

NEWS IN *brief*

US lauds Bangladesh police

DIPLomatic CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador in Dhaka Dan Mozena has extended his appreciation to the Bangladesh police force for their effort to protect and serve the people of the country.

In recognition of Police Week 2012, Mozena in a statement yesterday said a professional police force plays an important role in establishing rule of law and facilitating justice across all sectors of society.

"The US government is committed to the ongoing development of the Bangladeshi police forces with programs such as the Antiterrorism Assistance Program, the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, and community policing programs," he said on behalf the US embassy.

BCL founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the Awami League, will celebrate its 64th founding anniversary today.

To mark the day, BCL has chalked out different programmes across the country.

The BCL leaders and workers will place wreaths at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi at 8:00am. They will bring out a colourful procession on Dhaka University (DU) campus at 11:00am.

The organisation will arrange a voluntary blood donation programme and debate competition and will screen the film "Guerrilla" at the auditorium of Teacher-Student Center (TSC) of DU in the evening tomorrow.

The next day the BCL leaders will meet AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

The BCL was founded on this day in 1948 under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed BCL will also observe the day marking its 64th founding anniversary amid various programmes.

IFIC Bank launches literary award

METRO DESK

IFIC Bank launched a literary award to encourage creative writing in Bangla language and literature.

The bank Chairman Salman F Rahman made announcement of the IFIC Bank Literary Award-2011 at a press conference in the city's Hotel Purbani on Saturday, says a press release.

Chairman of the Executive Committee Mohammad Lutfar Rahman, Member of the Board of Directors Dr Mohammad Ali Khan, Managing Director Mohammad Abdullah and other top officials of the bank attended the programme.

Interested writers, publishers and readers can get detailed information about the award from the bank website www.ificbankbd.com. Each of the two winning writers will receive Tk 5 lakh, a crest and a certificate, the chairman said.

Nine geckos rescued in Tongi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Forest (DoF) rescued nine geckos from Tongi on Monday afternoon.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of the department rescued the geckos from a house in Tongi Bazar area, where they had been kept for smuggling, said a press release yesterday.

A case was filed with Tongi Police Station in this connection.

An organised gang smuggles geckos to China via Myanmar, the press release added.

The department also rescued 66 birds, including 33 parrots and six doves and a white-breasted water hen, on Sunday from the area.

The DoF recovered three owls from a house at New Eskaton in the city and released them into Mirpur National Park the same day.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reviews the annual parade of Bangladesh police at Rajarbagh Police Lines in the city yesterday on the occasion of Police Week - 2012.

PHOTO: PMO



Save my daughter

Urges divorced woman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sanjena, a three-year-old girl, has been fighting for life as she has been suffering from a complicated heart disease since her birth.

Sanjena has been taking treatment for the congenital heart disease from Dhaka Shishu Hospital and National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases since her birth on August 5, 2008, said Parvin Talukdar Priya, mother of the baby.

Parvin, a resident of Dinnath Sen Road of Gendaria, said physicians advised her to undergo heart surgery to recover from the disease.

"As I am a divorcee and my financial condition is very bad, it is not possible for me to bear the expenses of the surgery spending about Tk 8 to 10 lakh," said Parvin.

Parvin requested the well-off people of the country to come forward to save her daughter.

"Please save Sanjena's life as she is my last resort," said Parvin.

Her Saving Account No 002091049, Sonali Bank Limited, Distilary Road Branch, Dhaka and contact No-01947599745.

Dhaka keen to import 1,000MW electricity from Kathmandu

DIPLomatic CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday reiterated Bangladesh's interest in importing 1,000 MW electricity from the Sapt-Kosi high dam project to meet its ever increasing demand for power.

She wants Bangladesh to be an equity partner or shareholder of the project which is 110km off Thakurgaon district.

"This is the most opportune moment for the countries of South Asia to explore synergies for mutual benefit," she told this when the newly appointed Nepalese Ambassador in Dhaka Hari Kumar Shrestha called on her at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Dipu Moni also stressed the need for working together by the countries in the region to harness hydro-power and water resources for mutual benefit.

She noted that Bangladesh had already offered Nepal and Bhutan access to Mongla and Chittagong ports and said Bangladesh is keen to see the two countries using the ports.

Welcoming the new ambassador, the foreign minister said Bangladesh attaches high importance to its relations with Nepal as a close neighbour.

Dipu Moni said Bangladesh is observing with great interest the ongoing "Peace Process" in Nepal and strongly supports the forward march of democratic institution-building in the country.

She expressed her hope that the aspirations of the people of Nepal would be fulfilled with adoption of a constitution that best suits their needs.

During the meeting, the foreign minister and Nepalese envoy discussed various aspects of mutual interest and exchanged views on ways to infuse dynamism into bilateral relations.

She noted out that bilateral trade was far below the potential and sought ambassador's personal initiative to get private sectors actively involved in enhancing trade relations between the two countries.

She expressed satisfaction that

several small initiatives, including upgrading of facilities at land ports/land customs stations and signing of an SOP between Bangladesh and India that allows Nepalese cargo vehicles to enter up to 200 metres from zero point at Banglabandha would help facilitate bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Nepal.

Dipu Moni also mentioned signing of addendum to an MoU between Bangladesh and India granting Rohanpur-Singabad as an additional route for rail transit to Nepal. 50,000 MT of fertiliser has already been transported through this route as a one time case.

She also mentioned that the government plans to complete multi-gauge conversion of Birol-Radhikapur railway sector by this year, which would greatly facilitate passage of Nepalese cargo.

