

NEWS IN *brief*

President leaves for Singapore

BSS, Dhaka
President Zillur Rahman left Dhaka last night for Singapore on a ten-day visit by a regular Singapore Airlines flight for a medical checkup at the Mount Elizabeth Hospital.

The flight took off from the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 11:55pm. He is expected to return home on April 10. Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni, Jute and Textiles Minister Abdul Latif Siddiqui, Dean of the diplomatic corps, chiefs of the three services and high civil and military officials were present at the airport to see him off. Family members, secretaries of the president's office and his personal physician are accompanying the president. Zillur underwent medical checkups at the same hospital in September last year.

Shibir activist held at CU

CU CORRESPONDENT
Police caught an alleged activist of Islami Chhatra Shibir, Chittagong University (CU) unit, yesterday on charge of barring students from attending the classes. The detainee is Md Abdul Hannan, a third year student of CU's Arabic department. Proctor Siraj Ud-Doullah said Hannan was held in connection with barring students of the department from taking part in the classes. Mentionable, Shibir enforced indefinite strike in the university from March 18 placing four-point demand including formation of judicial probe committee to investigate February 8 clash between Shibir and Bangladesh Chhatra League activists that killed two students. Following the clash, the university went on a closure for long. However, the academic activities resumed from March 18.

Two held with firearms, ammo

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Police arrested two alleged muggers and seized arms and ammunition from their possessions in front of Port Market in the port city yesterday. The arrestees are Golam Sarwar, 35, of Barguna and Sazzad Hossain, 25, of Comilla. Acting on a tip-off, a team of Halishahar police conducted a drive in the area around 1:30pm and arrested the duo at gun point while they were going to the port area from Chotopul by a CNG-run three-wheeler. The police seized a foreign revolver with six rounds of bullets, a locally made gun with two rounds of bullets, two knives and a machete from their possessions, said Halishahar Police Station OC Mohammed Jahedul Islam.

Mozena visits school

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W Mozena met students and their parents of a local primary school in Bandarban yesterday. USAID Mission Director Richard Greene and several characters of Sisimpur, a TV programme, were present during the visit, said a press release. Mozena also played games with the school kids and talked to the parents to encourage good guardianship, it added. The US government has funded over US dollar 14 million to the TV programme Sisimpur with the help of USAID since 2004. This school gets support from USAID-funded Sisimpur outreach project, it added.

Body found on Karnaphuli bank

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
An unidentified body of a boy, wearing a red and black shirt and black jeans and aged around nine years, was recovered by police from Sekandar Chairman Ghat on the east bank of Karnaphuli river in Chittagong city yesterday. Police suspect that the boy, who had no signs of injury, might have drowned around a day ago and floated downstream from Shikalbaha under Patiya upazila. An unnatural death case was filed with Bakalia Police Station in this connection.



A team of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) knocks down an illegal structure during a drive to clear the banks of Gulshan lake in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Govt fooling people over maritime victory

Says Mirza Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir at a discussion yesterday said the government was fooling people through "deception" over the maritime victory against Myanmar. "Both Awami League (AL) and Myanmar are celebrating the victory. Why is the government not disclosing the full verdict regarding the maritime boundary dispute with Myanmar," he said. Swadhinata Forum, a pro-opposition forum, organised the discussion at Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh in the city's Kakrail marking the Independence Day. On March 14, Bangladesh won a landmark verdict at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, which sustained its claim to 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic and territorial rights in the Bay of Bengal rejecting the claims of Myanmar. The ruling AL is organising many programmes to celebrate the victory, giving

credit to the prime minister (PM). All the political parties, except AL and Jatiya Party, want the restoration of the caretaker government system to ensure free and fair elections. People will not forgive the government if it fails to restore the system within the 90-day ultimatum, said Fakhrul. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia issued the ultimatum on her March 12 rally. "The government is pushing the country towards uncertainty and chaos by snatching people's right to vote," he added. Criticising the PM for using indecent words in her statements, Fakhrul said the PM should give statements which inspires the new generation to follow her. Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, Abdullah Al Noman and Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal also spoke at the meeting, presided over by Swadhinata Forum President Abu Naser Rahmatullah.

**WORLD AUTISM DAY
Law to protect autistic children soon**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government will enact a law to protect the rights, including the right to property, of autistic children. The Social Welfare Minister Enamul Hoque Mustafa Shaheed came up with the government decision yesterday, a day before it goes to observe 'world autism day' across the country, at a press conference in the city. The minister called upon all parents and guardians not to hide their children's autism syndromes. "The government has taken elaborate programmes and will take many initiatives to address the problems of autistic children to ensure their rights," Shaheed said. He sought cooperation of parents and guardians to get proper statistics of children with autism. The minister said field level officials of the ministry have started their work to get statistics of children with autism in the country. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to inaugurate the World Autism Day programmes at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city today. Ranjit Kumar Biswas, secretary of social welfare ministry and Nasima Begum, director general of Department of Social Services among others were present at the briefing.

SSKOP meeting on wage board today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An extended meeting of Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari-Oikya Parishad (SSKOP), an organisation of journalists, employees and workers of newspapers and news agencies, will be held at Jatiya Press Club at 11:00am today to discuss the six-hour work abstention on April 3 demanding formation of the 8th wage board. Leaders of the SSKOP have been requested to attend the meeting in time, says a press release. The journalist leaders announced the protest programme at a rally on March 28 to press home the demand.



