

AIDS treatment to be free of cost: Nasim

BSS, Dhaka
The government has taken initiatives to provide treatments and medicines free of cost to HIV positive patients at different hospitals, said Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday.
The hospitals are the Infectious Disease Hospital at Mohakhali, Dhaka; Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, Chittagong Medical College, Khulna Medical College and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College University in Dhaka.
He said, "The health sector achieved a lot of success, our hospitals are well-equipped with updated technologies but we do not have the specialised hospitals for AIDS-affected people yet."
Besides, there are seven more medical college hospitals across the country where people can have free HIV detection test, the minister added.



Honey bees feeding on the nectar of flowers of sweet cumin plants (locally known as Misty Soj, Lomba Soj and Digla Soj) at Dhalatengor in Tangail's Kalihati upazila on Thursday. Curries are seasoned with the spice to add flavours. Its green leaves are also used in traditional dishes. Sweet cumin is planted in the Bangla month of Kartik and harvested in late spring or in the month of Chaitra. The spice currently sells for Tk 4,200 per maund (37kg).
PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

NEWS IN brief

ATM Shamsul Huda president, Omar Sadat GS of Gulshan Society

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Gulshan residents elected a 25-member executive committee of the Gulshan Society for the term of 2016-2018 with the incumbent president ATM Shamsul Huda re-elected, said a newly elected office bearer.
Barrister Omar Sadat bagged the post of general secretary while his outgoing predecessor Delwar Hossain Dulal was elected one of the two male vice-presidents. The other male vice-president was Neaz Rahman and advocate Seema Haider Chowdhury was elected the female vice-president, said Dulal. Rokia Quader was elected joint secretary.



Shamsul Huda

Ctg housewife burnt to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
A housewife was burnt to death and a minor injured as fire originated from a gas-oven while she was cooking and spread inside a mud-house at Rangunia upazila in Chittagong yesterday.
The deceased was Shahin Akhter, 30, wife of Shafiqul Alam of Dakkhin Razanagar and the injured was Md Ruhan, their one-year-old son, said Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Rangunia Police.
Shahin was taken to Chittagong Medical College Hospital, where the on-duty doctors declared her dead, said CMCH police.
Ruhan is undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

Dr Ehsan gets humanitarian award

CITY DESK
Dr Ehsan Hoque, a child rights activist, founder and executive director of Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI), was awarded a humanitarian award by Rajshahi Medical College in recognition of his contribution to humanity, said a press release yesterday.
Dr Masum Habib, principal of Rajshahi Medical College, presented the award to Dr Hoque.



BUP, CUB sign deal to boost co-op

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) and Canadian University of Bangladesh (CUB) was signed yesterday to establish a foundation for promoting academic cooperation and intercultural understanding, says a press release.
Major General Sheikh Mamun Khaled, vice-chancellor of BUP and William H Derrenger, project director and vice-chancellor designate of CUB signed the agreement at a hotel in the capital.

3 cases filed over vandalism at CU Move to import 500MW more power from India

CITY CORRESPONDENT
The Chittagong University (CU) authority on Friday night filed three cases over the three recent incidents of vandalism on CU campus.
CU Registrar (acting) Prof Kamrul Huda filed the cases with Hathazari Police Station accusing 10 persons by name and 80 unnamed people over the incidents which occurred on February 4, 8 and 9, said Officer-in-Charge Md Ismail.
Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist Fasiual Rahman Sonet and 25 others are accused in one case filed over the vandalism of a door and six windows of the physics department on February 4 after an academic committee denied taking a special exam for a course they had failed earlier.
Six BCL activists, Arafat Hossain, Bayezid Sajal, Imtiaz Uddin Chowdhury, Istiak Ahmed Tanvir, Arafatul Islam and Mahmudul Islam, and 30 others are accused in another case filed over the vandalism of several rooms during fighting among BCL groups at Shah Amanat Hall on February 8.
The third case was filed over the vandalism of several rooms of Suhrawardy Hall in a similar BCL clash on February 9 accusing three persons by name, including Arafatul, and 25 unnamed.

BSS, Dhaka
According to a ministry official, the government has a plan for achieving energy efficiency in the near future by implementing all mega projects. However, load shedding was almost an everyday phenomenon a few years ago to the utter sufferings of all people across the country, but today electricity failure is seldom seen anywhere in both urban and rural areas.
The government has already provided power connection to around 3 crore people by introducing 42,000km of new lines and capacity enhancement by 1,798MW in the last two years (2014 to 2015), he said.
The government has set a target to generate 24,000MW of electricity, 53 percent of which will be sourced from coal, within "Vision 2021". With this end in view, he said, the government increased the number of power plants, transmission lines and distribution lines for rapid economic growth to help Bangladesh become a middle income country by 2021.
By enhancing capacity of power grids connecting Bangladesh and India, the government has taken an initiative to import 500 more megawatts (MW) of electricity from India by June 2018.
"A project 'Enhancing Capacity of Existing Bangladesh (Bheramara)-India (Bahorompur) Grid Interconnection (500MW)' is under implementation," State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid told the news agency.
The government will construct a high-voltage direct current (HVDC) station having a capacity of 500MW under the project, which will require two years, he said.
Currently Bangladesh is importing 500MW from India, he added.
He said the government had set a target to generate 24,000MW of electricity by 2021, and 40,000MW by 2030 aimed at providing electricity to every citizen.