The foreign minister assured the new ambassador of Nepal of all cooperation in carrying out his duties in Dhaka and in further deepening and widening the bilateral cooperation.

25 injured in clash over land grabbing

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least 25 people were injured in an attack, launched by a gang of hired miscreants and Ansar members of a private housing firm, as they tried to resist land grabbing on Kolatoli bypass road in the town yesterday morning.

During the incident, the Ansar members and the miscreants fired at least 10 rounds of bullet targeting the local people, said witnesses.

Injured Khadiza Begum, 25, Nurul Anwar, 25, Anwara Begum, 40, Nur Ayesha, 37, Nurunnesa, 35, Dil Mohammad, 24, Anwar Hossain, 22, Baby Akhter, 28, Humayun, 25, and Nurul Absar, 22, were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Later, Anwara Begum, Nurul Anwar and Baby Akhter were shifted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Police and witnesses said the workers of RF Builders started erecting a boundary wall occupying a road used for people's movement at Kolatoli Adarsha village in the town. Following the incident, the locals went to the spot and tried to resist them. At one stage, some miscreants attacked their woman protesters.

When the others locked into the clash to save their co-villagers the Ansar members started beating them.

Two top US officials due today

DIPLomatic CORRESPONDENT

Two top US government officials, including a congresswoman, will arrive in Dhaka today as part of the Obama administration's efforts to promote policies on issues related to women, peace and security of Bangladesh.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum and Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer will be visiting the country to meet the government, community and civil society leaders here who are involved in advancing the rights and well-being of women and girls and to promote the US policy on women, health and education.

During their visit, the two will engage with the host country officials and non-governmental organisations on issues such as maternal and child health, improving girls' access to education, child marriage, gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, and the role of women in climate change, says a press release of US Embassy in Dhaka yesterday.

Ambassador Verveer will arrive in Bangladesh on a three-day visit and depart for Nepal on January 6 while Congresswoman McCollum will continue her visit till January 10.



President Zillur Rahman gives away a gold medal to a successful graduate at the 15th convocation of North South University in the city yesterday. On his right is NSU Vice Chancellor Dr Hafiz G A Siddiqi.

PHOTO: COURTESY

BANGLA-JAPAN DIPLOMATIC TIES Celebration begins today

DIPLomatic CORRESPONDENT

Japan and Bangladesh have chalked out three-month-long celebrations, beginning today, to mark the 40th anniversary of their diplomatic ties, said official sources.

Bangladesh Institute of International Strategic Studies (BISS) with support from Japan Foundation will begin a two-day international conference today styled "Prospects for peace and security through regional cooperation in 21st century South Asia: The role of Japan".

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Lt Col (ret) Muhammad Faruk Khan and Japanese Ambassador in Dhaka Shiro Sadoshima will attend the inaugural session as the chief guest and special guest respectively while BISS Director General Major Gen Muhammad Imrul Quayes will chair the session.

Related papers will be presented during the two sessions today while several scholars from South Asian countries tomorrow will take part in different working sessions on Japan's relations with Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Meanwhile, Jahangirnagar University will

organise an international conference styled "Towards oriental theatre studies" from January 7-9.

A joint press conference marking the anniversary by Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and the Japanese ambassador will be held on February 9 in Dhaka.

From February 15-17, a delegation of Spare Industry mission in Japan will visit Bangladesh to launch a satellite here that will help the country to forecast weather and prepare maps of landscape, river situation and the overall geography of Bangladesh.

There will be a speech contest on Japanese and Bangla languages on February 17 while a group of scientist from Japan will visit Bangladesh during February 24-25 for a joint science symposium.

On February 28-29, a business delegation comprising of leading Japanese companies and investors will visit Bangladesh with the aim to explore investment opportunities here.

On March 3, a reception will be organised to commemorate the 1st anniversary of the great east Japan earthquake and the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Japan.

Adopt curricula relevant to era of globalisation

President tells NSU convocation

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged all public and private universities in the country to adopt the educational curricula which are relevant to the demands of globalisation.

"During this era of globalisation, there is no alternative to modern and science-based education," he said this while he was presiding over the 15th convocation of North South University (NSU) on its campus in the city's Bashundhara residential area.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid attended the convocation as special guest while President of Bangkok University Prof Dr Mathana Santiwat was the Convocation Speaker.

Zillur said apart from modern curricula, it is also the responsibility of all educational institutions to correctly present the country's history, civilisation, culture, and liberation war before the nation.

"I urge the highest educational institu-

tions of the country to play pioneer role for the nation's welfare being imbued with patriotism, not merely for making profit."

The president said the university authorities would have to increase all sorts of facilities, including student scholarships, in a bid to facilitate higher education for the country's poor and meritorious students.

Describing education as an ongoing process, he said the trend of education depends on a country's socio-economic, geographical, cultural and political situation. "Education acts as a bridge between the present and the past, and also with the future."

A total of 1,074 students were conferred under-graduate and post-graduate degrees at the convocation.

NSU Foundation Chairman M Shahjahan and Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqui also spoke on the occasion.



Fall in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, Met office said.

Day and Night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:24pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 29.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 12.4 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	22.4	17.2	92	72
Chittagong	26.5	16.6	83	64
Rajshahi	21.2	14.6	95	88
Rangpur	19.5	13.0	92	86
Khulna	24.8	16.0	98	91
Barisal	25.6	15.5	100	86
Sylhet	24.3	15.0	98	85