it with the spirit of liberation war.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will announce programmes at a rally on September 27

September 27 rally so that it turns into a grand rally.
He urged the party leaders and workers to prepare for upcoming movement and told the meeting that they will organise the rally in front of the party's central office if the author-

Vagrant act a 'tool' to put shelterless behind bars

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Originally meant to help rehabilitate homeless people, the Vagrant and Shelterless Persons (rehabilitation) Act 2011 has become a "tool" to put the shelterless behind bars.
The law brands homeless people as possible criminals. It also gives law enforcers the authority to pick up any vagabond anytime and furthermore keep them behind bars for up to seven days, both needing no grounds.
The views came at a roundtable discussion yesterday titled "Vagrant and Shelterless Persons (rehabilitation) Act 2011: Protest and assessment" in the city's Dhaka Reporters Unity.
Brac, Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), ADD International and Nijera Kori organised the discussion.
Representatives from the vagabond community, human rights activists, teachers, lawyers and students present at the discussion slammed the new law and demanded the government to reconsider it.
"With the law, it seems the government is more interested in keeping them (shelterless people) behind bars than making arrange-

ments for their rehabilitation," said Barrister Sara Hossain, honorary director of Blast.
The government did not even bother to speak with any stakeholder, especially the vagabonds, before formulating the law, she said.
Mohammad Aslam, a street beggar from Dhaka's Shah Ali area, said law enforcers always pick them up while they are asleep on footpaths.
They are tortured mercilessly and many female beggars face sexual harassment in rehabilitation centres during detention, he added.
The law says the government is to establish more shelters for vagabonds. However, the shelters would be operated with money earned by the vagabonds themselves, which is horrible, said Sara.
Speaking as the chief guest, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman said the commission would find out the flaws in the law and place them before the government for reconsideration.
He said NHRC would also visit all shelters for vagabonds in the country to get a better picture of the living conditions.



Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi speaks at a discussion titled 'Bangladesh-India Relations in the Age of Globalisation: Post-Prime Ministerial Summit Conference' at Dhaka University Senate Bhavan yesterday. On his right are former Indian High Commissioner Prof Veena Sikri and Prof Imtiaz Ahmed. Centre for Alternatives, Dhaka and Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi organised the event. (Story on Page 1) PHOTO: STAR

WFP Executive Board members arrive today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Six members of the Executive Board of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) arrive on a six-day official visit to Bangladesh today, says a press release.
The delegates will inspect WFP field operations and meet with ultra-poor and food-insecure families to see how food and cash assistance have helped in building their skills and assets.
The WFP Executive Board members visiting Bangladesh are from France, India, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Denmark, and the Russian Federation. The delegation will be led by Bérengère Quincy, permanent representative of France at the United Nations in Rome.
"This visit by our Executive Board clearly shows its strong interest in WFP's innovative activities in Bangladesh, which are being implemented in close collaboration with the government", said WFP Bangladesh Representative Christa Räder.
The WFP team will meet with Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr M u h a m m a d A b d u r Razaque, Primary and Mass Education Minister Dr M Afsarul Ameen, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, and with other partners and donors.
The delegation will visit north-west Bangladesh to meet people being assisted through WFP's maternal and child nutrition activities, school feeding programme, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction activities, and food security for the ultra-poor project.
Over the past five years, the WFP has supported the government of Bangladesh in implementing maternal and child nutrition, school feeding, cash grant, and asset creation projects.

Indian held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An Indian national was arrested on Friday night with huge Bangladeshi coins and notes from a residential hotel under Bangshal Police Station in the city.
The arrestee was identified as Nur Hossain, 28, from Mominpur Road under Iqbalpur Police Station in Kolkata.
Police seized 10,000 pieces of Tk 1 coins, 10,000 pieces of Tk 2 notes and 5 and 10 paise coins of worth Tk 600 from Hotel Bait-us-Samir International.
Nur said he often smuggles Indian three-piece suits to Bangladesh. He said he bought the currency for the first time before returning to India.
Police said Nur has visited Bangladesh at least 20 times and he was carrying a valid visa during this visit. Police seized Nur's passport.