Shaban Mahmood and Soheli Chowdhury
Shaban president, Soheli general secretary of DUJ
BSS, Dhaka

Shaban Mahmood and Soheli Chowdhury have been elected president and general secretary respectively of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday.
Shaban bagged 857 votes while his nearest contestant Qudus Afrad got 667 votes.
Election conducting committee chairman Muhammad Shafiqur Rahman announced the results around 9:15pm at Jatiya Press Club.
Soheli secured 534 votes while his closest contestant Sajjad Alam Khan Topu bagged 448 votes.
Other elected office bearers are vice-president Atikur Rahman Chowdhury (749 votes), joint secretary Sahana Seuly (552), treasurer Sebika Rani (607), organising secretary Md Shahjahan Miah (497), publicity secretary Aktar Hossain (594), sports and cultural secretary Mafizur Rahman Khan Babu (918), public welfare secretary Ummul Wara Sweaty (1049) and office secretary Maniruzzaman Uzzal (712).
Executive committee members include Shamima Akhtar (691 votes), AM Shahjahan Miah (651), Salimullah Selim (599), Jannatul Ferdous Chowdhury (571), Dulal Khan (541), Soheli Chowdhury (541), Debashish Roy (533) and Manjusri Biswas (453).
The vote casting of the biennial election was held from 9:00am to 5:00pm without any break.
Some 66 candidates under five panels participated, while 20 independent candidates also vied in the polls.

Social justice at heart of Agenda 2030

IPU president tells Social Justice Forum in Morocco

CITY DESK
Inter-Parliamentary Union President Saber Chowdhury MP yesterday said social justice is at the heart of UN Agenda 2030 and is an essential precondition for peaceful, inclusive societies and prosperous coexistence within and amongst nations, says a press release.
"We advance social justice when we identify and remove impediments people face due to culture, religion, race and gender and we uphold the principles of social justice when we protect and promote rights of the youth, the marginalised and the disadvantaged," he said at the Inaugural Session of the Parliamentary Social Justice Forum, convened by the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco to mark World Day of Social Justice 2016.
Identifying income inequality as a key universal challenge, Saber said, "In developed and developing countries, poorest half of the population owns less than 10 percent of its wealth. Inequality of opportunity undermines sustainability of economic growth, weakens social cohesion and undermines our democracies."
Presided over by Speaker Abdelhakim Benchamach, the inaugural session, held in Moroccan parliament, was also addressed by former prime minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero.



Dancers perform at a competition for children at Tejgaon Farm Government Primary School in the capital on Friday. They also participated in singing patriotic and modern songs, recitation of poems and a drawing contest at the daylong programme organised by SHAMS Shilpangon. A fair for handicraft items was also held on the occasion.
PHOTO: COLLECTED

BTCL to cut price of broadband

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pay Tk 300 monthly for using Bcube Infinity 256 package with a bandwidth speed of 256 kbps. Bcube Infinity 512 will cost Tk 500, Bcube Infinity 1000 with a speed of 1 mbps will cost the clients Tk 700, whereas they will get Bcube Infinity 1500 with a speed of 1.5 mbps at Tk 1000.
Moreover, there will be no data limit. Fifteen percent VAT will be applicable with all the packages.

EC to print record number of ballots for UP polls

UNB, Dhaka
The Election Commission (EC) has started printing some 22 crore ballot papers required for the upcoming six-phase Union Parishad elections, which is the largest printing task in the country's election history.
Over seven-crore ballot papers will be required for chairman election in 4,275 union parishads and some 15 crore more for member posts and reserved seats (for women), said officials at EC Secretariat.
The six-phase UP election is set to begin on March 22 with balloting in some 740 UPs in the first phase.
Unlike the 2011 UP election, the commission will not be able to print ballot papers against the chairman posts before the list of candidature is finalised as this time the chairman election is being held along party line.
The commission will only get 13-14 days to print ballot papers for the chairman posts in each phase of the election after the last

date for withdrawal of candidature and it will take 3-4 more days to distribute those papers across the country, said a deputy secretary at the EC Secretariat.
The ballot papers for each chairman post will be different as the papers will be inscribed with symbols of political parties and independent candidates of the particular UP, he told the news agency.
"Printing and distribution of over 700 different types of ballot papers for chairman posts within 13-14 days is a difficult task... they initially started printing some six-crore last week for member posts and reserved seats," he said.
The ballot papers will be of three different colours. White for chairman posts, green and pink for member posts and reserved seats respectively, and are being printed in five printing presses, including BG Press, Government Printing Press and Security Printing Press, said EC officials.

Alok Shikkhaloy

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towards building a "Sonar Bangla".
Like the duo, all the participants expressed their patriotism and dedication to work for the country's betterment.
Light of Hope, a non-profit organisation, organised the competitions on the West Agargaon Eidgah premises to enlighten children about the spirit of the Language Movement and Liberation War.
The organisation started its journey in January last year aiming to facilitate education for underprivileged and rural children by providing books and other reading materials.
It has so far distributed around 4,500 books in 22 schools, eight in Dhaka and the rest in rural areas.



Inter-Parliamentary Union President Saber Chowdhury MP addresses the inaugural session of Parliamentary Social Justice Forum, convened by the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco to mark World Day of Social Justice 2016, yesterday.
PHOTO: COLLECTED