

NEWS IN *brief*

Serajuddin's death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 41st death anniversary of martyred journalist Serajuddin Hossain.



On the occasion, a discussion and a milad mahfil will be held at his House No-3/11, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur in the capital after Maghrib prayers while a Qurankhwani and milad mahfil at his village in Magura, says a press release.

On this day in 1971, Pakistani occupation army and their collaborators, Razakar and Al-Bader men, abducted him from his Chamelibagh house in the capital and he never returned.

Serajuddin, former executive and news editor of the daily Ittefaq, was the first among the intellectuals who was killed after abduction during the liberation

DoE asks Rajuk not to fill up Uttara Lake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday issued a notice to Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) asking not to construct a road by filling up a portion of Uttara Lake without its approval.

A DoE team on Thursday found that if the road is constructed as per the Rajuk's existing plan, at least two decimals of the lake's land would be occupied, said a DoE press release.

DoE Director Munir Chowdhury requested the Rajuk chairman to send a representative with documents to DoE office on Tuesday.

Contacted, Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda said the road can be made as per the original plan without harming the lake. Rajuk officials will visit

Jobs of 4 HC judges regularised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Zillur Rahman yesterday regularised the appointments of four additional judges to the High Court Division of the Supreme Court (SC), said a law ministry press release.

The judges are Justice Bhabani Prasad Singha, Justice Anwarul Haque, Justice Md Akram Hossain Chowdhury and Justice Md Ashrafal Kamal.

They were appointed as additional judges to the High Court (HC) on December 12, 2010.

Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain will administer the oath-taking at the SC auditorium at



Syeda Zebunnesa Haq, second from left, and Prof Mahfuza Khanam, right, stand with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina after receiving Begum Rokeya Award 2012 yesterday. State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, left, was also present at the award distribution programme held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

PHOTO: BSS

Begum Rokeya Day observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a call for social movement to stop violence against women, women rights and social organisations observed Begum Rokeya Day, marking Begum Rokeya's 132nd birth and 80th death anniversaries, in the capital and Chittagong yesterday.

A rally led by Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique was brought out from Rokeya Hall which was participated by the hall Provost Prof Dr Nazma Shahin and the resident students.

Biplobi Nari Shanghati held a demonstration and rally before the hall demanding exemplary punishment to those responsible for the deaths in the November 24 Ashulia garment factory fire.

Speakers at a discussion, organised by Bangladesh Nari Mukti Andolon at its Lalmatia office, said Begum Rokeya spearheaded the women's rights movement and fought a lifelong battle to ensure Bangalee women's access to education.

National Democratic League also organised a discussion at its Kalyanpur office.

In Chittagong, Bangla-desh Nari Pragati Sangha organised a procession and discussion at DC Hill premises.

Blake lauds govt's counter-terrorism activities

UNB, Dhaka

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O Blake yesterday lauded the government's counter-terrorism initiatives and success in women empowerment.

Blake, at a meeting with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at her office, also expressed his government's desire to work more closely in this regard. US Ambassador Dan W Mozena was also present.

He mentioned that inclusion of Bangladesh as a beneficiary under US President Barack Obama's four global initiatives and the ongoing visits of US high officials to Bangladesh indicate the rising importance of Bangladesh to the US.

He expressed shock over the deaths in the November 24 Ashulia garment factory fire and hoped that raising awareness and proper initiatives would help avoid such horrible incidents.

Dipu Moni thanked the US government for acknowledging that the Rohingya problem could only be permanently resolved within Myanmar.

UN lauds govt's political, electoral reforms

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The visiting assistant secretary general of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs yesterday lauded the government for taking up various political and electoral reforms, particularly the move to make the Election Commission independent.

"The reforms have set Bangladesh as a best example and a role model for the UN and many of its member states in the institutionalisation of democracy," said Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, the assistant secretary general.

He said this when he and his three-member delegation called on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at the foreign ministry.

Oscar Fernandez-Taranco is on a three-day visit to Bangladesh to learn about the preparations by the EC for the next general elections.

He also praised the government for political initiatives to make the EC politi-

cally, institutionally and financially independent, and transform it into a "truly highly professional, efficient and credible electoral institution, much beyond the UN's expectations".

Oscar Fernandez-Taranco assured that the UN would continue its institutional and capacity building support to the Election Commission during the 2013 general elections and beyond, said a foreign ministry press release.

Dipu Moni thanked the UN for its technical support in preparing an electronic voter roll and provision of translucent ballot boxes.

"Bangladesh welcomes UN's continued engagement and partnership with its EC to complement the government's efforts to empower the country's electoral institution," she said.

Oscar Fernandez-Taranco also met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the latter's Gono Bhaban residence in the evening.

Indigenous people's rights must for dev

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To develop the country, the state must ensure human and cultural rights of indigenous communities, speakers said at a seminar yesterday.

The government should resolve problems of the communities and hold dialogues with them, they added.

