

NEWS IN *brief*

Earthquake jolts Sylhet region

UNB, Sylhet

A light earthquake measuring 4.3 on the Richter scale jolted Sylhet region yesterday.

The earthquake was felt at 12:36pm in Sylhet. The epicentre of the quake was along Indo-Bangla border, about 185km north-east from Dhaka, said regional Met Office and Seismic Observatory Centre sources.

There was no immediate report of damage or casualties.

Cellphones worth Tk 50 lakh seized in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs officials seized 450 mobile phone sets worth around Tk 50 lakh from the luggage of two expatriates at Hazrat Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong city yesterday morning.

The expatriates are Kamal Uddin, 26, of Sitakunda upazila in Chittagong, and Imranul Islam, 40, of Feni.

The cell phone sets were seized from their possession as they did not pay the customs duties for them, said the airport customs house Assistant Commissioner Mohammad Shahidul Islam.

Worker dies from electrocution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A garment worker was killed and two others were injured in electrocution in Chittagong early Saturday.

The deceased was Md Rubel, 25, while the injured were Atik, 25 and Ansar, 18. They were employees at Asian Washing, a garment factory, at Monsurabad area in Chittagong city.

Kazi Imran, an executive of the factory, said Rubel, a washing machine operator, got an electric shock when he tried to switch the machine on around 1:00pm.

The victims were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Rubel dead, police said.

CCC seeks Tk 2,000cr from UNCDF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) has sought Tk 2,000 crore as loan from United Nation Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to implement its projects.

CCC Mayor M Manjur Alam made the call when UNCDF's Chief Technical Adviser Christopher Kajmersky met at his office yesterday.

Under the fund, the CCC would implement a drainage master plan, recover old canals and set up a new canal to remove water logging problems in the port city, Manjur said.

UNCDF's adviser Kajmersky told the mayor that they would inform their decision about the loan after discussion with LGRD and cooperatives ministry of Bangladesh.

'Arrest criminals in Rajshahi city'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Leaders of Rajshahi Rakkha Sangram Parishad (RRSP) yesterday urged the authorities concerned to arrest identified criminals to curb criminal activities in Rajshahi city.

They were speaking at a human chain and rally in Rajshahi city's Shaheb Bazar Zero Point intersection.

They said incidents of criminal activities including killing of auto-rickshaw drivers for snatching the vehicles, mugging, and extortion have recently been increased in the city.

RRSP President Liakat Ali chaired the rally, while its General Secretary Jamat Khan, journalist Mostafijur Rahman Khan, businessmen Ziaul Haque, engineer Tajul Islam, sportsman Harunur Rashid, physician Abdul Mannan and development worker Debashish Pramanik, among others, spoke on the



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the participants of the International Conference on People's Empowerment and Development yesterday in Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the capital. Representatives from 62 countries are taking part in the event. (Stories on Page 5 and 20)

PHOTO: PID

Domestic help 'tortured to death' Employers held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A domestic help was allegedly tortured to death by her employers in Pallabi area of the capital yesterday.

The deceased is Halima, 12, daughter of Moslem Shikdar of Faridpur.

Police arrested the employers Imran Khondakar, a transport businessman, and his wife Sheuly Begum.

Pallabi police said many parts of Halima's body, including back of the head and ears, carried marks of injuries and burns.

Abdul Latif Sheikh, officer-in-charge of the police station, told The Daily Star that Imran tried to remove the body.

"When he (Imran) came out of his apartment building early yesterday with a heavy sack, a security guard named Yakub asked him what was inside the sack. As Imran replied that there were motor parts, the security guard wanted to check it out," he added.

Imran did not allow the guard to do so and returned to his apartment, said the OC adding, the guard, later, shared it to locals who informed police of the matter.

Police recovered the body from a cot in the flat on the third floor of the building.

Neighbours alleged the couple used to torture the servant, said police.

Imran admitted that his wife often beat up the girl, the OC said.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Morgue sources said Halima died from internal bleeding as she was hit on her chest.

India to ratify land boundary deal soon

Jairam Ramesh tells prime minister

BSS, Dhaka

Visiting Indian Minister for Rural Development Jairam Ramesh yesterday assured Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement 1974 and its protocol in the Indian parliament as soon as possible.

The Indian minister, who is now in Dhaka to attend an international seminar, gave the assurance when he met the prime minister at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

As the prime minister stressed the need for early ratification of the agreement and protocol, the Indian minister assured that the two instruments would be ratified in the Indian parliament very soon, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said.

Demarcation of land boundary between Bangladesh and India and exchange of the areas of adverse possession are crucial for a satisfactory resolution and implementation of the decisions taken during the visit of the Indian prime minister to Dhaka in September last year, Sheikh Hasina said.

Abul Kalam Azad said Jairam Ramesh urged the industrial entrepreneurs of Bangladesh to invest in the north-eastern states of India.

Sheikh Hasina hoped that all pending issues between Bangladesh and India would be resolved at an early date as both countries have domestic political compulsions.

Some choices were difficult, but we have taken several bold decisions on relations with India, she said.

