

NEWS IN *brief*

Bangladesh elected IOM chair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has been elected the chair of International Organisation for Migration (IOM) unanimously for a period of one year.

The decision was declared yesterday at a council of the organisation after an election, said a press release.

The IOM is the leading intergovernmental organisation in the field of migration.

Md Abdul Hannan, Bangladesh's permanent representative and ambassador to the United Nations Offices in Geneva, has assumed the post

Second convocation of Cuet today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The second convocation of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) will be held today.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid will preside over the ceremony.

A total 1,718 graduates and postgraduates from 2006-2007 sessions will be awarded certificates while four students will also receive gold medals.

Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, vice chancellor of Asia Pacific, will speak at the convocation, which

Reshuffle in lower judiciary

UNB, Dhaka

A number of joint district judges and equivalent officials have been transferred and given new postings in a latest reshuffle in the lower judiciary.

The law ministry yesterday issued a notification in this regard, said a press release.

Mahbubur Rahman Sarker, senior assistant secretary at Law and Justice Division, has been made additional chief judicial magistrate of Narayanganj, SM Ershadul Alam, senior assistant secretary, has been appointed joint district and sessions judge of Munshiganj, AQM Nasiruddin, senior assistant secretary and director at Human Rights Commission, has been made judge of Chittagong Artha Rin Adalat and Shamina Parvin, joint district and sessions judge of Munshiganj, has

Punishment for Bahaddarhat flyover collapse demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Civic organisations of Chittagong at a human chain yesterday demanded punishment of the culprits responsible for the Bahaddarhat flyover collapse in the city.

They formed the human chain in front of Chittagong Press Club at about 10:00am, said a press release.

Blaming negligence of Chittagong Development Authority for the flyover collapse, they demanded resignation of CDA's chairman.

Terming the deaths as murder, they urged the authorities concerned to increase safety measures



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses a public rally on Dhanbari Nawab Institution Ground in Tangail yesterday.



PHOTO: PID

ELECTORAL TALKS WITH EC

JP for army on ground, WP against

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Party, a key component of the Awami League-led ruling alliance, yesterday asked the Election Commission (EC) to make necessary electoral reforms to legally ensure deployment of army in both local and parliamentary elections at all times.

"People have confidence in army. Elections will be free and fair if army is deployed. So, deployment of army in all elections should be made mandatory in law," JP Ruhul Secretary General Amin Hawlader said during his party's talks with the EC.

The Workers' Party, another ruling alliance component, opposed army deployment.

"We saw the impact of army deployment in maintaining law and order during the 2001 parliamentary polls," said party chief Rashed Khan Menon. "So the defence forces should not be legally made

part of the law enforcement agencies."

Menon demanded that the EC cancels the registration of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and declares people charged with war crimes disqualified for running the elections.

Election Commissioner Abdul Mobarak said it could not be done hurriedly as it required a legal process.

Meanwhile, JP Presidium Member Mujibul Haque opposed the electoral provision that an individual must be a member of a political party for at least three years to contest the parliamentary polls from that party.

Joining the talks at the EC secretariat, chief of a faction of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, ASM Abdul Rab, proposed to reduce the number of constituencies in the capital from existing 15 to 10.

Meanwhile, the ruling AL will not sit with the EC today due to parliamentary session and asked the commission to fix a new date.

Army Aviation gets 2 new helicopters

UNB, Dhaka

Two French-made multi-role high speed twin engine helicopters were inducted into the Army Aviation fleet through an auspicious commissioning ceremony at Army Aviation Complex at Tejgaon Old Airport yesterday.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith was present as the chief guest while Army Chief Gen Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan spoke on the occasion.

The new Dauphin AS 365 N3+ helicopters, each with a 12-passenger capacity, a cruise speed of 269 kilometres per hour and a range of 807 kilometres, can excel in the most severe climatic conditions such as high altitudes or hot temperatures.

This is also the most cost effective medium twin engine helicopter with the lowest direct maintenance costs in its class.

Muhith thanked Eurocopter Group, a global helicopter manufacturing and support company, for providing these two helicopters to Bangladesh Army.

Army Aviation, the integral flying organ of Bangladesh Army, operates both fixed wing and rotary aircrafts in its fleet for undertaking tasks like transporting troops, dropping paratroopers, conducting rappelling exercises, and moving logistics and combat supply.

New project director appointed for Bahaddarhat flyover

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) yesterday appointed a project director temporarily to lead the work of Bahaddarhat Flyover project.

CDA Chairman Abdus Salam appointed Kazi Hasan Bin Shams, superintendent engineer -1 of CDA.

Shams got the appointment following suspension of Habibur Rahman, who was suspended on Monday following the collapse of the flyover.

