

NEWS IN *brief*

Malaysian healthcare expo begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Aiming to promote healthcare facilities and health tourism, a three-day long expo "Malaysian healthcare: Seminar and exhibition" began at a hotel in Chittagong city today.

The Malaysian Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) of Health Ministry of Malaysia is organising the expo, to be inaugurated by Chittagong City Corporation Mayor M Manjur Alam as the chief guest.

The event was declared by MHTC Chief Executive Officer Dr Mary Wong Lai Lin at a press conference yesterday.

The exhibition will feature six Malaysian hospitals, from the 49 healthcare facilities recognised by the ministry, offering a wide range of healthcare services.

Among the seminars to be featured at the expo are "Coronary Artery Disease: An update on management", "Minimal access surgery in gynaecology" and "Neurology management of stroke".

Second trial of transit begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

The unloading of MV Gulf-4, the second ship carrying the special consignment for transit and transshipment on trial basis, began at Ashuganj River Port yesterday.

Carrying 867 tonnes of Indian "galvanised steel plate sheets" from Kolkata, the ship berthed at the port last Monday.

Of the total cargo, 200 tonnes were unloaded and sent to Akhaura Land Port on 15 Bangladeshi trucks yesterday. They would be sent to Agartala in India after Durga Puja, said Engineer Md Farook Ahmed, project coordinator of Gulf Orient Seaways.

Army sergeant stabbed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed an army sergeant and snatched money from him in the city's Sayadabad early yesterday.

Anwar Hossain, 40, of Chittagong Cantonment was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with stab injuries at his right leg and right cheek.

Anwar told the camp police at DMCH that after getting down from a bus at Sayadabad, he took a rickshaw to go to Gulistan but on the way he fell victim to mugging around 5:30am.

He said three to four muggers with knives intercepted his rickshaw and asked him to handover what he had.

As he denied, the muggers locked in tussle with him and at one stage they snatched the bag, which contained Tk 33,000 and a mobile set and stabbed him, he said.

Anwar reached Sayadabad from the cantonment to go to his village home in Dohar of Dhaka.

Tourism Educators' Assoc formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tourism Educators' Association of Bangladesh (TEAB) was formed yesterday in a bid to enrich tourism learning through quality education, research and training among the students of the higher educational institutions.

Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique inaugurated the activities of the newly formed organisation at the conference centre of the Faculty of Business Studies in the university.

Prof Dr Sayed Rashidul Hasan presided over the programme.

Gang impersonating DB snatches motorcycle, beats rider

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of four criminals impersonating detective police snatched a motorcycle after beating the rider with iron rods on Mohakhali Flyover yesterday.

The injured rider Mohammad Payel, 35, was heading towards Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with a relative around 3:30am when the gang stopped him, said sources at Dhaka Medical College, where Payel was treated.

Claiming to be detective police, they pretended to check the documents. Suddenly, one of them rode away with the motorcycle. Payel got beaten when he tried to resist, added the sources.



Rushanara Ali, the first British MP of Bangladesh origin, calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

CG needed to prevent rigging in polls

Says Akbar Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid a standoff between the government and the main opposition over the caretaker government (CG) system, former adviser Akbar Ali Khan yesterday said the system is necessary to prevent rigging in the polls.

"It is not possible for the Election Commission alone to hold a free, fair and neutral election. It might stop a small-scale rigging," the former caretaker government adviser told a roundtable discussion at the city's Jatiya Press Club.

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a coalition of individuals across Bangladesh working to achieve good governance, organised

the discussion styled Doable for Fair and Neutral Polls.

Caretaker government is not an issue related to law; rather it is a social agreement, which cannot be voided one-sidedly on the pretext of a legal obligation, observed Akbar.

The issue came to the forefront after parliament on June 30 abolished the system through adopting the 15th amendment to the constitution. The amendment made a provision for holding general elections under an elected government.

Scrapping of the system triggered huge resentment among most of the political parties, constitutional experts and different socio-political organisations.

Speakers at the meeting said scrapping of the caretaker government system has halted the path of peaceful transfer of power to a great extent.

They also feared the country's democratic system might be under serious threat if the standoff between the government and the opposition continues.

Former caretaker government adviser M Hafizuddin said holding national polls is a huge task, which is almost impossible for the EC alone to manage. "The Election Commission might not be able to ensure neutrality of the administration and law enforcement agencies with a partisan government in power."

Though the government is speaking about strengthening the EC, there is no action to this end, mentioned another former adviser ASM Shahjahan.

Pointing to the emergency act, Akbar Ali Khan said though the last caretaker government did many bad things, they held the election fairly. "They did bad things using the emergency act. Therefore, we should rethink about it and amend some of its sections."

Akbar also questioned the legitimacy of keeping 10 percent unelected members in the cabinet.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar and columnist Syed Abul Maksud also addressed the roundtable meeting.

\$ 3.5m Swiss support for safe labour migration

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Switzerland will provide US\$ 3.5 million to support a project aimed at making labour migration more organised and safer, especially for the disadvantaged groups.

The project titled "Promoting decent work through improved migration policy and its application in Bangladesh" was inked at the conference hall of Economic Relations Division (ERD) in the city yesterday.

Iqbal Mahmood, secretary of ERD, Dr Derek Mueller, head of Cooperation of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Andre Bogui, country director of International Labour Organisation (ILO), signed the project document in this regard.

