

PM hands over national film awards

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the filmmakers to make real-life movies to use the medium in building a healthy society.

She was addressing a function arranged to give away the National Film Award for 1999, 2000 and 2001 at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

For the year 1999: Best film, Chitra Nadir Parey, best story writer Tanvir Mokammel, best script writer Kazi Hayat, best dialogue Tanvir Mokammel, best direction Tanvir Mokammel, best music director Maksud Jamil Mintu, best actor Zahid Hossain, best side actor Golam Mostafa (posthumous), best comedian ATM

Shamsuzzaman, best actress Shamsun Nahar Shimla, best side actress Roushan Jamil (posthumous), best vocalist Subir Nandi, best lyricist Rashid Uddin (posthumous), best musician Alam Khan, best colour photography Mahfuzur Rahman Khan, best sound recordist Mofizul Huq, best art direction Uttam Guha; and best make-up man Dipak Sur.

For the year 2000: Best film, Kirtonkhola, best story writer Selim Al Din, best script writer Abu Sayeed and Nurul Alam Aliq, best dialogue Selim Al Din and Abu Sayeed, best direction Abu Sayeed, best actor M Wasimul Bari Rajiv, best actress Gulshan Ara Akhtar Champa, best side role Tamalika Karmakar, best vocalist (male) Andrew Kishore, best vocalist (female) Sabina Yasmin, best colour photography Mahfuzur Rahman Khan, best sound recordist Nasim Reza Shah, best editor Sujun Mahmud, best art direction Tarun Ghosh, and best make up man, Khalilur Rahman.

For the year 2001: Best film, Lal Shalu, best story writer Syed Waiuliah (posthumous), best script writer Nargis Akhtar, best dialogue Tanvir Mokammel, best direction Tanvir Mokammel, best music director Ahmed Imliaz Bulbul, best dance director Amir Hossain Babu (posthumous), best actor Raisul Islam

Asad, best villain Shahidul Alam Sachchu, best comedian A T M Shamsuzzaman, best actress Arifa Parveen Zaman Moushumi, best side role Mahbuba Mahnur Chandni, best vocalist (male) Monir Khan, best vocalist (female) Rumana Morshed Kanakchapa, best lyricist Gazi Mazharul Anwar, best musician Satya Shaha (posthumous), best colour photography Abul Khair and Anwar Hossain, best sound recordist Ratan Kumar Pal, best editor Mojibur Rahman Dulu, best art direction Mohiuddin Faruk, best child artists Shovon, Shipu, Shantanu, Twinkle, Rini and Rajiv.

Snap polls

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ernment during the 2001 elections was biased and played its role against our interests."

"We secured lesser number of seats despite bagging higher percentage of vote as a 'ghost-rigging' took place," the opposition leader added.

She said the AL would not join the parliament session beginning today, as she said, parliamentary procedures and rules were not followed in dealing with the opposition.

"We are not allowed to exercise our democratic rights and even to talk. We face rude behaviours there," she said.

The AL chief also called for scrapping of the recent agreement with the US that gave immunity to US soldiers from trial in Bangladesh. "It is an act of sedition because such a treaty can never signed by violating constitutional norms."

Replying to a question on the nomination of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury for the post of OIC Secretary General, Hasina said his nomination was an act of betrayal to the martyrs of the liberation war.

She was also critical of the prime minister's son Tareque Rahman for his alleged involvement in corruption.

Regarding gas export, she said, "We were against it while in power as we can export it only after fulfilling our requirement."

AL agenda

FROM PAGE 1
are not allowed to speak." However, Hamid said, AL lawmakers would take the decision on joining the parliament session on September 14.

Hamid said he did not get any proposal from the government till yesterday to join the parliament session.

After the 2001 election debacle, the AL refrained from joining several sessions of the eighth parliament till June 24, 2002. The AL staged walkouts on many occasions and also stayed out of the House for days together.

The AL is set to enforce a daylong hartal across the country on September 25 and organise a procession in the city on September 15. The party has also extended its support to another dawn to dusk hartal on September 16 called by workers' groups backed by the leftist parties.

In the run up to the upcoming agitation programmes, AL chief Sheikh Hasina addressed two public meetings at Mirpur and Shyampur in the city on Saturday and Monday last.

Besides, the opposition leader directed her party rank and file to participate in the movements of professional groups like lawyers and workers.

AL sources said the city unit leaders were preparing for a big showdown on September 15 that Hasina said would be a 'no confidence' by people to the present regime.

Vice-presidency

FROM PAGE 1
Privileges' Act, 1975.

Parliament sources said Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is expected to introduce the bill.

"The bill will be introduced to amend the act and make it consistent with the provisions of the constitution," said Bhuiyan, specifying the reason for the move to introduce the bill.

Besides, two other bills, The Bar Council Act (Amendment) Bill, 2003, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation Act (Amendment) Bill, 2003, may be introduced in parliament.