Bangladesh Adivasi Forum organised the seminar titled "Adivasider Odhikar, Manobadhikar" in Cirdap auditorium in the capital marking International Human Rights Day.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Mizanur Rahman said no country can move forward with flourishing democracy if any community is deprived of its human rights. "It is the duty of the state to protect each community's ethnic, cultural and religious rights," he said over phone as he could not attend the programme.

Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, who also could not attend due to the opposition's road blockade, said over phone that the state must remove worries of indigenous communities concerning implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University's history department also spoke among others.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sonai Sarkar, mother of Kailash Sarkar, a senior correspondent of The Daily Star, passed away due to old age complications at Palita village under Rajor upazila in Madaripur early yesterday. She was 85.

She left behind four sons, three daughters, a number of grandchildren and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

Dhaka Reporters Unity President Shahed Chowdhury, General Secretary Elias Khan and its executive members expressed deep shock and sorrow at her death. They also expressed sympathy to the bereaved family

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the 6th death anniversary of advocate ABM Fazle Rashid

Chowdhury Hiru, a distinguished politician, business personality and social worker.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani, doa, milad mahfil and distribution of food among poor people will be held at his residences in Dhaka, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and ancestral village Gohira of Rawzan in Chittagong, said a press release.

His family members requested all to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



People from all walks of life pay their last respects by placing wreaths on the coffin of Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid at Central Shaheed Minar premises in the capital yesterday. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: STAR

DHAKA TODAY

Journalists' rally

Dhaka Reporters Unity will hold a journalists' rally demanding, among others, trial into the murder of journalist couple Sagar-Runi; Venue: before Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Discussion

Odhikar will organise a discussion marking Human Rights Day; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Rally

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a rally marking Human Rights Day; Venue: Central Shaheed Minar premises; Time: 3:00pm.

Festival

Liberation War Museum will inaugurate a weeklong festival marking Victory Day; Venue: its premises; Time: 4:30pm.

Procession

Jago Bangladesh Garments Shramic Federation will organise a procession marking Human Rights Day; Venue: from before Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:15am.

Seminar

Brac University will hold a seminar "Venture Capital for Entrepreneurship Development in Bangladesh"; Venue: its Mohakhali premises; Time: 3:00pm.

Memorial lecture

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will organise "The Maulvi Shamsuddin Ahmed Memorial Lecture-2012"; Venue: its premises; Time: 4:00pm.

Reception

Chesta will accord a reception to 10 women freedom fighters; Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy; Time: 4:00pm.

Lecture

WEATHER TODAY

Dense 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.

Dense fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:13pm and rises tomorrow at 6:31am.

Country's highest temperature 29.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Khulna, Mongla and Khepupara and lowest 10.2 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	26.5	16.4	96	69
Chittagong	25.5	15.0	89	87
Rajshahi	26.8	11.4	93	74
Rangpur	22.0	15.0	97	96
Khulna	29.0	13.5	90	73
Barisal	28.6	12.4	85	85

Why flyover collapse victims shouldn't be compensated

HC asks authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the authorities concerned to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to give adequate compensations to the family members of the deceased and to the injured in the Bahaddarhat flyover collapse incident.

On November 24, three concrete girders of the under-construction flyover collapsed on a kitchen market in Chittagong city, killing 12 people and injuring at least 50 others.

Yesterday, the HC issued the rule asking the authorities to explain why their inaction to prevent the incident should not be declared illegal.

In the rule, the court ordered the authorities to explain why they should not

be directed to monitor the rest of the flyover's construction work by skilled engineers to ensure safety measures at the construction site.

It also directed them to submit a report on what steps they have taken in this regard within a month.

Secretaries to the ministries of communications, and local government and rural development (LGRD) and cooperatives; deputy commissioner of Chittagong, the flyover's project director and its construction firm Mir Akhtar and Parisa Trade System Limited have been made respondents to the rule.

The court came up with the rule and order after hearing of a writ petition filed on November 26 by one Raihanul Mustafa of Moheshkhali in Cox's Bazar.

Sirajganj road crash kills 5, injures 10

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Five people were killed and 10 others injured in a three-vehicle pile-up on western approach road of Bangabandhu Bridge in Kamarkhand upazila of Sirajganj early yesterday.

The deceased were Azizur Rahman, 40, three vegetable traders Jalal Uddin, 35, Joyanal Abedin, 35, and Hashem Sikder, 45; and the identity of another could not be known immediately.

Bangabandhu West Police Station Sub-Inspector Aslam Uddin said a speeding bus hit a standing truck near Jhaoil railway flyover around 1:00am due to poor visibility caused by dense fog.

Another speeding bus struck the previous bus at the same time, killing trucker Azizur, and Jalal Uddin and Joyanal Abedin instantly.

Hashem and the unidentified succumbed to their injuries on way to Sirajganj General Hospital.

Two injured were taken to Dhaka while the others were admitted to the Hospital.