

WEATHER
FORECAST



YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 29.0 L 15.0

MYMENSINGH
H 27.5 L 14.5

CHITTAGONG
H 29.8 L 15.2

SYLHET
H 28.0 L 15.0

RAJSHAHI
H 28.5 L 12.4

RANGPUR
H 27.5 L 13.0

KHULNA
H 29.3 L 15.0

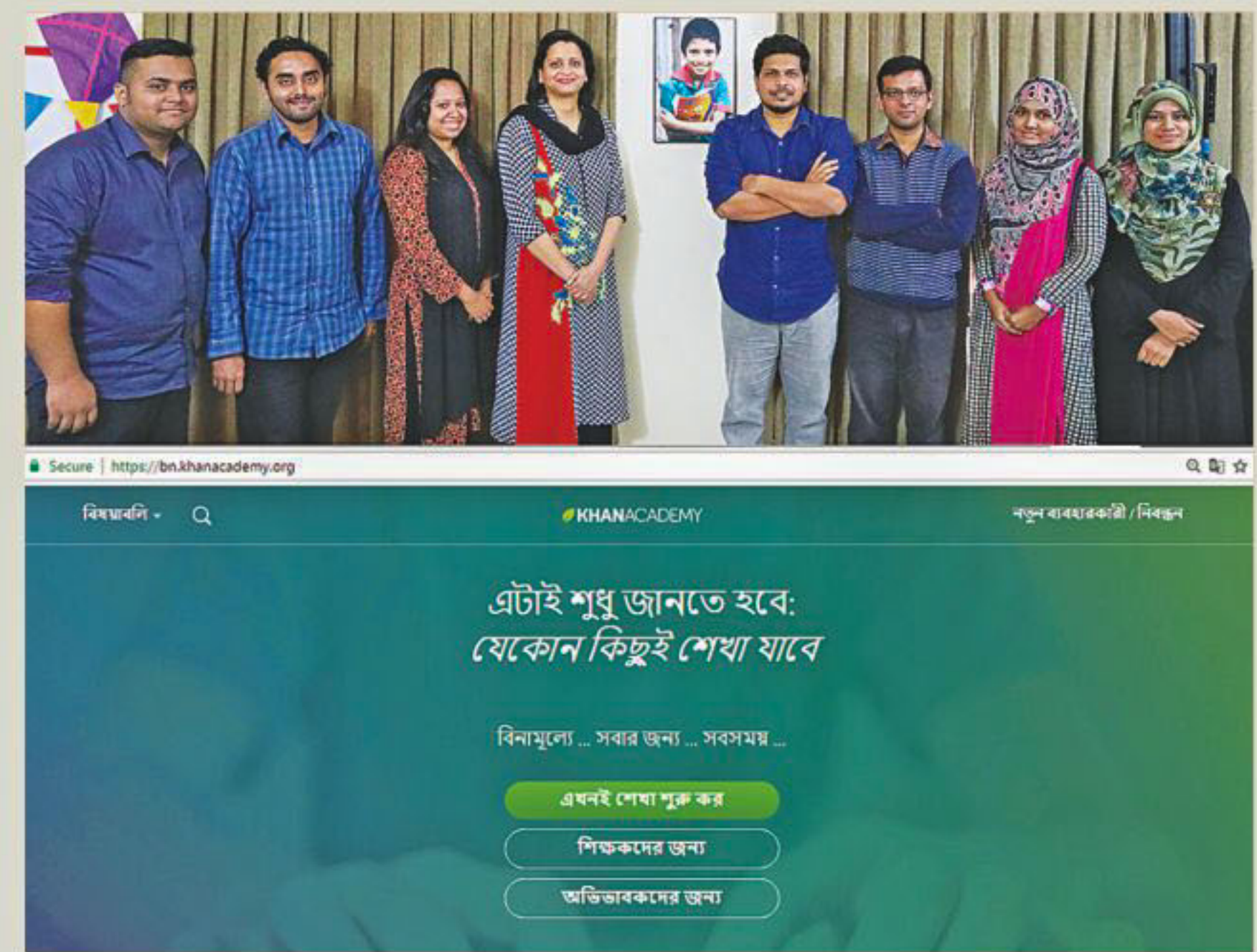
BARISAL
H 30.2 L 13.3

COX'S BAZAR
H 31.0 L 16.0

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Night and day temperature may rise slightly, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:51pm and rises tomorrow at 6:34am. Country's highest temperature 32.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Teknaf and lowest 9.9 degree in Chuadanga.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Members of Agami and a sample Bangla page at khanacademy.org.

