

NEWS IN *brief*

Non-govt school, college teachers get 6-month maternity leave

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The education ministry yesterday issued a circular granting six-month maternity leave for teachers and employees of non-government secondary and higher secondary level educational institutions. A teacher or an employee will get the maternity leave twice in her professional life while full salary and allowances before going on leave, it said. The leave can be granted on any date the teacher or employee applies for but it has to start before she gives birth. Managing committees or governing bodies will have no authority to reject the leave application or

Muggers shoot dead man

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was shot dead by muggers in the capital's Shyampur area yesterday. The deceased was Habibur Rahman, 55, an employee of Madina Group. Habibur's colleague Nasiruddin said three muggers riding on a motorcycle shot Habibur and took away some amount of money while returning to his workplace at Pagla in Narayanganj after collecting the money from the company's clients. Locals caught one mugger while two others fled the scene with the money, opening fire on the chasing people that left Mahbubur Rahman Lipu, 40, wounded. Habibur and Lipu were rushed to Dhaka Medical

23 tonnes hilsha, 30 lakh metre nets seized countrywide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Fisheries (DoF) seized around 23 tonnes hilsha fish and 30 lakh metres of fishing nets from different parts of the country in the last five days. The DoF conducted around 495 mobile courts and 2,045 drives in coastal rivers and fish markets from September 25, said a press release. The courts also jailed 247 people in different terms, fined Tk 6 lakh and filed 240 cases for catch-

Mozena praises Bangladeshi youths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United States Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W Mozena yesterday praised Bangladeshi young people for their growing participation in entrepreneurship and humanitarian activities. He was addressing the grand opening of the Edward M Kennedy Centre for Public Service and the Arts (EMK Centre) in the capital's Dhanmondi area. In partnership with the Liberation War Museum, the American Center of US Embassy in Dhaka announced the official opening of the EMK centre. "I am so proud that we have partnered with the Liberation War Museum to create this glorious space in Senator Kennedy's memory to provide a base, a foundation, a home for Bangladesh's next genera-



An underprivileged child collects water from a leaking hose of a Dhaka Wasa tanker supplying water to an affluent citizen's building, inset, yesterday in the capital's Khilbaritek of Shahjadpur, an area suffering from water crisis for the past one month.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Water crisis plagues Shahjadpur, Bhatara

HELEMUL ALAM

Acute water crisis has gripped several thousand residents of the capital's Shahjadpur and Bhatara as Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) supply pipes have been running dry for the last one month. Out of three water pumps providing for the area, two have gone out of order while performance of the third has dropped by two-thirds, said the Wasa officials. "We are working to replace a pump at Natunbazar by October 20," said Wasa Assistant Engineer of Zone-8 Abul Bashar, adding that the replacement would reduce the crisis to a large extent. Work to replace the second pump at Nure Salah will start within a few days and take around 45 days to complete. The last one, the performance of which has dropped, needs to be replaced too, he added. Residents of Bhatara in Shahjadpur of Gulshan and Nure Sala and Khilbaritek in Bhatara said they were depending on other sources for water, like purchasing bottled ones, though it was very inadequate to meet daily needs.

"Now I have to routinely fetch two pitchers of water on my shoulder from a relative's house some half a kilometre away," said a Batargali resident, Shafiqur Rahman. Another resident, Kanij Layla, said she was now taking her baths after every three to four days as the water tankers of Dhaka Wasa arrive some three to four days after they have been paid for, even if the officials have been bribed. "Since September 1, I have already spent Tk 11,000 in purchasing bottled water and water from the tankers," she said. Abdul Kashem, a businessman of Khilbaritek, said he was forced to close his dyeing factory due to the water shortage and this has caused him to experience a financial crisis. "I have been borrowing money, Tk 60,000 to be exact, from friends and relatives to provide for my family expenses," he said. Though Dhaka Wasa officials claimed that water tankers, around 25 every day, were immediately being provided on demand in crisis-hit areas, most residents said they had

to wait for over a week after applying for it. Moreover, a section of employees and officials of Wasa Zone-8 were charging double or even more for the water tankers and carts. Officially each water tanker, with a capacity of around 5,000 litres, costs Tk 500 while the smaller water cart, with a 3,000-litre capacity, costs Tk 300. If the officials are provided Tk 1,000 or more, the water tankers come earlier, probably skipping others in queue, said a resident of Khilbaritek, Abdul Baker. Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan said he had asked the zonal authority of Wasa to increase water supplies to the area through water tankers, even if it means bringing the water from other areas. Bashar, on the allegation of some officials taking bribes from residents, said they received no complaints from the residents over the allegations till date and so could not take steps against those who were allegedly involved. "If we find anybody involved in taking money illegally, we will immediately take action," he said.

