

NEWS IN *brief*

Shuvo Mahalaya today

BSS, Dhaka

'Shuvo Mahalaya', beginning of Durga Puja, will be observed today.

The celebration of Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of Bangalee Hindu community, will also be started through the occasion.

Dhaka City Sarbojanin Puja Committee has taken various programmes, marking the day. The programmes include installation of Mahalaya Ghat and special puja (prayer) at the central puja pandal in Dhakeshwary National Temple. Special cultural programme will also be held in the evening.

RMG worker murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered the body of a garment worker from her husband's house in the city's Sabujhbagh.

Police said they recovered the body of Nipa Akhter, 25, wife of Sujon of South Manda in the area from the house at Danobar Goli in the morning.

The body, bore some marks of injuries, was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy. Nipa's husband fled the house. Police suspected that Nipa was hacked to death.

A relative of the deceased, Nazrul Islam, told the reporters that Sujon often beat up his wife over his unemployment issue.

'Law soon to make NGOs transparent'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to formulate a law to ensure transparency of those non-government organisations (NGOs) expanding its activities, said NGO Affairs Bureau Director General (DG) Nurun Nabi Talukder.

He made the remark while talking to the executive council members of Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) at the latter's office yesterday, said a press release.

DU Bangla dept reunion Oct 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Bangla Alumni will organise a reunion at Teacher-Student Centre on October 8 to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Bangla department, one of the oldest department of the university, says a press release.

All former students of the department are requested to register at the departmental office from 2:00pm to 4:00pm during the working days by October 3.

IIUC pro-VC detained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police detained Prof Dr Abu Bakar Rafeeq, pro-vice chancellor of the International Islamic University, Chittagong (IIUC), from Shah Amanat International Airport in the port city yesterday.

Police detained him in connection with September 19 incident at Muradpur intersection where Jamaat activists clashed with police at the time of a procession.

Pradip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge (OC) of Patenga Police Station, said a team of police and airport immigration police jointly detained Prof Bakar from airport around 6.00pm.

Mentionable, Abdul Mannan, assistant commissioner of Chittagong metropolitan police and two other police personnel were injured on September 19 incident.

ICDDR,B team returns from Somalia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ICDDR,B team that left for famine-hit Somalia to help it tackle cholera outbreak has returned home after providing treatment and training for 20 days, says a press release.

Based at the Banadir Hospital in Mogadishu and working under the banner of Muslim Aid, the team held a five-day training course for health professionals including nurses and community health workers at the hospital, which is receiving a huge number of patients with cholera and other cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) everyday.

Refrain from amassing illegal wealth

Hasina urges party men

UNB, New York

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina at a reception in New York urged the party men to live honest lives instead of amassing illegal wealth "like the family members of Khaleda Zia."

"You will not take your wealth to the grave. You will leave this world either with

fame or with a bad name.

"Money and wealth cannot be the only target. Rather, what you have given to the masses will be counted," said the prime minister.

The reception was held following a council of USA AL at the ballroom of Hotel Hilton on Sunday afternoon.

Money laundering by the "son of the

opposition leader was not unveiled by the government, rather a US federal court investigated and found that her son smuggled out a huge amount of money from Bangladesh," she said.

She reiterated that the ongoing drives against corruption and terrorism would continue and said the war criminals would certainly be tried according to the demand

of the masses.

She urged people to remain alert about any "destructive attempts and politics" of the Opposition in Parliament BNP and its ally Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami.

"When the country is progressing and the government started trying the war criminals, BNP is calling hartals and Jamaat cadres are creating panic among the masses by vandalising cars," said Hasina.

She said the country's people must not allow any loss to the national economy due to "destructive programmes" like hartal. "Jamaat will never be allowed to carry out destructive activities."

Hasina urged expatriate Bangladeshis to come forward and invest at home as they are being given various facilities on priority basis.

Considering the demand of the expatriates, she said the government is going to procure a new aircraft by this October or November to restart the Dhaka-New York flight.

