

NEWS IN *brief*

Death threat issued on Sylhet mayor's son through SMS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Sylhet city mayor Badar uddin Ahmed Kamran received a death threat on his son via cellphone SMS from a number that he does not recognise.

The mayor saw the message yesterday noon although it was sent Saturday night, said Sylhet City Corporation Public Relation Officer Nehar Ranjan Purkayostha.

The anonymous sender in the message said the mayor's son Adnan would be killed if yesterday's SSC examination was not postponed, the PRO said.

However, no general diary in this connection

Kazi Aref remembered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation will remember Kazi Aref Ahmed for his contributions to the formation of the people's court for trial of war criminals and his struggle to establish a secular Bangladesh, said speakers at a commemorative programme yesterday.

They were addressing the memorial discussion on the 14th death anniversary of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Kazi Aref. The JSD organised the event in Colonel Taher Auditorium of its central office in the capital.

On February 16, 1999, Aref was killed by an armed gang while he was speaking at a rally at

Youth dies after falling from train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth died after falling from a running train in the capital's Jurain area yesterday morning.

Rakibul Islam Ridoy, 21, was a management student of Tejgaon College.

Rakibul was hanging from the gate of an overcrowded Kamalapur-bound train when his bag got stuck with a bamboo pole near the rail tracks which caused him to fall, said the victim's friend Raihan Mahmud.

He was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital from a Dayaganj hospital where doctors

Three drown as dredger sinks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three workers died when the dredger they used to work in sank near the bank of the Balu river in the capital's Khilkhet yesterday.

The dead are Mazharul Islam, 22, Yazul Islam, 22, and Asgar Ali, 18.

The three were sleeping in a cabin of the dredger that sank in the morning due to a crack developed in the bottom of it, said Khilkhet police, adding that the cabin was locked from inside.

Police recovered the bodies and handed them



1) People look at a list of war criminals prepared by Youth Research Centre before the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University yesterday. 2) Fashion designers of Bangladesher Fashion Ebong Amra express solidarity with demonstrators, demanding death penalty for war criminals, at Shahbagh in the capital. 3) A troupe of jatra actors arrives at Shahbagh in consensus with the movement.



PHOTO: STAR

INLAND WATER TRANSIT, TRADE
Bangladesh, India agree on need for protocol validity extension

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India have agreed on the need to extend validity of the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade to link it with trade agreement between the two countries.

In a joint statement issued yesterday, Indian and Bangladeshi foreign ministers expressed hopes that the shipping secretary level talks scheduled for February 27 would identify ways to increase cooperation under this transit protocol.

The statement was issued following the second meeting of the Bangladesh-India Joint Consultative Commission which concluded on Saturday. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni led the Bangladesh delegation while External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid led the Indian team.

At the meeting the two countries inked three memorandums of understanding (MoUs) -- formation of a joint foundation, setting up rail link between Akhaura and Agartala, and bringing changes to avoid double taxation -- to enhance bilateral cooperation.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said

Bangladesh has formed an active group to develop a system which will facilitate movement of goods between the two countries, according to the statement issued yesterday.

It said both sides agreed to enhance telecommunication between the two countries.

Reiterating their commitment for early finalisation of the interim agreement to share waters of Teesta and Feni rivers, the two ministers agreed on the need to move forward on the decision to explore possibilities of cooperation in power, water, connectivity and transit in the sub-regional context.

The two ministers stressed on effective implementation of the coordinated border management plan to prevent cross border criminal activities, illegal movement, incidents of violence and loss of lives among other things.

They said the signing of the land boundary agreement has paved the way for settlement of all remaining land boundary issues.

The two ministers stressed the urgent need for upgradation of infrastructure of the land customs stations, land ports and integrated checkposts.

They also underscored the need for removal of non-tariff barriers on both the sides, the joint statement said, adding that the ministers hoped an agreement between the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute would be signed at the earliest.

Reviewing status of project implementation under the US\$80 crore Indian Line of Credit (LoC), the foreign ministers noted that projects amounting to \$78.54 crore were being processed and were at various stages of implementation.

They also stressed the need to expedite early completion of all formalities of the new projects so that the benefits could reach the people.

Responding to Dipu Moni's emphasis on Bangladeshi government's appreciation regarding conversion of US\$20 crore of the LoC into grant, the external affairs minister of India said the first tranche of the grant would be released to Bangladesh shortly for utilisation of projects that were of priority to Dhaka.

