

NEWS IN *brief*

Khaleda visits Satkhira today

UNB, Dhaka
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will visit Satkhira today to meet and financially help the families of those killed in the recent violence there.

Khaleda, also the leader of the opposition in parliament, started her journey for the southwestern district from her Gulshan residence at 4:00pm yesterday.

She will go to Kalaroa upazila this morning and talk to the families of the victims.

Later, she will address a condolence rally at Satkhira Government Girl's High School ground in

JS to go into session April 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The 17th session of the ninth parliament starts on April 21.

Acting President Abdul Hamid yesterday called for the session, said a parliamentary secretariat press release.

The Jatiya Sangsad is to elect the country's 20th president during the session. The post of president has fallen vacant following the death of former presi-

'Mugger' killed in mob beating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An alleged mugger was killed in a mob beating in the capital's Paltan area yesterday.

Mahmudul Hasan, sub-inspector of Paltan Police Station, said locals beat the unidentified youth at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque around 1:00pm suspecting him "mugger". Later, police rescued him and sent to Dhaka

Mahila Parishad concerned over human skeleton found in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday expressed concern over the incident of recovering a skeleton of a female from inside a drum at an abandoned house in the capital's Shyampur on Monday night.

In a statement, the parishad leaders demanded the government take necessary steps to find out the identity of the victim and ensure proper punishment to the perpetrators following an impartial investigation.

They also called upon all to build social resistance to violence against women and children

Presidency University gets new VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Prof Muhammad Mahboob Ali has been appointed as the vice-chancellor of Presidency University in the capital's Gulshan area.

According to the university's website, Prof Ali served as the head of the School of Business of Presidency University.

He has been appointed as the VC on Monday for the next four years following a proposal of the Board

Netherlands envoy visits Ferdous Biotech's laboratory

METRO DESK
Netherlands Ambassador to Bangladesh Gerben de Jong visited the laboratory of Ferdous Biotech Pvt Ltd on invitation of its research wing, the Development of Biotechnology and Environmental Conservation Centre (DEBTEC), yesterday.

During the visit, he spoke to scientists working in the laboratory. He listened to the farmers' experiences that they face in field level.

Later, he visited DEBTEC Orchid House and growth chamber of the tissue culture laboratory.

Ferdous Biotech Managing Director and DEBTEC Executive Director Dr Ferdousi Begum



Members of Rapid Action Battalion in a pre-dawn raid seize a large number of sharp weapons, jihadi books, leaflets and bombs from a mess controlled by Islami Chhatra Shibir in Sapura area of Rajshahi city.

PHOTO: STAR

AL decides to handle Hefajat march peacefully

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Against the backdrop of the radical Islamist organisation Hefajat-e-Islam's resolve to go ahead with its long march Friday, some key figures in the ruling Awami League and influential ministers sat in a meeting yesterday about how to tackle the situation.

They decided to handle the heated political situation in a peaceful manner and not to allow any effort to create anarchy, according to sources at the meeting, which took place at the home ministry.

"We can't allow the situation to spill over further," an influential minister present at the meetingsaid.

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir said the government had taken an all-out preparation to maintain law and order during the Hefajat-e-Islam long march scheduled to start from Chittagong on Friday.

"We don't have any problem if the long march is held peacefully. But measures will be taken if there is a breakdown of law and order," he said.

About BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami's support to the long march, he said, "I have heard that the BNP-led 18-party alliance has lent

support to the long march. Begum Khaleda Zia and other leaders will have to take the responsibility if any untoward incidents occur."

The home minister said 11 bloggers who had hurt Islamic sentiment through their writings had been identified. "Four of them have so far been arrested while efforts are on to round up the others," he told reporters after the meeting.

Deputy Leader of the Parliament Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Food Minister Abdur Razzaque, Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan, Forest Minister Hasan Mahmud, State Minister for Law Kamrul Islam, and State Minister for LGRD Jahangir Kabir Nanak attended the meeting.