POWER TARIFF HIKE Police disperse protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 20 activists of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports were injured as police charged batons and lobbed teargas shells on their procession, protesting power tariff hike, in the capital yesterday. The committee declared to hold demonstrations across the country today protesting the attack and to declare future programmes, including hartal, said the committee convenor Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah. Hundreds of the committee's leaders and activists brought out the procession from before Jatiya Press Club, aiming to lay siege to the energy ministry, inside Bangladesh Secretariat. They were obstructed by metal barricades placed by police in the road connecting Topekhan Road and Abdul Gani Road. A scuffle ensued between the committee's activists and police, leading to the attack. The agitators set pieces of wood on fire before Jatiya Press Club, halting vehicular movement on the road for nearly 20 minutes. Earlier, the activists held a rally before Jatiya Press Club around 11:30am to press home their demands. The demands include shutting down rental and quick rental power plants and scrapping related deals, rehabilitating and repairing state-owned power plants, installing more gas-based power plants, cancelling anti-state foreign companies' deal in power sector and providing a permanent solution to the power crisis. In separate statements, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Gonotantrik Biplobi Party, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Gonotantrik Bam Morcha, Revolutionary Workers Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Communist League condemned the attack and demanded exemplary punishment to the accused.

SPEAKER'S RULING SC appeal hearing today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday deferred till today the hearing of an appeal against a July 24 High Court verdict stating that the Speaker's June 18 ruling about a HC judge had no legal effect and was baseless in the eye of law. Speaker Abdul Hamid, in parliament on June 18, said the judge (Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik) had violated the constitution by making "derogatory remarks" about the Jatiya Sangsad and its Speaker. Justice Manik observed during a June 5 hearing that the Speaker had committed an offence tantamount to sedition by commenting in parliament on an HC order. The judge also said the Speaker was ignorant of the apex court and the constitution.

Justice Manik's remarks came in response to some observations made by Speaker Abdul Hamid in the House on May 29. Hamid had told the House that courts were neutral and independent. However, it looked odd when they took quick decisions to resolve their own problems while people waited for years to get justice. He had also said that if people were aggrieved at court verdicts, a day would come when they would stand against the courts. The leave to appeal petition, filed by the government on September 3, was scheduled to be heard by the Appellate Division of SC yesterday.



Activists of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports run for cover after police lobbed teargas shells on their procession, protesting power tariff hike, in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

UPROOTING CORRUPTION Progressive political forces' role stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Role of emerging progressive political forces and huge social protests are prerequisites to uprooting corruption from the society, said Dr Swapan Adnan, former Dhaka University (DU) teacher, yesterday. To build a corruption-free society, he recommended bringing radical change in the rules and regulations, which have been followed for years, of the country's institutions. Dr Swapan, also a researcher, made the comments at the 10th Abdul Karim Sahitya Bisharad Memorial Lecture 2012 styled "Culture of Corruption and Politics of Patronisation" at RC Majumdar Auditorium, DU. Samaj Rupantar Adhyayan Kendra, a civil society think tank, organised the programme. Addressing the programme, Dr Swapan also said combined political pressure should be imposed upon the corrupt persons and organisations to uproot corruption. DU Professor Emeritus Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, also president of Samaj Rupantar Adhyayan Kendra, presided over the programme.

COMMONWEALTH MINISTERIAL ACTION GROUP Dipu Moni elected chairperson

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has been elected chairperson unanimously to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) at its 38th Session held in New York. With the election, she has become the first female chair of CMAG. She has also become the first from a South Asian country to chair the Commonwealth body, said a foreign ministry press release yesterday. In her introductory statement after the election on Friday, Dipu Moni, who is now attending the UN General Assembly in New York, said she would work closely with other members of the group to uphold the values and principles of the Commonwealth. The CMAG, a nine-member group of foreign ministers of Commonwealth countries, is the custodian of the political values of the Commonwealth. The body is mandated to assess serious or persistent violations of the Commonwealth values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights in member states. It is also mandated to take decisions for collective Commonwealth action to preserve and restore democracy and good governance. Foreign ministers of Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Jamaica, the Maldives, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, and Vanuatu are members of the body now. The CMAG was established as part of the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme adopted during 1995 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in New Zealand.

DHAKA TODAY

Programme
Bangladesh Shishu Academy will organise a programme; Venue: its premises; Time: 10:45am.

Sit-in
Non-MPO Shikkha Protisthan Shikkhak-Karmachari Oikyajote will stage a sit-in; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain
HelpAge International will form a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatio Betar Bhaban, Agargaon; Time: 10:00am.

Seminar
Dhaka Ahsania Mission will hold a

Village Education Resource Center will organise a seminar; Venue: Biam Foundation; Time: 10:00am.

Seminar
Campaign for Good Governance will hold a seminar; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Workshop
For the Women by the Women Forum will organise a workshop; Venue: Bangladesh Bank Training Academy, Mirpur 2; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Dhaka Ahsania Mission will hold a

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:46pm and rises tomorrow at 5:51am.

Country's highest temperature 35.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Chudwanga and lowest 24.0 degrees at Rangamati.

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	33.8	26.7	77	80
Chittagong	29.5	26.0	92	87
Rajshahi	34.5	26.9	89	80
Rangpur	34.0	26.0	89	88
Khulna	34.8	26.8	74	86
Barisal	33.4	26.5	77	87