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# Big day for booklovers

Ekushey Boi Mela opens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Crowds started to grow steadily around Bangla Academy in the capital in the winter afternoon. They stood patiently in long queues for the much-awaited Ekushey Book Fair to kick off.

As the clock struck five yesterday, booklovers made their way to the Academy premises and Suhrawardy Udyan across the road.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had earlier inaugurated the book fair. In order to accommodate the increasing number of publishers, writers and visitors, Bangla Academy is holding the fair at Suhrawardy Udyan for the first time as well as on its premises.

"There had been a demand for long for expanding the fair's area," said Murshid Anwar, deputy director (public relations) of the Academy.

In previous years, the organisers had allowed setting up of stalls on the road beside the Academy to cater to the needs of publishers and other institutions. But it was not sufficient, he said.

This time, only public and private institutions and publishers of children's literature and little magazines have been allowed to build stalls on the Academy premises, while the other publishers have set up stalls at Suhrawardy Udyan.

Welcoming the Academy's decision to expand the fair's area, Mohammad Liaquatullah, publisher of Student Ways, said, "We have been demanding it for long."

He, however, was not happy with the arrangement of the stalls.

Mazharul Islam, publisher of Anya Prakash, said, "There might be mismanagement since the fair is being held at the Udyan for the first time. We hope to get bigger space next year for setting up pavilions."

Writer Lutfur Rahman Riton welcomed the expansion of the fair venue, and said the road adjacent to the Academy should be made

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina flips the pages of a book at a stall in Ekushey Boi Mela in the capital yesterday right after the inaugurating the month-long book fair at Bangla Academy compound.

PHOTO: BSS

# DEMAND FOR REPATRIATION FROM IRAQ

## 14 confined workers start hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fourteen Bangladeshi workers, who have been stranded jobless in Iraq for nearly a year, yesterday began a hunger strike demanding immediate repatriation.

"We stopped eating today [Saturday]. We won't eat until we are given air tickets home," Shafiqul Islam, one of the stranded migrants, told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

"This is impossible. How long can we suffer this way? We would rather die here," Shafiqul said.

Shafiqul, along with 13 fellow ill-fated workers, have been "confined" to an accommodation in the Iraqi city of Najaf, 160 kilometres south of Baghdad for about a year.

A total of 27 workers were sent to Iraq between January and February last year on promises of construction jobs at M Kodja Co General Trading with a monthly salary of \$350.

Four recruiting agencies -- Meghna Trade International, Morning Sun Enterprise, East

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Inqilab's press opened

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers last night opened the printing press of the Bangla daily Inqilab, paving the way for the resumption of its publication.

A team of the Detective Branch of police opened the press on Ram Krishna Mission Road at Motijheel in the capital around 6:45pm, Habibur Rahman Talukder, general manager of the daily, told The Daily Star.

He said they would start publishing the newspaper

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

# Tribunal-1 resumes war trial soon

Appointment of chairman this week

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 is going to get new chairman this week after more than one month of vacancy in the post that halted the trial in war crimes cases.

Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star on Friday that the process of appointing the ICT-1 chief was going on and would be completed in a week.

"A sitting judge from the High Court Division of the Supreme Court will be appointed as the chairman of the

International Crimes Tribunal-1," he said.

The minister refused to say why the government took more than one month after former chairman Justice ATM Fazle Kabir went on retirement on December 31 last year.

However, sources in the law ministry and the SC said the government was looking for a "committed" and "suitable" judge for the post.

A few HC judges were requested to take over, but they were yet to take a final decision, the sources added.

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## UPAZILA POLLS Schedule for third phase this week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission may announce the schedule of the third phase of upazila polls by this week.

Elections to around 74

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PRAYER TIMING		February 2
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:52	5:56
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation



The body of biker Bill Standley mounted on a 1967 Harley-Davidson inside a glass coffin. Standley, 82 at the time of death, wanted his final journey on the bike that took him to 49 states of the United States.

## On highway to heaven

American buried 'riding' his favourite bike

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

An American biker has made his final journey on his beloved Harley-Davidson and been buried astride the motorbike in a clear box.

It was Bill Standley's wish to share a grave with the 1967 bike, which took him travelling around 49 out of America's 50 states.

His body was dressed in full riding gear and positioned on the Harley in a see-through box, which was driven to the cemetery on a trailer before being lowered into the extra-large plot.

Work on the unusual coffin started six years before Standley's death, aged 82.

He built the plastic casket that would hold him and his

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

# Violence rocks Thailand

Polls today amid blasts, clashes in Bangkok

AFP, Bangkok

Explosions and heavy gunfire rattled Bangkok yesterday as pro- and anti-government protesters clashed on the eve of controversial Thai elections seen as unlikely to end a cycle of violence in the kingdom after months of opposition rallies.