PHOTO:
IHTISHAM KABIR

Khan Academy in Bangla

Some years ago, after visiting one of their schools in Dhaka and being very impressed, I wrote a column about Agami, a non-profit organisation based in California dedicated to improving education for the underprivileged in Bangladesh.

This week I decided to pay a visit to Agami's Dhaka office to find out more about the group's work with Khan Academy, the globally recognised source of educational videos on the Internet, much loved by students, that was started by Bangladeshi-American Salman Khan.

The Khan Academy videos were, initially, only in English, making them inaccessible for the vast majority of our Bangla-speaking pupils. This project has changed that.

I spoke with Dilruba Chowdhury, their coordinator, as well as project staff Fazle Rabbi, Marjuk Ahmed and Iffat Naomee. They lead the team which has worked on translating Khan Academy educational tools to Bangla since 2015.

Thanks to Agami's work, Fazle said, Khan Academy's website now has a Bangla section with over 1200 of their educational videos translated into Bangla. During our meeting, I accessed these videos at bn.khanacademy.org and watched an explanation of fractions. The translation work required, among other things, "localising" 3 million functional English terms to Bangla.

Having videos is part of a complete educational package, Dilruba explained. In addition to the instructional content, Khan Academy offers two other tools: exercises for students, and a dashboard for teachers to instantly assess their students' learning in real-time. No teacher wants to leave a child behind, but using traditional methods, it is often too late by the time a teacher discovers that a student is struggling with a certain concept. With instant feedback from the Khan Academy dashboard, teachers can take timely remedial action.

Along with the videos, Agami has

also translated the associated exercises and dashboard functionality to Bangla, offering a complete platform for learning in Bangla.

How about taking this to our schools? Agami is working with schools to help deploy these tools. So far, twenty schools (most without Internet) have been given the Bangla videos. Three schools in Dhaka have adopted the Khan Academy platform into their teaching methodology. Working closely with them, Agami is finding the best ways of integrating these tools into teaching in a large number of schools.

Marjuk points out these tools do not replace traditional teaching methods. Rather, they embellish them. There is another advantage from the teacher's perspective. The government has set goals for teachers to use more digital technology in teaching. Using these tools will empower the teachers to reach these goals.

Another issue is curriculum. Do Khan Academy videos, which were initially designed for American schools, match the topics covered in our schools? Iffat is working on this matching problem: how to map the Khan Academy topics to our schools curricula. With very few exceptions (for example, arithmetic problems related to currency exchange) our curricula are well-covered by the existing videos.

The goal of the team is to create a complete package of the topics, their exercises and the dashboards – all of them matching our schools curricula – by the end of this year.

Khan Academy Bangla – the name of this Agami project – has been supported by funds from three sources: Government of Bangladesh, Grameenphone, and Agami's fund-raising activities in the United States. The organisation is considering more fund-raising activities – such as crowd-funding – here in Bangladesh. Such a worthy and well-conceived project deserves our wholehearted support.

facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

TEXTBOOK CONTENT

Govt 'surrenders' to Hefajat's demand

Says SHUJAN chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The government's "surrender" to the demand of Qawmi madrasa-based group Hefajat-e-Islam in selecting the contents of school textbooks might have far-reaching impacts, SHUJAN secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said yesterday.

He said there was a time when Hefajat demanded that the government not interfere in the curriculum of Qawmi madrasa, but now they demanded a change in the curriculum of the general education and inclusion of some of their contents.

"Succumbing to their demand, 17 writings of Hindu writers and poets were excluded from the textbooks," he said, adding, "We are feeding a tiger."

"Changing the textbook contents succumbing to the demand of Hefajat is one of the most important events of the country because its impact would be widespread," he said.

"We are terrified," he added.

The head of the civil society organisation shared the observations at SHUJAN's Chittagong Regional Planning Meeting in the port city.

EC selection criteria unknown

Says Badiul Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Civil society organisation SHUJAN yesterday questioned the neutrality of some members of the Election Commission search committee and said the process of forming the new EC might be an eyewash.

"We asked them [the search committee] to make the names of the selected persons public and give a report mentioning details of why they were selected and what the standards or criteria of selection were," SHUJAN secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said at the organisation's Chittagong Regional Planning Meeting in the port city.

"As they did not do it, questions arose in our mind whether the whole process was just an eyewash," he said.

Passengers stabbed, mugged by bus staff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The driver, helper and conductor of a bus mugged and stabbed two passengers in the capital's Jatrabari area yesterday.

The passengers identified as Alam Miah, 48, and Shafiqul Islam, 32, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with several stab injuries and given treatment.

The staff of a Turag Paribahan bus along with others swooped on the passengers in Tikatuli area in the morning and took the money away from their possessions when it reached near Sayedabad bus terminal, said witnesses and victims.