"We don't believe that the religion-based organisations will create anarchy and harm peace in the name of Islam," Hanif told reporters, emerging from the meeting.

He said the government was conscious about whether Jamaat-e-Islami had any undercover operatives inside Hefajat-e-Islam.

Communal harmony to be safeguarded: Ashraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam yesterday said the government would strictly control violence in the name of religion and protect communal harmony at any cost.

The people of Chittagong have been living in communal harmony for ages, and this tradition must continue, he told a roadside rally at Chandpur Bazar in Banshkhal upazila.

The Awami League general secretary later attended a workers' meeting organised by the local AL unit on Satkania Upazila Parishad premises.

Addressing the programme, he said evidences suggested that the attacks on religious minorities in Satkania and those on Buddhists in Ramu of Cox's Bazar were similar.

Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir were involved in the Ramu violence, and they were responsible for the atrocities against minorities in Chittagong too, he added.

Ashraf urged AL leaders and activists to be united so that such incidents do not repeat.

AL Chittagong south district unit General Secretary Moslem Uddin and Chittagong District Council Administrator MA Salam also addressed the meeting.

Earlier, the minister visited the Buddhist temple, "Rupnagar Sudarshan Buddha Bihar", in Satkania upazila, which came under attack during the recent Jamaat-Shibir mayhem.

He also addressed another AL workers' rally in Lohagara upazila.

Ensure world-class education

Nahid urges universities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday urged public and private universities to strive to improve the education quality, learning atmosphere and teaching methods in order to ensure world-class education in the country.

"The universities will have to continue their endeavour to teach new contents to the students so that they can face the challenges of today's world," he said while addressing the 6th convocation of the University of Asia Pacific (UAP) in Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

Delivering the convocation speech, former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman urged the graduates to make big plans, take informed risks and learn from mistakes.

Degrees were conferred on 1,438 students in the convocation. Fourteen students were awarded Chancellor's and Vice Chancellor's gold medals for their outstanding academic achievements.



Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid hands over a certificate to a student of the University of Asia Pacific at the university's 6th convocation at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY



Academics, students, bloggers and citizens' groups at a rally at the base of Raju memorial on Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding immediate release of arrested bloggers.

PHOTO: STAR

Amar Desh editor sued over report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A defamation suit was filed against the daily Amar Desh editor and three others, including its publisher, for publishing a report on a Tk 3 crore alleged bribe demand by minister without portfolio Suranjit Sengupta in the daily on March 31.

Awami League activist Humayun Rashid Lovelu of Jogdol village in Derai upazila under Sunamganj district filed the case with the chief judicial magistrate court of Sylhet.

Amar Desh Editor Mahmudur Rahman, publisher Hashmat Ali, reporter Quader Gani Chowdhury, and founder and chairman of Bangladesh Female Academy Jamil Chowdhury have been made accused in the case.

The plaintiff in the case alleged that the daily harmed the reputation of Suranjit socially and politically by publishing the report. The report says Suranjit demanded Tk3 crore as bribe from Tk 10 crore allocated for Bangladesh Female Academy, a school for orphans in Derai upazila.

Lovelu also alleged that Jamil Chowdhury had supplied "untrue information" to the reporter.

Taking cognisance of the case, Magistrate Abu Syed Dilzar Hossain ordered the officer-in-charge of Sylhet Kotwali Police Station to investigate the matter and submit a report, said court sources.

The court set the date of hearing of the case on April 21.



WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Dhaka, Faridpur, Patuakhali, Rajshahi and Pabna and it may continue, Met Office said.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:15pm and rises tomorrow at 5:47am.

Country's highest temperature 39.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 20.6 degrees at Dinajpur.

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	36.0	25.5	72	49
Chittagong	33.2	25.0	82	74
Rajshahi	37.5	23.4	48	44
Rangpur	34.3	21.6	64	47
Khulna	36.4	25.5	72	49
Barisal	35.2	25.0	79	52