

NEWS IN *brief*

Return of Bangladeshi girl Dec 4

BSS, Dhaka

The government will bring back Baishakhi, a Bangladeshi girl who lost her mother in a recent train accident in India, to the country on December 4.

The Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi has made the arrangements for her return, the foreign ministry sources said yesterday.

Baishakhi lost her mother Janu Begum and a younger brother as they fell down from an unknown train in Andhra Pradesh on October 4. Their bodies were recovered from near the rail track the next day and were buried in Andhra Pradesh on November 4.

Baishakhi underwent treatment at a government hospital in India.

Baby found dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-year-old girl was found dead and her body was left in a roadside dustbin stashed in a sack near Ansar camp area at Section No-1 of Mirpur in the city yesterday.

On information, police recovered the body from the dustbin around 9:00am.

The newly appointed US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W Mozena speaks to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during a courtesy call at the Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO



ZIA ORPHANAGE CASE

Charge framing deferred again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday deferred for the eleventh time the hearing on charge framing in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case till February 2.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, her elder son Tarique Rahman and four others are accused in the graft case.

Judge Mohammmed Mozzamel Hossain of the Special Judge Court-3 passed the order after the defence lawyer for Khaleda and Tarique submitted a petition seeking the adjournment of the charge hearing.

Advocate Sanaullah Mia said in the petition that an earlier High Court rule related to the case is still unresolved. So he prayed for an adjournment on the hearing.

WEATHER TODAY

Fall in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary or partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Rain or thundershower may occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barisal and Chittagong division. Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:25am.

Country's highest temperature 30.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and Bogra and lowest 13.2 degrees at Jessore.

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	29.3	17.4	58	63
Chittagong	28.0	17.6	79	69
Rajshahi	28.0	14.2	85	81
Rangpur	28.7	17.0	80	75
Khulna	27.0	16.5	86	76
Barisal	28.2	15.5	90	90
Sylhet	30.2	17.8	62	73
Cox's Bazar	30.0	18.4	63	75

Strong US-Bangla ties his goal

Says new US envoy; meets PM

STAR REPORT

US Ambassador to Dhaka Dan W Mozena yesterday said he aims for a strong strategic partnership between Bangladesh and the United States.

"This is my goal, this is my dream," the ambassador told journalists at his maiden press conference at the American Club in the capital's Gulshan.

Earlier in the day, he paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office.

During the meeting, Mozena said his country would provide all-out support in building a prosperous, democratic and peaceful Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Elaborating on the strategic partnership issue at the press conference, the new US envoy said it would be aimed at creating a forum to discuss issues like counter-terrorism, food security, climate change and energy.

In reply to a query, he said Washington looks to sign a Trade and Investment

Framework Agreement (Tifa) with Dhaka to set up a platform for discussing all issues related to trade and investment.

Mozena said Bangladesh has a huge strategic importance to the US because it is a moderate democratic Muslim country. "This is a model country for others."

About Grameen Bank, he said it is a unique organisation. "Today, I shared my experience with the prime minister about microcredit and Grameen Bank."

He hoped the process to select a new managing director for Grameen would be expedited; someone who can ensure dynamism in the organisation's activities would be appointed to the post.

Asked about the political stalemate over the next general election, Mozena said, "We hope all key political players will work together to create a productive democratic process in the interest of the people of Bangladesh."

Gen Mubeen meets India's top military hierarchy

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Aiming to strengthen defence ties with India, visiting Bangladesh Army Chief Gen Md Abdul Mubeen yesterday met India's top military hierarchy including Defence Minister AK Antony and the services chiefs.

"The Bangladeshi army chief met the defence minister, Army Chief Gen VK Singh, and IAF Chief Marshal NAK Brown", the defence ministry officials said here.

On a five-day visit to India since November 28, Gen Mubeen started his tour by reviewing the Passing Out Parade (PoP) at National Defence Academy (NDA) in Khadakwasla, 40km from western Indian city of Pune.

SWINDLING OF TK 40.83CR
Three bank staff among 22 sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A senior official of Social Islami Bank Limited (SIBL) sued 22 people including three officials of the bank following the allegation of swindling Tk 40.83 crore out of customers at its Bogra branch.

Md Shariful Islam, senior vice-president of the bank, lodged the case with Bogra Sadar police station on Wednesday night.

He alleged that the branch's Manager Rafiqul Islam, first assistant vice president Atikul Kabir and senior executive officer Mahbubur Rahman assisted the 19 businessmen by channelling the money to their accounts from October 23, 2008 to November 3, this year by showing fake deposits.

Earlier, in November this year, local businessmen Md Arif Rezwan, son Md Abu Bakkar Siddique, proprietor of M/S Siddique and Abdul Quddus, proprietor of M/S Abdul Quddus and Brothers, raised the allegation of channelling the money from their bank accounts at the branch.

The businessmen also alleged the SIBL audit committee chairman Sultan Mahmud Chowdhury was involved in the scam.

The bank formed two committees consisted of its 10 officials to probe the allegation. The Bangladesh Bank also launched separate investigation.

The probe bodies found that the businessmen including Firoz Ahmed, Altaf Hossain Mamun, Mahbubur Rahman, and Jahurul Haque Momin were involved in the scam.

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