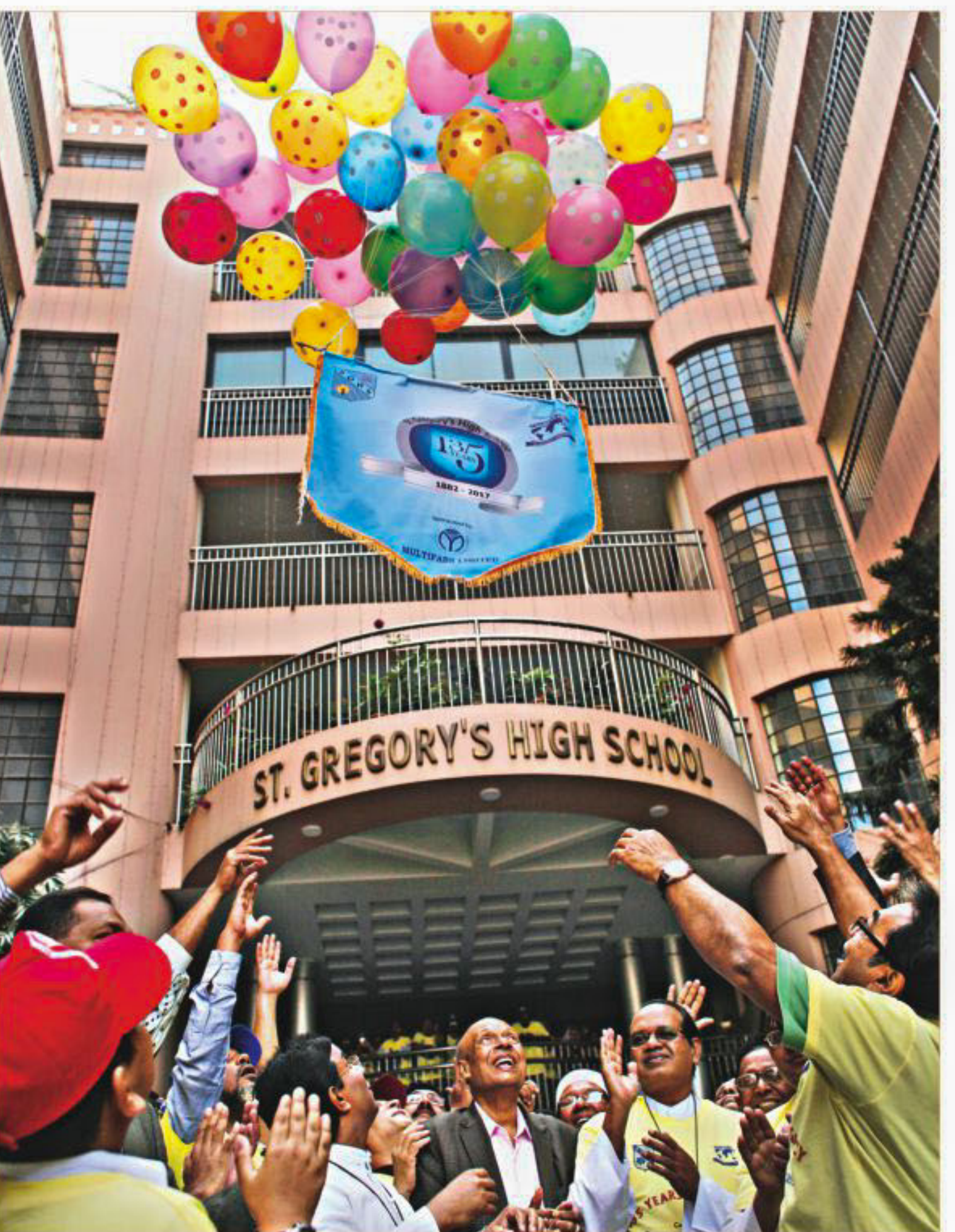
All the miscreants managed to flee leaving the bus, said OC Anisur Rahman of Jatrabari Police Station.

"We have already seized the bus and taken information about the driver Siddique, helper Rubel and conductor Kamal about communicating with the bus owner," the OC told The Daily Star.

Babul Miah, a fish trader of Jatrabari area, told The Daily Star that Alam and Shafiqul, who are his regular customers, came to his shop in the morning with Tk 45,000 from Kaptan Bazar area around 5:00am.

They got on the bus near Bangababhan, when the staff along with two to three people impersonating passengers attacked them, said Babul, quoting the victims.

No case was filed and none was arrested till filing of this report yesterday evening.



It was a day full of hugs, laughter and reminiscing as former and current students of St Gregory's High School celebrated the school's 135th founding anniversary on its campus at the capital's Luxmibazar yesterday. The occasion was marked by releasing an event emblem tied to balloons, bringing out a celebratory procession from the school to Bahadur Shah Park and musical performances.