According to a press release of Switzerland Embassy in Dhaka, labour migration is currently the main source of income for more than 7 million people in Bangladesh.

The particular project will contribute to labour migration related policies and strengthen institutions to support and protect interests of the new and returning migrant workers.

An estimated number of 0.5 million migrant workers per year are expected to benefit from this project.

The ILO is the main implementing agency of this project.

The project will work in close collaboration with the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and other relevant ministries, national and international agencies.



Accused in the BDR carnage case appear before a makeshift court at Bakshibazar in the city yesterday. The detainees, handcuffed with each other and fettered in the legs, face inconveniences as they get down from the prison van. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

The law is what matters

Says BDR case judge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The judge presiding over the trial of the BDR carnage case said yesterday the court never expects anyone to be hanged. He said this in response to a defence lawyer's remark directed at the prosecution.

"We expect that every accused will be acquitted, but also that finally things will take place as per the law," said Judge Mohammad Zohurul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court.

Earlier, defence lawyer Advocate Faruq Ahmed had said in exasperation, "Oh, you can hang many innocent accused and we cannot even cross-examine the witness properly!"

The lawyer expressed his feelings when prosecution lawyers objected to the questions which Faruq put to Lt Col Mohammad Abu Tasnim, the third prosecution witness in the case.

A smiling judge asked Faruq how he

knew that the accused would be hanged. Faruq did not reply.

Five defence counsels yesterday cross-examined the witness, asking "largely irrelevant questions", which evidently left the judge irked.

"The whole world is watching the trial. Cross examine the witness for necessity, not for fashion," an apparently annoyed judge admonished the defence lawyers.

The defence will resume its cross-examination of Tasnim on October 12 as the makeshift court at Bakshibazar rose for the day yesterday.

During the four-hour proceedings beginning at 9:15am, prosecution and defence lawyers were locked in heated altercations over the relevance of the questions put to the witness.

Earlier on September 29, the defence lawyers began cross-examining the witness.

On September 21, Tasnim provided

a vivid account of how the mutiny broke out at the Darbar Hall in Pikhana during BDR Week in February 2009. He also dwelt at length on his agonising hours in captivity with seven of his family members.

Tasnim was present at the Darbar Hall on the morning of February 25, 2009 when sepoy Moyeen suddenly appeared on the stage with firearms, which was the first sign of a bloody mutiny that would leave at least 74 people, 57 of them army officers, murdered.

Altogether 824 BDR jawans and 23 civilians have been charged in the case. The charges against them include arson, theft, looting, dumping dead bodies, holding people hostage and destroying property.

Earlier, Nabojyoti Khisa, the complainant and first prosecution witness of the case, and second prosecution witness Inspector Kamal Uddin were cross-examined by the defence.

War crimes trial a poll pledge

PM tells Rushanara

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has taken initiatives for trial of the war criminals to fulfil its election pledge.

She said this when Bangladesh-origin British parliament member Rushanara Ali met her at the Prime Minister Office (PMO).

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters after the meeting.

The prime minister informed the British lawmaker that the trial of those persons who committed crimes against humanity during the War of Liberation in 1971 is going on.

They also discussed climate change issue and Hasina sought British cooperation in implementing climate change mitigation programmes in Bangladesh.

She also highlighted various steps her government has already undertaken to combat the adverse impacts of climate change in the country.

Hasina said her government is working hard for strengthening democracy and democratic institutions of the country since it assumed office through a free, fair and neutral election held in December 2008.

Rushanara highly praised the dynamic and visionary leadership of Hasina and said Bangladesh has achieved tremendous successes in the fields of agriculture, education, health and women empowerment under her eligible and pragmatic leadership.

She also praised the present government for taking pragmatic initiatives to face climate change impacts on the country.

TREATMENT OF NIZAMI Dhaka Central Jail super summoned

UNB, Dhaka

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday summoned the Dhaka Central Jail superintendent to explain the allegation that the prison authorities have violated the tribunal's earlier order on ensuring treatment to Jamaat-e-Islami ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami.

Altaf Hossain, the jail super, was asked to explain his position before the tribunal on October 23, according to an order passed by the three-member tribunal headed by Justice M Nizamul Huq following a brief hearing on a contempt petition.

Nizami, who has been in custody since June 29, 2010 over war crimes charge, filed the petition against the jail super under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973.

The tribunal also issued an interim order asking the jail authorities to comply with its earlier order on ensuring the detained petitioner's treatment as per the rules.

Nizami's counsel M Tajul Islam submitted the petition saying that the jail super did not comply with the tribunal's April 21 order asking the Dhaka Central Jail authorities to provide medical treatment to Nizami at Birdem Hospital, if so recommended by his physician.

Nizami is now suffering from acute arthritis (joint pain) and it is getting worse day by day without treatment, the counsel said.

Tajul Islam said Nizami's physician on August 24 advised him to take physiotherapy at Birdem at regular intervals. Despite repeated requests, the jail authorities did not pay heed to the advice, which constitutes "contempt of court", he said.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:42pm today and rises at 5:52am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

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	34.5	26.0	67	69
Chittagong	31.2	25.9	76	82
Rajshahi	34.6	25.5	80	77
Rangpur	33.5	25.3	73	69
Khulna	35.0	27.0	84	88
Barisal	33.4	25.5	73	82