

NEWS IN

brief

Ittefaq editor gets bail in
defamation case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail to the daily Ittefaq's Editor Anwar Hossain Manju for four months in a defamation case.

Former Deputy Managing Director of Takaful Islami Insurance Company ASM Nazrul Islam filed the case with a Dhaka court on June 4 against Manju for publishing an advertisement treating him (Nazrul) as absconder in his daily in February last year.

The court issued warrant for his arrest on July 8. The HC bench of Justice Siddiquir Rahman Miah and Justice KM Kamrul Kader granted the bail after hearing a petition filed by Manju on July 15 seeking bail.

Book on Abdul Matin Choudhury
launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A book on Abdul Matin Choudhury and his life and works has been launched in Sylhet city.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith unveiled the book while being present as chief guest at its publication ceremony at Sylhet Zila Parishad auditorium on Saturday.

The book titled "Abdul Matin Choudhury: Trusted lieutenant of Muhammad Ali Jinnah" was written by Prof Atful Hai Shibli.

Muhith said Abdul Matin Choudhury made huge contributions for the people of the then undivided Assam and Sylhet region.

Sylhet city Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, veteran educationist from Assam Prof Kamal Uddin Ahmed and Abdul Matin Choudhury's son Zuned

Pro-AL candidates sweep Sust
academic council polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Pro-ruling Awami League candidates won five positions while pro-BNP candidates secured one in the election for teacher representatives to the syndicate and academic council of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) held on Sunday.

Among the AL candidates, Sust Teachers Association President Prof kabir Hossain and Abu Awal Md Shoeb were chosen to be representatives for the syndicate while Dr Himadri Shekhar Roy, Mohammad Omar Faruque and Al-Amin Rabbi were elected for the academic council.

Lone pro-BNP candidate Dr Hossain Al-Mamun was elected for the academic council.



President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Kanayo F Nwanze pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Gono Bhaban in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

PM seeks IFAD
support for fish
processing plant

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for setting up fish preservation and processing plants in Haor areas of the country.

She sought the support when IFAD President Kanayo F Nwanze met her at her official Gono Bhaban residence in the afternoon.

Hasina said her government has emphasised crop diversification as well as research for boosting food production.

"We have invented flood, drought and salinity-tolerant varieties of paddy which help increase country's food production," she said.

The premier said the country's fish and poultry production has risen to a great extent in the last three years.

Hasina thanked the IFAD for extending its support to Bangladesh especially in agriculture and rural development.

The IFAD president, appreciating Bangladesh's stunning success in different fields, including agriculture, said his organisation has undertaken six projects and would take a six-year project in Bangladesh in the light of the goals of the sixth five-year plan and Vision 2021 of the government.

ATN chief
apologises to
journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ATN Bangla Chairman Mahfuzur Rahman, in an undated written statement, apologised to the journalist community for his derogatory comments on murdered journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi.

"I am sad and seek apology for my comments that angered and bruised the dignity of journalists," he said.

On May 30, Mahfuzur, at a press briefing in London, had said, "Sagar and Runi were victims of an extra-marital affair." He also claimed to have video footage that hinted at the motive behind the murders.

On February 11, Sagar, a news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and his wife Meherun, a senior reporter for ATN Bangla, were brutally killed in their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar.

BANSKHALI CARNAGE
Next hearing
on Aug 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday fixed for the next hearing date of Banskhalhi carnage case on August 2.

The court of third additional district and session judge (acting) Hosne Ara passed the order after completing the second-day quizzing of Bimal, said court sources.

Earlier, Bimal Kanti Shil gave his statement before the court on May 15, 23 and June 3, 27.

A gang of attackers on November 18, 2003 night set the house of one, Tejendra Shil, at Shilpara in Banskhalhi on fire, killing 11 members of his family, including an infant.

Tejendra's son Bimal, the lone survivor of the attack, filed a case the next day against 30-35 unidentified people on charges of arson attack, looting and murder.

TORCHING OF MC COLLEGE HOSTEL

Third probe body
formed

Previous committees show no progress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Over a week into the torching of 42 rooms of MC College's hostel in Sylhet with two probe bodies showing no progress in identifying the culprits, the home affairs ministry yesterday formed a third investigation committee.

Deputy commissioner (North) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, Ejaj Ahmed, heading the five-member committee, said they were asked to file a report in two weeks.

On July 8, the ruling party backed Bangladesh Chhatra League activists torched the rooms after clashing with Jamaat-e-Islami backed Shibir activists, leaving some 20 people injured.

Since then, none has been arrested although five cases, including two by BCL, one by Shibir, one by Jubo League and one by the hostel super, had been filed.