'Teach kids words first, then alphabets'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Education specialists yesterday put more emphasis on "introducing words first than teaching alphabets" as it will help children learn language spontaneously.
"Children will learn to say Baba (Father) first then they will learn Bengali alphabet 'Ba' which is in the word," they explained.
They called upon the authorities concerned to include the method in the curriculum of Class-I.
Room to Read, an international non-governmental organisation, organised a roundtable on "Bangla Language Teaching in Primary Education: Context and Enhancement" at the city's Cirdap Auditorium.
Research officer of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) Murshid Aktar and Chief Programme Officer of Room to Read's global office Dhir Jhingran presented separate keynote papers at the programme.
Murshid said pre-reading and pre-writing skills including concept of sound, phonology, phoneme and letter sound are not addressed in the existing curriculum. As a result it becomes hard for students to learn the language.

Phonology is the study of the sound of languages, and phoneme is the smallest unit of speech that can be used to make one word different from another word, such as the 'b' and 'd' in 'big' and 'dig'.
"The process of introducing letters seems traditional and there is no clear indication of how and which technique should be used. It hails the most customary form of learning, rather than communicative or creative notion," he added.
Murshid later pointed out some drawbacks in the curriculum of Class-I to Class-III.
Quoting a global study, which reveals that Bangladeshis spend less hours per annum to teach children language compared to citizens of neighbouring countries, Dhir Jhingran emphasised increasing the time allocation.
Professor of Institute of Education and Research Siddiqui Rahman suggested that supplementary books can be used as a tool to increase the readability of students, and proper training of the teachers.
Chairman of NCTB Prof Mostafa Kamaluddin said they have so far found 28 problems which will be addressed during the revision of the curriculum.

3 killed in road crashes

UNB, Dhaka
Three people were killed and 10 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla and Sherpur yesterday.
Two people were killed and 10 others wounded in a collision between a Comilla-bound microbus and a covered van at Barpara of Daudkandi upazila in Comilla yesterday.
The deceased were identified as microbus driver Russel, and passenger Tofail Ahmed, both residents of Daudkandi upazila.
Meanwhile, a banker, riding a motorbike, was killed when a Sherpur town-bound speedy truck knocked him down on his way to Jamalpur town on Sherpur-Jamalpur road at Nandir Bazar of Sadar upazila in Sherpur yesterday.
The deceased is Nazrul Islam Azad, 45, manager of Janata Bank Bakshiganj Dhanua-Kamalpur branch and resident of Sajarbarkhila in Sherpur town.

WORLD CAR FREE DAY ON SEPT 22 'Increase public buses to control traffic jam'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Speakers at a press conference yesterday demanded increase of public buses for reducing dependency on private cars.
Citizen Rights Movement (CRM) and Green Club of Bangladesh jointly organised the conference at Jatiya Press Club in the city ahead of the World Car Free Day on September 22, says a press release.
"If more people use bus, their dependency on private car would be reduced and it would be possible to control the intolerable traffic jam," said Tusher Rehman, general secretary of CRM.
The number of people a single bus can carry equals to that of 30 private cars, and aside from this increasing number of private car leads to higher environment pollution, accident, and transport costs, he added.
"Despite Dhaka being the capital city, it is becoming difficult to live in Dhaka and one of the main reasons for this is the terrible traffic condition, which is the result of poor transport system and large number of private cars," said Maj (ret'd) Md Mofizul Haq, chairman of CRM.
To reduce traffic congestion, they suggested that the government increase tax on import of private car and provide more car parking space.
They also suggested not issuing driving licences to new car drivers.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely
UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over all the seven divisions in 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 6:00pm today and rises at 5:46am tomorrow.
Country's highest temperature 32.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Rangamati and Chittagong.
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	28.4	25.7	85	85
Chittagong	29.5	24.0	81	92
Rajshahi	32.4	25.5	98	97
Rangpur	26.5	25.2	96	96
Khulna	30.2	25.0	97	94
Barisal	29.8	25.2	98	96
Sylhet	28.0	25.4	94	97
Cox's Bazar	30.5	25.2	88	95