PHOTOS: STAR

Reunion amidst gaiety

St Gregory's High School celebrates 135th anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The school saw the period of the British raj, fall of the Pakistani regime and the creation of Bangladesh. It is one of the historic educational institutions, which has been on the zenith of excellence in education since its inception in 1882. One of the oldest in Dhaka, St Gregory's High School celebrated its 135th founding anniversary through colourful events yesterday.

Gregorian Association, a platform of former students of the school, organised the celebratory programmes on the campus at the capital's Luxmibazar.

Former and current Gregorians participated in the grand event to share and create memories. Some were hugging their old friends, some posing for selfies -- it was happiness all around the school premises.

"I feel nostalgic to be here today. Sweet old memories are coming back," said Mujahidul Islam Selim, president, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), while posing for a group photo.

Selim was a student of the 65th batch.

"We want to maintain the network among us; that's why we

formed the Gregorian Association in 1985," said Dhaka Wasa's Managing Director Taqsem A Khan, who passed matriculation from the school in 1972.

The colorful event started in the morning.

Wearing yellow dresses and red caps and chanting "Gregory... Gregory", the participants brought out a celebratory procession from the school to Bahadur Shah Park.

"We were eagerly waiting for this day. It's a reunion of former and current students, which definitely brings blissful happiness to all of us," said Nicholas Tolention.

Marking the occasion, different competitions including debate, general knowledge, quiz, chess, and drawing were arranged earlier, and winners and runner-ups awarded.

A fourth grader, Sayanta Saha, won the first prize in chess. Expressing his feelings, he said, "I'm happy to win on such a big occasion."

The security was tight -- law enforcers including Rapid Action Battalion, police, Ansar-VDP, and the school's own security forces guarded the whole area.

The celebration ended with a cultural programme in the evening.



Students and guests release colourful balloons to inaugurate the 15th Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad in the capital's St Joseph Higher Secondary School yesterday.

PHOTO:
STAR

15th Math Olympiad begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 15th Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad 2017 began at St Joseph Higher Secondary School in the capital yesterday.

A total of 1,120 students, selected through 15 regional competitions, took part in the Olympiad, the biggest mathematical competition in the country, under four groups -- primary (class III-V), junior (class VI-VIII), secondary (class IX-X and SSC examinees) and higher secondary (class XI-XII and HSC examinees).

Of them, six will be selected for the upcoming 58th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO), to be held in Rio de Janeiro of Brazil from July 12-23.

Brother Robi Theodore Purification, principal of St Joseph Higher Secondary

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4 lives lost, 43 hurt in road accidents

CITY DESK

Four people, including an SSC examinee, were killed and 43 others injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday and on Thursday.

In Tangail Sadar, a Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinee was killed as brick-laden truck collided head-on with a CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying him on Tangail-Charabari Road in Khejurtola area yesterday afternoon.

The deceased Julkar Rafi, 16, was an examinee from Bagbari High School. He was the son of Noor Alam of Bagbari village.

Witnesses said the accident occurred around 3:00am when Rafi was returning home. Rafi died on the spot.

The driver and two other passengers of the three-wheeler received minor injuries.

In Dinaipur, two people were killed as a rickshaw-van carrying them collided head-on with a battery-run auto-rickshaw in Laterhat area of Birganj upazila on Thursday night.

The deceased were Jagendranath Roy, 45, of Bochaganj upazila and Shafiqul Islam, 35, of Khatiya Dighi village in the district.

Jogendranath was killed on the spot while Shafiqul succumbed to his injuries on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

In Sirajganj, a theatre artist was killed and 10 people were injured as a bus hit a truck in Talgasi Bazar area of Shahzadpur upazila early yesterday.

The deceased Mojmammel Hossain, 40, was an artist of Anushilon Ashi in Pabna. Among the 10 injured five were artists of the theatre group.

Mojammel along with five others was going to Dhaka to cast their vote in Shilpi Shangha election, said police, adding, the accident occurred as the bus driver could not see the truck due to dense fog.

In Jessore, at least 30 people including teachers and students of a school were injured as a picnic bus fell into a ditch beside Jessore-Narail road as the driver lost his control over the vehicle in Baulia Hamkura area yesterday morning.

Police said the bus, carrying 58 people of Kolkakoli Government Primary School in Jhenidah, was heading towards Narail Niribili picnic spot. Ten of the injured, with serious injuries, were rushed to Jessore Medical College Hospital while others received primary treatment at local clinics.

Police said headmaster of the school Kajem Hossain was sent to Dhaka Medical college Hospital as his condition was very critical.