



A sky lantern being launched on March 27 last year at the Fanush Festival. The exact day of the festival is decided according to the Hindu calendar. The day is primarily celebrated to commemorate the return of Lord Rama from his 14 years of exile. However, there are many others stories associated with the festival. The photo was snapped by a finalist in the 'Festivals' category of the 'inPixel' photo contest of The Daily Star.



PHOTO: ABDUR RAHMAN

Sramik League to lay siege to Khaleda's office Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Sramik League, labour wing of the ruling Awami League, will lay siege to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office on Monday.

Sukkur Mahmud, president of Sramik League, announced the programme yesterday at a protest rally against the ongoing blockade enforced by the BNP-led alliance, in Motijheel of the capital.

He said they would lay siege to Khaleda's office at 11:00am and urged the organisation's leaders and activists to be present at Gulshan-2 on time.

Food Minister Qamrul Islam, who was present as the chief guest, backed the programme and hoped it would be successful.

The minister said there was no ban on political activities and that the BNP

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Attack AL men but not innocents: Mosharraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain urged the BNP-led alliance not to attack innocent people, and said if the blockade supporters have any hostility towards Awami League, they can attack AL leaders and activists.

The minister said this while visiting the burn unit of Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

He criticised the BNP leaders for "failing to involve people in their so-called movement".

State Minister for Land Saifuzzaman Chowdhury also visited the hospital where they donated money for the burn victims.

UK urges cooperation among political parties

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Expressing sorrow over the death of innocent people in the blockade violence, the UK yesterday called on political parties in Bangladesh to come together and break the cycle of violence and disruption.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Gibson, who returned to Dhaka from the UK yesterday, also urged the government and all political parties to exercise restraint and respect the rule of law, said a press statement.

He expressed his sadness and regret to learn of the continuing loss of life and injury, as well as the detrimental effect on children's education and the economy caused by the ongoing violence across Bangladesh.

New US envoy's meeting with foreign secy 'exceptionally warm'

She however doesn't take any question from reporters

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The new US Ambassador in Dhaka Marica Stephens Bloom Bernicat yesterday said she would work with the Bangladesh government to make the bilateral relation stronger.

"We have such a deep and broad relationship. I have a direct mandate to make it even stronger," Bernicat told reporters after her first meeting with the Bangladesh foreign secretary.

The US envoy, who presented her credentials to President Abdul Hamid on Wednesday, said she looked forward to working with everybody in the government.

Ambassador Bernicat, in her first appearance before the press, did not take any

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Foreign visitors lament lack of translations at book fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreigners are intrigued by Amar Ekushey Granthamela every year in February but often fail to find good translated works of Bangladeshi writers.

Expatriate development worker Danielle Naranjilla, in particular, is curious about works of popular writers whose books attract long queues at certain stalls. Unfortunately she did not find enough translated works.

Isabelle Robillard from Canada was



also seen looking for English translations of fictions by Bangladeshi writers on Wednesday. "I want to read a nice novel about the Bangalee culture. I have never come across any works of

Bangladeshi writers in Canada, so I wanted to buy something in the fair." However, her friend Sazid Zaman could not find anything to suggest and all Robillard could buy was a book to help learn Bangla.

Anypokash which owns over 100 titles by best-selling author Humayun Ahmed, has only five translations of his writings among which "Gouripur Junction" is available in Hindi,

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Selected Shwapno outlets:
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All Gulshan Branches
All Banani Branches
Manikpuri Para Branch
Green Road Branch

Thought for food

Safe Food for all is a shared responsibility

It is good news that in the recent years general consumers have become more and more aware and conscious of how food and drinks get contaminated and of the issues concerning food safety. As a result, many of them now refuse to buy food items that look contaminated and not safe for consumption. There is no denying that food is a fundamental need for human beings and it is impossible to survive without safe foods and drinks. Every year millions of people suffer from unexpected food poisoning after having unsafe foods and various types of drinks and effects arises from contamination of pathogenic microbes (bacteria, virus moulds & yeasts etc), Chemical contamination (artificial additives, preservatives, residual effect of pesticides, herbicides) as well as physical contamination.