She also requested the expatriates not to do anything which might tarnish the country's image abroad.

The elected presidents and secretaries at the council are Dr Siddiqur Rahman and Sajjadur Rahman Sajjad of AL, USA unit, Commander Nurunnabi and Emdad Chowdhury of NY city unit and Mujibur Rahman Miah and Shahin Azmol of NY State AL respectively.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses a reception in her honour in New York on Sunday.

PHOTO: PID

CHEQUE BOUNCE
Charge framed against ex-BNP lawmaker Monju

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charge against former BNP lawmaker Mujibur Rahman Monju (Kishoreganj-6) in a cheque bounce case.

Monju claimed himself innocent and demanded justice before the court after the charge was read out to him.

Judge Al Asad Mohammad Asifuzzaman of the Special Tribunal-11 fixed January 24, 2012 to start trial of the case.

According to the prosecution, it was alleged that Monju appointed Rezaul Karim, a garments businessman, a power of attorney and took Tk 1.20 crore from him for construction of a multi-storied building on his (Monju) land which he was given allotment from Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk).

Later, Rezaul pressed Monju to pay the money for delaying construction and Monju gave a cheque against the money on October 14 in 2009. But the cheque was dishonoured after it was submitted to the bank for withdrawal of money on November 23 the same year.

Rezaul filed the case against Monju with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on November 7 of 2009.

Another case filed against Monju for acquiring wealth worth Tk 74.12 lakh beyond his known sources of income and concealing information about it, is now pending with the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka.

Reform Saarc to ensure food security: Experts

UNB, Dhaka

Food experts stressed the need for regional actions for the promotion of fair and competitive food market and effective operationalisation of the Saarc Food Bank.

They also suggested pursuing reforms of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) in areas that affect the food security of the poor.

The experts were speaking at a discussion on "Food Justice in a Resource Constrained South Asia," jointly organised by South Asia Watch on Trade,

Economics and Environment (Sawtee) and Oxfam in Kathmandu yesterday.

"Unless the governments fix the broken food system, the region is going to face the most extreme situation of food insecurity in the near future," said Cherian Mathews, Oxfam deputy regional director in Asia.

Mathews said despite being agriculture-based, this region houses 40 percent of the world's most hungry people.

Dr Posh Raj Pandey, the Executive Chairman of Sawtee, said the situation has further worsened due to the South Asian governments' and development partners' negligence on agricultural

sector, and suggested increased investment in this sector.

"We've already seen what the food and financial crises have done to millions of poor. The protests ended but the impacts have remained with the prices still high. It's time for the governments to protect the universal right to make sure nobody goes to bed hungry," said Dr Pandey.

Oxfam observed that the South Asian governments have largely failed to maintain food security of their population because of the broken food system and suggested going for reform in Saarc food policy.



Around 2,000 students of Jagannath University take to streets during demonstration at Roy Saheb Bazar in Old Dhaka yesterday demanding the government continue financing for the institution. (Story on Page 1) PHOTO: STAR

MU AHMED'S DEATH
SC Bar won't greet judges after vacation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) yesterday decided to refrain from greeting the Supreme Court judges on October 9, the day it reopens after an ongoing vacation, in protest against the death of pro-BNP lawyer MU Ahmed.

The SCBA decided this at a general meeting at its South Hall, with SCBA President Khandker Mahub Hossain in the chair.

Ahmed died at a city hospital on August 26, 16 days after he suffered a heart attack in police custody.

Traditionally the judges and lawyers of both the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the SC meet and exchange greetings on the court's resumption after its annual autumn vacation.

Khandker Mahub told the meeting that MU Ahmed might not have died, if the HC judges had granted him anticipatory bail in the case filed by police on charges of assaulting them and preventing them from carrying out their duties.

Had Ahmed been granted bail, he would not have been arrested and tortured in custody and died, insisted Mahub.

