



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



REGD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXV No. 91 | BAISHAKH 1, 1422 BS | **Your Right to Know** | JAMADIUS SANI 24, 1436 HIJRI | 20 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE : Tk 12.00

Pahela Baishakh

Bangalees' biggest festival today

RIFAT MUNIM

With the soothing spring wind fading, a sultry heat takes hold and a blustery wind sets in, presaging a series of storm that would ravage the otherwise green Bengal. Baishakh thus arrives, apparently throwing everything into disarray, as if a masterly nature painting was tampered with insanely by some lunatic.

The first month in the Bengali calendar, however, has a much deeper bearing on our psyche. As most of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

PART-1

HILSA & BAISHAKH

To us Bangalees, hilsa isn't just a fish. It's an integral part of our culture and heritage. Be it fried or cooked with mustard, hilsa is a must in Pahela Baishakh celebration. But they aren't anymore safe in our rivers, home to world's 60pc hilsa. This four-part series focuses on the existential crisis, changing habitat and ways to conserve this mystique fish.

HILSA ELUSIVE

Price exorbitant on huge demand-supply gap; high duty discourages import

SOHEL PARVEZ

Najmul Alam went to a fish market in the capital's Motijheel to buy hilsa last week, well ahead of Pahela Baishakh, to avoid runaway prices. For him the celebration of Bangla New Year is incomplete without the fish.

But he had to return home empty-handed, as the prices were too high for someone like him from the middle class. The seller demanded Tk 6,000 for a frozen pair, each weighing over 1,000 gram (frozen hilsas are sold at lower prices than fresh catches).

The prices have remained more or less the same this week too,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Two pairs of hilsa with an asking price of Tk 10,000. A ban on hilsa catching and high import duty are probably going to make many stay away from the national fish this Pahela Baishakh. The photo was taken yesterday morning at Mallbagh Bazar in the capital. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



The Daily Star wishes its valued readers, patrons, well-wishers and advertisers a happy Bangla New Year

1422



The Daily Star offices will remain closed today on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh. Therefore, the newspaper will not come out tomorrow.

TOP QUOTE

"I hope she [Khaleda Zia] will not have enough strength left to think again of ousting the

PRIME MINISTER
SHEIKH HASINA
DURING A VIDEOCONFERENCE WITH DISTRICT OFFICIALS



A number of rival mayor candidates in DSCC polls have their arms around each other and exchange greetings during a views-exchange meeting with the EC at the Krishibid Institute yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

EC asked to ensure candidates' security

'Threat' worries many Dhaka south hopefuls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of mayoral and councillor aspirants of Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday demanded the Election Commission take effective measures to ensure their security, saying they have been facing threats.

Without security of candidates, there cannot be a congenial atmosphere for free and fair polls, they said at a meeting organised by the returning officer of DSCC.

Around 35 candidates spoke at the event, held at the Krishibid Institution Bangladesh. Of them, around 20 expressed security concerns.

In response, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad said



Günter Grass dies at 87

AP, Berlin

Günter Grass, the Nobel-winning German writer who gave voice to the generation that came of age during the horrors of the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

HIGHEST SELLING CEMENT
in Bangladesh now for **12** years



Born to Build

SHAH CEMENT