(From left) former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Ghulam Rahman and economist Dr Farshuddin Ahmed at a seminar on "Role of mass media and civil society in curbing corruption and implementing political commitments" at ACC office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page-20) PHOTO: STAR

DoE fines owners of four buildings Tk 28 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Department of Environment (DoE) fined owners of four multistoried buildings Tk 28 lakh for constructing the buildings without its environment clearance certificate. The buildings are the 13-storied Midas Centre in Dhanmondi, 20-storied Lotus Kamal Tower in Banani under-construction 14-storied Navana Chhayabithi in Gulshan and Navana Nasrin Casavel in Gulshan. The Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act 1995 (Amendment 2010) makes it mandatory for any residential or commercial building to have an environment clearance certificate before the construction. The law says such buildings must have parking areas, open greenery, proper sewerage and rainwater harvesting and waste treatment facilities. Moreover, the owners should control noise pollution during the construction and preserve wetlands. DoE Director (monitoring and enforcement) Mohammed Munir Chowdhury fined the owners after a three-day drive and asked them to immediately comply with the environment law. The gas, electricity and water connections of these buildings will be snapped if the directions are ignored, says a DoE press release.



Justice Hussain's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the 26th death anniversary of Justice Syed Muhammad Hussain, an eminent judge of the Bangladesh Supreme Court. He was the chairman of the Bangladesh chapter of International Law Association, Amnesty International and International Commission of Jurists, said a press release yesterday. Born in 1928, Syed Muhammad Hussain was the eldest son of former district and session judge Syed Tasodduque Hussain. He played a pioneering role in the country's cultural movement and was the general secretary of Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts and Pakistan Arts Council. His publication includes a book titled 'Banglar Katha'. In recognition to his contribution, he was awarded the 'Swadhinata Padak' (posthumously) in 1998.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Khulna, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Pabna, Bogra, Comilla and Noakhali with hails at places in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today. Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said. Mild heat wave is sweeping over Barisal, Sylhet and Khulna divisions and the regions of Pabna, Dhaka, Tangail, Faridpur and Sandwip and it may continue. The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:49am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 38.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and lowest 19.9 degree 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	36.5	23.8	45	33
Chittagong	34.5	24.5	61	59
Rajshahi	34.2	20.0	64	60
Rangpur	34.5	21.0	51	54
Khulna	36.2	21.6	51	53
Barisal	36.3	21.0	60	65
Sylhet	37.5	22.7	47	47
Cox's Bazar	35.0	25.5	61	60

JS body summons Biman chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Chairman of Board of Directors of Biman Air Marshal (retd) Jamal Uddin Ahmed was asked to appear before a parliamentary body's meeting on Thursday to explain alleged mismanagement and corruption in the national airliner. The parliamentary standing committee on civil aviation ministry in its yesterday's meeting took the decision. "Earlier on several times, we had requested Jamal Uddin Ahmed to attend the committee's meeting to inform us about Biman's different issues. But he did not pay heed. That's why the committee yesterday summoned him," Mosharraf Hossain, chief of the committee told reporters after the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. The committee members yesterday expressed their annoyance over the repeated absence of the Biman chairman. The committee at this stage decided that they will place the issue before Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Jamal Uddin was not available last night to comment on the issue as his mobile phone was found switched off after repeated attempts. "No one knows under whom the organisation is accountable," said Mosharraf. "We cannot let a national organisation like the one of Biman Bangladesh Airlines be destroyed," he added. Asked about the ongoing movement of Biman employees against the Biman board, Mosharraf said the issue will also be taken up with Jamal at the next meeting.

BCL men beat up vendor at DU for toll

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A group of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men yesterday beat up a "fuska" vendor and damaged his stall near TSC of Dhaka University (DU) for his denial to pay toll money to the BCL activists. Seriously injured Akash, 24, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The attackers are the followers of Omar Sharif, general secretary of DU unit BCL, sources said. Contacted, Omar Sharif told The Daily Star, "I came to know that a group of BCL leaders permitted Akash to set up a small shop in return for money." He, however, claimed that none of his followers were involved in the incident. DU proctor Prof Dr MA Ali said he sent a proctorial team to investigate the matter.

JU VC rejects demand for his resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Just a day after some agitating teachers again announced a five-day protest programme, Jahangirnagar University Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Sharif Enamul Kabir yesterday said he would not resign. "I will resign immediately if my beloved students want, though I believe they do not. But I can not resign before the undemocratic and irrational demand of 30 or 40 teachers," he said at a press conference at Zahir Raihan Auditorium in JU. The agitating teachers, under the banner "Shikkhak Samaj", are demanding the VC's resignation allegedly for his irregularities in appointing teachers and not declaring the election for the post of the VC since February. Prof Kabir, appointed after the government took office, strongly criticised the teachers, saying that "their activities are harmful for the progress of the university". They are after a special agenda to create chaos in JU "but that agenda would not be successful," he said, describing some of the development activities he took in the last three years. He, however, urged the agitating teachers to come for discussions on their demands. Prof Nasim Akhter Hossain, spokesperson for Shikkhak Samaj, denied holding discussions with the VC. "We demand his resignation as he broke his earlier promises. We will continue our agitation until he resigns," she said. Prof Kabir said he will declare the elections of all the bodies, including the election for the VC post, in due time. On the formation of a judicial probe committee to investigate the murder of Zubair, he said he could not do this as the case was now proceeding under police supervision. Zubair Ahmed, a fourth year student of English department, succumbed to his injuries after being attacked by a group of Bangladesh Chhatra League activists on January 9.