The next meeting of JCC would be held in New Delhi.

Two cops sued in Ctg for giving death threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two police officers have been sued on charges of threatening to kill a man over a land dispute in Chittagong.

One Nur Mohammad, 32, of Sabujbagh Residential Area, filed his complaint before Chittagong Metropolitan Sessions Judge SM Mujibur Rahman accusing sub-inspectors Farrukh Ahmad Minhaz and Harun-or-Rashid of Halishahar Police Station yesterday.

Taking the case into cognisance, the court ordered assistant commissioner of detective branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police to investigate the matter.

In the first information report, Nur mentioned that SI Minhaz sent a fake notice to Nur on January 23 over a land dispute case and called him to the police station, said plaintiff's counsel Sanwar Ahmed Lovelu.

SI Harun went to the plaintiff's residence on January 24, pointed a gun at him and threatened to shoot him over the same issue, he said.

Refuting the allegation, SI Minhaz said Nur was accused in a land dispute case and he called Nur to the police station for interrogation.

SI Harun also denied the allegation saying that he did not go to Nur's residence and does not know his address.

LOCAL GOVT, ETHNIC LAWS
Coexistence cause problems: Research

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the coexistence of local government system and traditional ethnic laws, ethnic people face difficulties and their customary practices remain out of the state's recognition, speakers said at a research paper publication ceremony yesterday.

Research and Development Collective (RDC), in association with National Institute of Local Government (NILG) and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), conducted the research in Chittagong Hill Tracts and northwest Bangladesh.

The research paper titled "Coherence Between Customary Practices of Selected Marginal Ethnicities and Formal Governance System in Chittagong Hill Tracts and North-West Bangladesh" was launched in the capital's Biam auditorium.

Abu Naser, Trustee of RDC, and Dr Shah Alam, chairman of Bangladesh National Law Commission, were present among others.



Islamic Chhatra Shibir activists tear down an advertisement on a billboard bearing the picture of renowned writer Muhammad Zafar Iqbal in Darshan Deurli area on Sylhet-Sunamganj road yesterday, during a procession brought out to drum up support for today's hartal called by Jamaat-e-Islami.

PHOTO: STAR

DHAKA TODAY

Sit-in
Gulshan Niketon Recreation Society will stage a sit-in demanding trial of the killers of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haidar; Venue: Fazole Rabbi Park, Gulshan; Time: 7:00am-6:00pm.

Poetry recital
Transparency International Bangladesh will arrange a poetry recital against corruption; Venue: Rabindra Sarobar; Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Bangabandhu Parishad will hold a discussion on language movement; Venue: Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh; Time: 4:00pm.

Human chain
Sammilito Awami Samarthak Jote will form a human chain protesting the hartal called by Jamaat-Shibir; Venue:

East Delta University, Collegiate School win Star-MTB idea contest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

East Delta University and Chittagong Collegiate School won the fourth edition of The Daily Star-Mutual Trust Bank Business Idea Contest held in Chittagong city on Saturday.

Teams from four schools and three universities participated in the final round of the brainstorming contest on innovative business ideas.

The three other schools are Sunshine Grammar School, Silver Bells Girls High School and Agrabad Girls High School. The schools presented their ideas on the theme "Branding Cox's Bazar".

International Islamic University Chittagong, East Delta University and Chittagong University (CU) presented their ideas on "Reviving Old Heritage".

Teams from Sunshine Grammar School and CU were the runners-up in their respective levels.

Drishty, a cultural organisation, organised the competition in association with The Daily Star and Mutual Trust Bank (MTB) where a total of 44 teams-- 24 school teams and 20 teams from eight universities-- participated.

Md Ahasan-Uz Zaman, additional managing director of MTB, distributed trophies and certificates among the winners and runners-up.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain or thundershowers likely
UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Chittagong, Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions till 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may fall slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:55pm and rises tomorrow at 6:29am.

Country's highest temperature 31.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 14.8 degree Celsius at Feni.

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	23.3	19.7	70	94
Chittagong	28.8	19.4	64	63
Rajshahi	18.0	17.3	97	98
Rangpur	19.4	16.6	95	90
Khulna	21.0	19.0	95	98
Barisal	23.5	18.8	80	95



The Dhaka city unit of BNP organised a rally in front of the party central office at Naya Paltan in the capital yesterday to press home the BNP-led 18-party alliance's demand for restoring the caretaker government system for holding the next general elections.

PHOTO: STAR