BIRDEM BANGABANDHU PARISHAD Journos offered money for 'conveyance'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists who went to cover a discussion marking National Mourning Day at Birdem Hospital in the capital were offered money to pay for their "conveyance".

The organisers, Bangabandhu Parishad of the hospital unit, offered Tk 500 to 1,000 to all of the journalists, most of whom refused to take it.

Talking to The Daily Star correspondent, the organisers said they decided to provide the money as the journalists had come to give coverage of the programme.

"Our president (of the hospital unit Bangabandhu Parishad) Prof Mir Nazrul Islam told me to give some money to them (journalists) for conveyance and I obliged," said the hospital unit Bangabandhu Parishad General Secretary Imran Hossain.

On contact, Nazrul, a doctor of Birdem Hospital, admitted that he had asked Imran to give money to the journalists.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Despite all the fun in Eid shopping, long hours needed for that could be exhausting for children. The little girl falls asleep in her father's arms during shopping in a mall in the capital yesterday.

3 die as boat capsizes in Sunamganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Three bodies were recovered yesterday after a boat capsized in Sonatola Haor in Dharmapasha upazila in Sunamganj on Saturday.

The deceased were Beauty Akhtar, 50, wife of Shamsu Miah of Srirampur village in Barhatta upazila and Abdus Salam, 50, and his wife Nazma Akhtar, 30, of Jamaikona Purbodhola upazila in Netrokona district.

Md Bayes Alam, officer-in-charge at Dharmapasha police station, said the boat carrying 11 people capsized due to violent winds and rains in the haor around 7:30pm.

A team from Fire Service and Civil Defence at Sunamganj recovered the bodies, he said.

Divers of the firefighters' team were searching body of another missing in the incident when the report was filing at 8:00pm yesterday.

Concern over 'communal conspiracy' expressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Samprodayekata-Jangbad Birodhi Mancha (anti-communalism and anti-militancy platform) yesterday expressed concern over conspiracy of creating communal conflicts by a section of people in the country.

In a statement, the leaders urged the government to take steps to find out any connection of the conspirators to foil the trial of crimes against humanity during the country's Liberation War.

Prof Ajay Ray, coordinator of the platform, and many leaders of other social and political organisations have stated the statement signed by Saleh Ahmed, member of central executive parishad of the platform.

LIBERATION WAR

People must recall Bangabandhu's role

Says Prof Anisuzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Denying that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the leader of the country's Liberation War is more dreadful than his killing, said noted educationist Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman yesterday.

"The propaganda against Bangabandhu and the denial of his contribution to the Liberation War by a section of people after his killing are more outrageous," he said at a discussion.

Bangabandhu Parishad and Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad of Birdem hospital unit jointly organised the discussion on National Mourning Day marking the 37th martyrdom of Bangabandhu at the hospital's auditorium.

Addressing as the chief guest at the programme, Prof Anisuzzaman also said people of all walks of life had took part in the Liberation War and the country's reconstruction after independence under the leadership of Bangabandhu.

People must recall the contributions of Bangabandhu to be respectful to the history, he said adding that following the ideology of the great leader and committing crimes cannot go together.

The criminals who were involved in committing crimes against humanity during the liberation war must be tried to establish the rule of law in the country, said Prof Anisuzzaman.

Cherishing the spirit of Liberation War and the Bangabandhu's ideology can be recalled by recognising his contributions to the nation, said Liberation War Museum trustee Dr Sarwar Ali.

Birdem hospital unit Bangabandhu Parishad president Prof Mir Nazrul Islam chaired the function, while Prof AK Azad Khan, president of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Awami League leader Abu Naser, among others, also spoke on the occasion.

GRAFT CASE AGAINST MOUDUD

Dispose of rule by Oct 7 SC asks HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday directed the High Court (HC) to hear and dispose of by October 7 a rule issued on the legality of proceedings of a corruption case filed against former BNP law minister Moudud Ahmed.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case with Gulshan Police Station on September 16, 2007, saying that Moudud amassed wealth worth more than Tk 7.38 crore through illegal means and concealed information about wealth worth more than Tk 4.4 crore from the commission.

Following a petition submitted by Moudud, the HC on January 29 this year stayed the proceedings of the case and issued a rule upon the ACC and government to explain why the proceedings of the case should not be quashed.

Later, the ACC in February filed a leave to appeal petition with the SC against the HC order.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division of SC, headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, yesterday ordered for disposal of the HC rule after hearing the ACC's petition.

An HC bench led by Justice Musa Khaled will hear and dispose of the rule, according to the SC order.



Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at many places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions in 24 hours still 6:00pm today.

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

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:38pm and rises tomorrow at 5:31am.

Country's highest temperature 35.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.8 degrees at Rangamati and Cox's Bazar.

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	31.0	26.5	74	76
Chittagong	29.3	25.8	90	77
Rajshahi	34.2	26.8	81	80
Rangpur	33.3	26.0	80	76
Khulna	32.5	26.4	87	86
Barisal	31.1	25.5	92	92
Sylhet	35.3	25.3	76	80