The newly appointed project director told The Daily Star that he had sent a letter to the authority saying he was unable to accept the post as he was physically unfit, but his appeal was rejected.

Shams said he only accepted the post on the condition that he would just look after the safety measures of the project and not deal with financial issues.

However, Nasir Uddin Mahmud Chowdhury, CDA chief engineer, denied receiving any letter from Shams and said as government staff they are bound to comply with any order from the state.

At least 12 people died and 50 were injured when three girders of the flyover collapsed on Saturday.



Muktijodha Sangbadik Command forms a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday demanding that the government ban politics of Jamaat-Shibir and take steps to expedite the war crimes trial.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

35 magistrates pledge to protect environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 35 magistrates from 34 districts took an oath to play an "honest and courageous" role in protecting the environment from pollution.

The oath-taking was held at a weeklong training programme, "Role of Mobile Court to Protect Environment", at Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy in Shahbagh of the capital on Tuesday.

Department of Environment (DoE) Director (enforcement) Mohammad Munir Chowdhury administered the oath to the magistrates, said a DoE press release received yesterday.

He urged the administrative cadre officials to be like fearless soldiers while discharging their duties in stopping rampant environmental pollution.

Rivers and water bodies of the country are being filled up with earth to set up housing projects and brick kilns, posing a serious threat to the environment, he said.

Munir said the level of environmental pollution was crossing the tolerable limit due to a lack of active role by the officials and the illegal practice could not be stopped by only the use of the law and handing down punishment to offenders.

He called upon the magistrates to use mobile courts as a strong instrument in preventing environmental pollution.

Such oath-programmes are being organised to make the administration officials, professionals, and the civil society members conscious about environment so that they are inspired to take up the responsibility and challenge of environmental protection, he added.

DHAKA TODAY

Views-exchange meeting

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will organise a views-exchange meeting with lawyers on amendments to laws; Venue: Bangladesh Supreme Court Ainjibi Samity auditorium; Time: 3:00pm.

Memorial meeting

Gono Forum will hold a memorial meeting marking the first death anniversary of its leader Abdur Rauf; Venue: its premises; Time: 6:00pm.

Human chain

Dhaka University Teachers' Association will form a human chain demanding trial and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the recent deaths in a fire in an Ashulia garment factory; Time: 10:00am.

Programme

Theatre will organise a programme marking the 87th death anniversary of Shaheed Munier Chowdhury;

WEATHER TODAY

Light fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over north and north eastern part of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:24am.

Country's highest temperature 28.7 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 10.4 degrees at Chuadanga.

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

| | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
|------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max: | Min: | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 27.2 | 15.0 | 45 | 55 |
| Chittagong | 26.5 | 15.3 | 68 | 54 |
| Rajshahi | 26.6 | 10.9 | 80 | 78 |
| Rangpur | 25.5 | 12.2 | 84 | 85 |
| Khulna | 28.0 | 13.4 | 64 | 74 |
| Barisal | 27.4 | 13.3 | 71 | 84 |

Indian FM condoles Ashulia, Ctg tragedies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indian External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid expressed his sympathy and offered condolences to those affected by the recent tragedies in Ashulia and Chittagong.

Salman Khurshid conveyed his condolences in a message to Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, said a press release.

He said, "I received the news of the tragedy that occurred during the fire at Tazreen Fashions ready-made garments factory in Ashulia near Dhaka with profound grief and regret. I am also saddened at the loss of lives in the Chittagong flyover accident."

In a separate press release, Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI) mourned the deaths of the garment workers.

The BWCCI urged the government to adopt strict policy to stop recurrence of such incidents.

Elephant, man clashes on rise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Continuous destruction of elephant habitats, deforestation, extension of agricultural land and encroachment on elephant resources have led to rising number of clashes between humans and the large mammals, said Tapan Kumar Dey, conservator of forests.

He said between 2003 and 2010, a total of 180 people were killed in elephant attacks across the country while humans killed 47 elephants.

He was addressing a workshop on "Elephant Conservation in Bangladesh" organised by Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection Project at the forest head office in the capital's Agargaon, said a press release.

The forest conservator said the forest department announced seven areas -- Chunoti, Pablakhali, Teknaf, Sanshu, Dhudhpukuria-Dhopchhari, Fasiakhali, and Kaptai National Orchard -- as wildlife sanctuaries for elephant protection.

Initiatives will be taken in India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to protect the endangered Asian elephants, said the press release.

Rabi Chellam, adviser to Asian Nature Conservation Foundation in India, Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad, Bangladesh country representative at International Union for Conservation of Nature, Chief Forest Conservator Md Yunus Ali, Farid Uddin Ahmed, executive director of Aranyak Foundation, spoke at the ceremony among others.