Having safe and nutritious food along with food security should be one of the most important attempts to ensure the rate of malnutrition and improve public health by reducing food poisoning. But the quality and safety of food depend on the efforts of everyone involved in the complex food chain (from "Farm to Fork"). The roles and responsibilities of different parties are vital to ensure food safety and development of food safety environment.

Role and responsibility of public sector

■ Government authorities (regulatory and enforcement authority) are primarily responsible for guiding the system with the help of clear and rational national food laws which should be included as a consulting process involving all stakeholders and this sector is in the best position to influence how the food safety system can work efficiently. Regulations must be dealt with all aspects of the entire food safety system from production to consumption.

■ Responsible to develop effective surveillance and monitoring systems in order to ensure implementation and maintenance of food safety law. Collect and disseminate information relevant to food safety to all interested parties.

■ Also responsible to develop public awareness regarding food safety (particularly, food labeling, personal hygiene, preparation, cooking, chilling, holding & storage) by using mass media.

Role and responsibility of Primary producers

■ To ensure food safety farmers have to pay attention to good agricultural practices, understand safety issues and follow sanitary provisions. Develop relationship with public authorities as well as Scientists and advisory services that provide information on the correct use of fertilizers, pesticides, veterinary drugs and other products used in farm.

Role and responsibility of other parties (Processors, Marketers, Food services, Importers)

■ Other parties including Processors, marketers and distributors should recognize the need for effective control of food safety hazards, and combine their



efforts with those of other private partners, academic research and governments to address food safety concerns. Private industry can contribute by adopting an effective and comprehensive food safety system such as HACCP based food safety system. Effective development and maintenance of HACCP based system will facilitate good practices and procedures in order to produce or serve safe and good quality products consistently. HACCP based food safety system is not only necessary to ensure product safety but also system documentation and record keeping can be used as Due-diligence for business.

Role of consumers

■ An important and crucial role can be played by consumers in a comprehensive food system and awareness of food safety issues as well as knowledge of good practices to protect their food from hazards during purchase, preparation, storage and consumption. In addition they also can play an important role in expressing their demand and can also be powerful forces that can direct the market place to provide access to and make available fresh and processed food that constitutes healthy diet and customers can have expected foods or drinks as they pay for. In addition, an important role can be played by consumers Organizations such as advocacy of food safety, quality, nutritional and related matters as well as providing assistance in education and information.

All along the food chain, various procedures and good practices should be implemented to ensure that the food which reaches the consumer's table is fit for consumption and minimises the risk of contamination so that the population as a whole is healthier from the benefits of safe quality food. But responsibility for food safety should not only be the priority of professionals in the food industry, but everyone is equally responsible in order to ensure the safety of food from farm to fork as a shared responsibility.

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Hasan shot dead fleeing Hindu men, boy

Witness tells International Crimes Tribunal-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A prosecution witness yesterday testified before the International Crimes Tribunal-1 on how fugitive war crimes accused Syed Hasan Ali shot dead three persons and led other Razakars in the killing of another six in Kishoreganj on September 27 during the 1971 Liberation War.

The 15th witness, Shamsul Alam, now 60, used to earn his livelihood selling jute. He and others were returning to his Bargaon village on a boat after buying jute from Chouranga Bazar when around 30 Razakars, the Pakistani occupation army's auxiliary force, led by Hasan stopped them near Kurerpar and asked whether they were Hindus.



Hasan Ali

When they replied in the negative, the Razakars gave chase to another boat carrying around 17 Hindu men, women and children leaving for shelter in India. Shamsul and his partners were asked to follow and the Hindus were taken to a riverbank by Belongka village.

"One among them directed other Razakars to bring three males from the boat. The person who gave the direction was wearing a khaki dress and white tupi (prayer cap)," Shamsul said.

The Hindus were asked to form a line. "The person who had passed the orders shot them from behind. Turning on a torchlight, he shot one round of bullet at each to confirm their death," the witness said.

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