He also pointed out that the HC denied anticipatory bails to 14 lawyers including Ahmed in a normal case, although many accused of serious offences get anticipatory bail.

SCBA Secretary Bodruddoza Badal, Assistant Secretary Kamruzzaman Mamun and Treasurer Fahima Nasrin Munni, among others, spoke at the meeting.

Meanwhile, pro-BNP lawyers' organisation Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (JAF) yesterday staged demonstrations at different district courts in this connection.

Alleged mugger beaten

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob beat an alleged mugger and recovered a foreign pistol and two bullets from him in front of Babu Bazar rice market in Old Dhaka yesterday.

Police later admitted the arrested Mohammad Raja, 25, to Mitford Hospital.

Witnesses said Rakib, a shop employee, was on a rickshaw carrying Tk 5 lakh in a bag around 2:00pm when three muggers appeared, fired two blank shots and tried to snatch the bag.

On hearing the shots and Rakib's cries, the locals gave chase and managed to catch Raja, they said.

TRAVEL AGENT'S FRAUDULENCE

Victims passing days in uncertainty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defrauded two years ago by a travel agent promising them of jobs abroad, at least 25 youths are now passing their days in uncertainty and helplessness.

The victims at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the city yesterday claimed police were not cooperating in this regard.

One victim Khalil Talukder said many of them sold their lands and properties and took high interest loans to collect around Tk 1.5 to Tk 2.5 lakh each as demanded by the travel agent Kazi Bilal.

But Kazi, owner of Mita Travels and Tours in the city's Naya Paltan, closed office within two months of getting the money and fled, he said. "I collected Tk 26 lakh from nine youths in my village to go abroad with me. But now I cannot go back to my village," said another victim Mohammad Jewel of Dash Hazar village of Faridpur.

A few weeks after they found the office closed, they complained to Paltan police

over the matter, he said.

Detective police detained Kazi nine months ago. In presence of police, he gave Jewel two bank cheques, one worth Tk 7 lakh and another Tk 19 lakh, both of which bounced, said Jewel.

By the time, Jewel found the cheques worthless, police had released Kazi. He then filed a case accusing Kazi of fraudulence with Paltan Police Station, he added.

A couple of months ago, Kazi opened another travel agency VVS Travel Agency in the same area. When the jobseekers went there asking for refunds, the agency employees beat them up, Khalil alleged.

The victims later filed three cases against Kazi and other officials with Paltan Police Station, he said.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge Shahidul Haq of Paltan Police Station denied the allegations of negligence and said they could not arrest Kazi as he is absconding abroad.

The victims demanded arrest of the agency officials and quick refund of their money.

PM visits ailing Humayun Ahmed

BSS, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited ailing eminent writer and playwright Humayun Ahmed at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) in New York on Sunday night.

"The prime minister stayed there for some time and inquired about his treatment," said the prime minister's (PM) Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

She also wished early recovery of Humayun, who has been suffering from colon cancer.

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni and Bangladesh Ambassador to US Akramul Quader and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Dr AK Abdul Momen accompanied the PM during the visit.

Hasina is now in New York to join the 66th United Nations General Assembly session at the UN headquarters.

She addressed the session on Saturday, presenting her "peace model" based on the people's empowerment.

During her 11-day visit, she also attended a number of events organised by the UN secretary-general on counterterrorism, communicable diseases, women empowerment and food security apart from a series of bilateral meetings.

During her stay in the USA, she will undergo a medical checkup in Connecticut and is expected to return home on Thursday night.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

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

The sun sets in the capital at 5:51pm today and rises at 5:49am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Srimongal and lowest 23.0 degrees Celsius at 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	33.0	27.0	71	63
Chittagong	31.0	25.5	74	82
Rajshahi	32.5	25.4	89	97
Rangpur	31.0	25.5	89	91
Khulna	33.0	26.6	84	84
Barisal	32.5	25.2	84	80
Sylhet	32.4	24.0	81	83
Cox's Bazar	31.8	24.0	78	86