

Will consider Khaleda's parole if she applies

Says home minister; decision on seeking parole later, says Fakhru

UNB, Jamalpur

The government will consider releasing BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on parole if she files an application and cites specific reasons, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said yesterday.

"We haven't received any request for parole so far," he told reporters after inaugurating a naval police station at Chikajani in Jamalpur's Dewanganj upazila.

Parole is a conditional release of an inmate before completion of the sentence.

Regarding the minister's remark, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said they will discuss the matter at their party forum. "A decision on applying for parole will be taken later," he told the news agency.

Khaleda has been in jail since February 8 last year after being convicted in a corruption case. She was later found guilty in a similar case.

Her release remains BNP's main demand. The party has been accusing the government of neglecting her treatment and demanding that she be moved to a specialised hospital.

Khaleda was shifted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) on April 1.

BSMMU Director Brig Gen AK Mahbul Haque said she had been suffering from severe pain in the joints of her hands

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2



Trees in full bloom at Shalbon in Gazipur's Bhawal. These light yellow flowers in the backdrop of green leaves are a sight to behold and everyday, a large number of people through the area to enjoy the serene beauty. The photo was taken in Rajendrapur on Friday.

PHOTO: ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE AKAND

NEWS IN brief

Man found dead beside highway

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A man was found dead beside Dhaka-Tangail highway in Savar yesterday.

Police recovered the body of Saddam Hossen, 25, a driver by profession, in Baraipara area.

Javed Masud, inspector (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station, said criminals hacked Saddam at night and dumped the body on the spot. The body bore several injury marks, he said.

The body was sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy.

E-commerce fair held in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

A daylong e-commerce fair was held in Rajshahi city yesterday.

Bangladesh Postal Department and E-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (E-CAB) organised the fair at General Post Office building in Laxmipur area of the city.

Director General of Bangladesh Postal Department Sushanta Kumar Mondal inaugurated the fair as chief guest.

Assistant Post Master General Raquib Biswash, Senior Post Master Aminur Rahman, E-CAB General Secretary Abdul Wahed and organising committee convener of the fair Asif Ahnaf were present at the programme.

Some 31 companies showcased their products at the fair. Three seminars were held where local entrepreneurs, consumers and investors participated.

Mohammad Hussain's death anniversary

CITY DESK

The 30th death anniversary of journalist Mohammad Hussain will be observed today, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at Mirpur Jannatul Mawa graveyard after Zohr prayers today.

His relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the mahfil and pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Hussain was the news editor of the daily Azad, the daily Janapad and the daily Sangram. He was also vice president of BFUIJ.



Fire breaks out at Ctg super shop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A fire gutted valuables of a super shop in Chattogram city's Kazir Dewri area yesterday.

The blaze originated on the ground floor of the three-storey shop around 6am, said Purna Chandra Mutsuddi, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence, Chattogram.

Firefighters managed to douse the blaze around 8am, he said.

Fire service officials could not ascertain the reason behind the fire and loss caused by it immediately.

British univs keen on Bangladesh market

British high commissioner tells dialogue

UNB, Dhaka

UK universities want to get into Bangladesh's higher education market to help the country develop its human capital, said British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson said at a dialogue on Thursday.

"Bangladesh's human capital is probably its strongest asset... It has an enormous potential. But the key to unlocking that potential and making the most of it is education," he said.

The high commissioner said this while delivering the keynote speech at Cosmos Dialogue at a city hotel.

He hoped that Bangladesh youth will

benefit from the world-class education Britain can offer. It will be a real contribution to the development of human capital in the South Asian country, he observed.

"In an increasing globalised and competitive world, the key to education is making sure that young Bangladeshis have the ability to draw on the very best higher education available," the high commissioner said.

Dickson noted that they have made it clear to the Bangladesh government that it will be possible to open up local higher education market in a way that will enable the British universities to operate.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Bangladesh, India should work together to improve education: Dipu Moni

BSS, Sylhet

Education Minister Dr Dipu Moni yesterday said Bangladesh and India should work together to enhance research work, in order to improve the quality of education in the two countries.

"Both Bangladesh and India will advance in the education sector, if the two countries strengthen their bonding on different disciplines of education, particularly science and technology," she said.

The minister was speaking at the inauguration of "International Convention of Vice Chancellors" at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust).

Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof Abdul Mannan; Sust VC Md Farid Uddin Ahmad; Gauhati University VC Dr Mridul Hazarika; and Meghalaya Science and Technology University Chancellor Mahbul Haque, among others, addressed the event.

Prof Dr Abul Mukid Mohammad Mukaddes, dean of the school of applied

science and technology at Sust, chaired the programme.

The minister said, "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman established a historical relationship between Bangladesh and India. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is following his footsteps to further strengthen bilateral relations of the two countries."

Welcoming the knowledge-sharing gathering among VCs of Bangladesh and India, the minister said this convention of vice-chancellors will produce better outcomes for improving quality of education at higher level.

There is no alternative to sharing and exchanging knowledge, particularly on science and technology, she said. "A joint collaboration between Bangladesh and India should be developed in education sector for keeping up with the technologically advanced world."

Vice-Chancellors of 23 universities from Bangladesh and India took part in the convention.

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Four of a family injured in 'gas leak explosion'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Four members of a family, including three children, sustained critical burn injuries in an explosion -- possibly caused from a leaky gas pipeline -- at a house in Fatullah of Narayanganj yesterday.

The injured are: Fatema Akhter, 35; her daughter Faria Akhter, 9; and two sons -- Rafi, 11; and Safwan, 5.

They were admitted to the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital last night.

Sabbir Ahmed, a local, said the family lives in a rented flat on the second floor of a five-storey building in Giridhara residential area.

"The explosion happened around 9:45pm when Fatema was lighting a gas stove. Doors and windows of the flat were blown away," he added.

Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH police outpost, said the injured are in a critical condition.

Aslam Hossain, officer-in-charge of Fatullah Police Station, said they suspect the stove was not put off fully and thus the gas spread the whole room.

Fire dept marks 2 Rangpur high-rises risky

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The Fire Service and Civil Defence authorities marked two multi-storey buildings in Rangpur city as risky after they began a drive against such structures yesterday.

No fire safety requirement is met at eight-storey Rezeka Tower in Kachari Bazar area and 10-storey Ramisa Tower in Engineerpara, they said.

Both the buildings are used for commercial and residential purposes, said fire service officials.

There is no fire safety equipment, emergency exit and adequate water supply in those buildings, said Younus Ali, deputy director of Fire Service and Civil Defence, Rangpur.

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