Bystanders, security personnel and journalists raced to take cover in a shopping mall after a masked gunman began spraying bullets from an assault rifle during confrontations between government supporters and

opposition demonstrators, according to an AFP reporter.

At least six people were injured as a busy intersection in a northern suburb of the capital was turned into a battle zone with volleys of sustained gunfire ricocheting off buildings for over an hour in a daylight attack that sent shockwaves across the city.

Tensions are high in the capital ahead of snap elections today, which opposition demonstrators have vowed to block as they seek to prevent the likely re-election of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Bangkok has been rocked by weeks of sometimes bloody political violence during rallies by a loose coalition opposed to Yingluck and the enduring influence of her brother Thaksin Shinawatra -- a former premier ousted by the military in 2006.

Yesterday's clashes happened after demonstrators blocking ballot boxes from being delivered from the Lak Si district office -- one of 50 in the capital -- were confronted by a group of some 200 government supporters, some armed with sticks and metal bars.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

**ONLINE POLL**

Do you agree with Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad that women of the country faced challenges last year as religious extremism entered the political arena?

Yes (53%)  
No (47%)

TOTAL VOTES: 276

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you think it is justified for the political parties to pick candidates for the upazila parishad polls which is a non-political election?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

হরতাল ও অবরোধ সহিংসতায় নির্বিচারে গাছ কাটার ফলে সৃষ্ট ক্ষতি পূরণকল্পে করণীয়

‘হরতাল আনাস বিন মালিক (রা.) বলেন, ‘রাসূল (সা.) বলেন: যদি কেয়ামত সংগঠিত হয় আর তোমাদের কারো হাতে যদি একটি খেজুর বৃক্ষের চারা থাকে, সে যদি দাঁড়াতে সক্ষম নাও হয় তবু সে যেন বৃক্ষচারাটি রোপণ করে।’ -ইমাম বুখারী: আল-আদাবুল মুফরাদ

- গাছ আমাদের খাদ্য, পুষ্টি, আশ্রয় ও ভেজ জলের অন্যতম উৎস;
- গাছ আমাদের অক্সিজেন দেয়, পরিবেশের ভারসাম্য রক্ষা করে। একটি পূর্ণবয়স্ক গাছ বছরে ৪৮ পাউন্ড কার্বন-ডাই-অক্সাইড গ্রহণ করে, পরিবেশ শোধন করে এবং সমপরিমাণ অক্সিজেন ত্যাগ করে যা দুইজন মানুষকে বেঁচে থাকতে সাহায্য করে। একটি বড় আকারের গাছ প্রতিদিন ৪০০ গ্যালন পানি বাতাসে ছেড়ে দেয় যা বাতাসের তাপ শোষণ করে পরিবেশ ঠান্ডা রাখে। গাছ ঝড়-জলোচ্ছ্বাস প্রতিরোধ, বৃষ্টিপাতে সহায়তা, শব্দদূষণ রোধ, বাতাস-তাপের সমতা রক্ষা, জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ ও চিত্তবিনোদনে সাহায্য করে;
- গাছ থেকে জ্বালানি ও আসবাবপত্রের উপকরণ পাওয়া যায়। গাছ পশুপাখিরও পরম আশ্রয়স্থল এবং খাদ্যের উৎস। গাছ মাটির ক্ষয়রোধ করে, জমির উর্বরতা বাড়ায় ও ভূ-নিষ্কাশ পানির স্তর বাড়িয়ে দেয়;
- বৃক্ষ আমাদের অকৃত্রিম বন্ধু। সাম্প্রতিক সহিংসতায় নির্বিচারে অসংখ্য গাছ ধ্বংস করে পরিবেশ নষ্ট ও দেশকে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত করেছে তারা প্রকারান্তরে মানবজাতিকেই ধ্বংসের কিনারায় ঠেলে দিয়েছে;
- এ ক্ষতি পুষিয়ে নিতে বসতবাড়ির আঙিনা, রাস্তার দুইপাশ, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, ধর্মীয় প্রতিষ্ঠান, অফিস আঙিনা, হাটবাজার, বাঁধ এসব জায়গায় ভালো জাতের ফলদ, বনজ ও ভেজ গাছের চারা-কলম লাগাতে হবে;
- মানসম্মত ও সুলভ মূল্যে চারা-কলম পেতে দেশব্যাপী কৃষি সম্প্রসারণ অধিদপ্তরের হটকালচার সেন্টার, বাংলাদেশ কৃষি উন্নয়ন কর্পোরেশনের উদ্যান উন্নয়ন কেন্দ্র, এগ্রো সার্ভিস সেন্টার এবং বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইন্সটিটিউটের উদ্যান গবেষণা কেন্দ্রে যোগাযোগ করুন।

বিস্তারিত পরামর্শের জন্য নিকটস্থ উপজেলা কৃষি অফিস অথবা উপসহকারী কৃষি কর্মকর্তার সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন

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