Additional District Magistrate Md Shahidul Alam, heading a five-member committee, said the college staff, teachers and students were afraid to identify the culprits.

Vice Principal Prof Md Al Helal Bhuiyan, heading another committee formed by the college authority, mirrored Shahidul's comment.

One member of the committees, requesting anonymity, said video footage and pictures taken by journalists could be used to identify the culprits but there was also pressure from a quarter in the ruling party to protect the attackers.

Addressing a press briefing at Sylhet Circuit House yesterday, minister without portfolio Suranjit Sengupta said the incident should not be considered emotionally and it was not an isolated incident but a result of



Buet teachers, students and employees observe a token hunger strike on campus yesterday demanding resignation of the university's vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor.

PHOTO: STAR

President urges
journalists to
be accountable

BSS, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged journalist leaders to give highest priority to the national interest by being accountable to the country and its people.

He made the call when a team of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) led by its President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury met him at Bangabhaban.

Zillur said the role of media is very important as the journalists raise expectation of common people and identify flaws of the government.

Iqbal urged the president to take his personal interventions to ensure proper investigations of murders of all journalists, including journalist couple Sagar-Runi.

He also urged the president to take initiatives for including a journalist representative to the National Information Commission.

BFUJ Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan also

Office hours set
for Ramadan

UNB, Dhaka

Office hours during the month of Ramadan have been fixed from 9:00am to 3:30pm with a 15-minute prayer break from 1:15pm to 1:30pm for all government, semi-government, autonomous and semi-autonomous organisations.

Banks, insurance companies, other financial institutions, Bangladesh Railway, postal department, hospitals, state-owned industries and factories and other such organisations will fix their own timetable for the month according to their rules and regulations, said an official release.

The Supreme Court would fix its own and other courts' timings.



Rain or thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Moderately heavy to very heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:48pm and rises tomorrow at 5:22am.

Country's highest temperature 35 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 23.9 degrees at Feni.

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	28.0	82	71
Chittagong	29.8	25.1	90	85
Rajshahi	32.5	26.5	80	96
Rangpur	29.5	26.8	96	84
Khulna	32.5	27.0	90	87
Barisal	31.0	27.0	87	92
Sylhet	31.5	25.1	77	94

CLIMATE CHANGE

Use funds for
recovery activities

Says EU envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The funds promised to Bangladesh to fight against climate change impacts should be spent in the recovery activities of the country's marginalised people, said Ambassador of the European Union (EU) in Bangladesh William Hanna yesterday.

"The marginalised poor people are mainly being affected by the severe impacts of climate change," he also said while addressing a chief guest workshop in the capital's Brac Centre. Non-government organisations Action Contre la Faim, Christian Aid, DanChurchAid, Muslim Aid, and Save the Children jointly organised the workshop in line with the formation of a consortium named "DeSHARI" by them to work together in pragmatic sectors relevant to disaster management.

William Hanna said the EU will provide its promised funds to Bangladesh for recovering losses due to climate change impacts.

He mentioned about the support of European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection to around 14,000 marginalised water-logged flood affected families as part of its 'early recovery' activities in Bangladesh.

The DeSHARI members will work in Bangladesh's disaster prone regions including haor, char and riverine that are subject to flooding and waterlogging and the coastal districts that are vulnerable to cyclones and storms.

WB LOAN CANCELLATION

Govt will question
procedure

Says Dipu Moni

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will raise question about the World Bank's procedure in canceling the loan commitment for Padma bridge project, said Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

"As a sovereign state, we have the right to raise questions as they have. We will also raise question in the proper place and at the proper time about the procedure," she said.

She was addressing a view exchange meeting organised by the newly formed Indian Media Correspondents Association in Bangladesh at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

The foreign minister said the allegation of the World Bank was not substantiated by any credible evidence and the decision to cancel the Padma bridge funding was not taken through due process. "We are aggrieved by the decision. The tenure of the credit agreement was scheduled to end later, but the deadline was brought closer and the agreement was

cancelled," she said.

Dipu Moni, however, said there is no reason to damage Bangladesh's relationship with the World Bank just for canceling funding for one project.

"If they don't fund it, we will arrange alternative funding," she said, adding that Bangladesh will construct the Padma bridge with its own fund, but the door is open for international development partners.

Japan is positive about financing the project under a new framework and it would be easier for the Bangladesh government if Japan stands by it, she said.

She said she does not think that Bangladesh's image has been tarnished after the World Bank cancelled the \$1.2 billion credit line for the Padma bridge project on corruption charges.

Asian Development Bank said it would also be unable to release fund for the project due to the joint nature of co-financing.