The Business Advisory Committee will sit at 5:00pm today to decide on the duration of the session. But the AL lawmakers will not be joining the meeting.

The AL may hold its parliamentary party (ALPP) meeting on September 14 to decide whether to join this session or continue with the boycott of parliament it had started on June 26 protesting a remark by a state minister against its chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

The government will not take any

formal initiative to bring the main opposition back to parliament. But Mannan Bhuiyan, also the BNP secretary general, talked over telephone to Abdus Samad Azad, AL presidium member, Wednesday night and urged them to join parliament, sources close to Bhuiyan told The Daily Star yesterday.

On the other hand, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday told newsmen that he would not make any move to persuade the AL into ending the boycott.

"It's their (AL) constitutional duty to join parliament sessions and talk on behalf of people. [Unfortunately] they have planned not to join the session and will hold their parliamentary party meeting on September 14, though the parliament session begins on September 11," he said.

Problems affecting agricultural development in Bangladesh include the existing marketing system dominated by middlemen and inadequate facilities for preservation of farm products, he mentioned.

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia talks with Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri at her office in Dhaka yesterday.

WTO meet starts amid deep splits

FROM PAGE 1
While no one expects great things to be achieved in a few days at Cancun, we hope the publicity surrounding the meeting will embarrass the US, Japanese and European governments, with their atrocious record on farm subsidies, into adopting a more radical approach," added the US daily.

The New York Times, on its part, called on US President George W. Bush to make common cause with the Group of 21 and stand up to "powerful farming interests ... that stand to lose if forced to compete fair and square against foreign farmers."

Ministers here also faced difficulties over agreeing a framework for negotiations on cutting tariffs for industrial goods, special treatment for developing countries as they implement trade accords and whether to launch new talks on competition and investment policies.

Japan insists that establishing global rules governing cross-border private investment would benefit developing countries, which have so far resisted calls for such regulations to be debated by the WTO.

Developing countries suspect that such rules would be of greater benefit to investors in rich industrialised nations than to their own fragile economies.

Their argument is that investment rules have nothing to do with

trade and could impose limits on their domestic policies.

But Japanese Foreign Minister Yuriko Kawaguchi said in Cancun Tuesday that "the world is changing very fast and we need a system to respond to the changes."

Without the protection afforded by internationally accepted investment procedures, she added, developing countries would be at the mercy of more powerful states.

Despite the profound disagreements, all 146 member states agree that after two years of deadlock a failure of the Cancun talks would be disastrous.

The conference gets under way Wednesday morning with speeches by top WTO officials, Mexican President Vicente Fox and a message read on behalf of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Hundreds of non-governmental groups and thousands of protesters have descended on the Caribbean resort to voice their opposition to what they say is the pro-corporate agenda of the WTO.

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Hasina blames BNP for Jamal kidnap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, City

Opposition Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said business magnate and BNP leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury was kidnapped by none other than the ruling BNP godfathers.

"Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has become a godmother and she has 70 godfathers who are involved in the abduction of Jamal. That's why Jamal has not been rescued as yet," Hasina told a public meeting at the historic Laldighi Maidan.

The former prime minister said she wanted to visit Jamal's family but thought better of it after the family members quoting the abductors as saying that Jamal would be killed should she visit them.

She said the ruling coalition of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami has recently launched the 'abduction business' in the port city. Hasina wondered why Jamal has not been rescued even 48 days after his kidnap despite assurances by three ministers.

Earlier in the morning, she visited the family members of slain AL leaders Faruk Mahmud Siddiquee in Quais Burishchar area, Ajit Talukder in Hathazari and Chittagong University Bangladesh Chhatra League leader Golam Mortaza in Fatehabad under Hathazari thana.

The opposition leader leaves for Dhaka this morning, sources said.

Airbus case

FROM PAGE 1
Justice Joyntul Abedin and Justice Tariqul Hakim gave the verdict after hearing final arguments Tuesday on the quashment petition by Khaleda.

The Attorney General's Office did not oppose the petition nor will it appeal against the HC verdict, as the case was quashed on law point, said Attorney General AF Hassan Arif.

Earlier, a HC division bench issued a rule nisi on the government on November 6, 2000 and stayed proceedings of the case after Khaleda challenged the charges against her.

Yesterday, Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, counsel for Khaleda, told the court that one Airbus was received and the funds were provided for it during the rule of the caretaker government in June 1996.

He referred to a decision of the August 6, 1996 meeting presided over by the then finance minister of the AL government that approved \$64.02 million for the second aircraft.

"If there was any lack of transparency or irregularities in the procedure of the aircraft purchase, the caretaker government or the AL government later could have cancelled the deed. Without doing that, the AL government filed the case against her."

He submitted that the case was intended to harass political opponents.

Saarc

FROM PAGE 1
OIC Secretary General.

He informed her that Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf expressed his hope that the unity of the Muslim ummah in various areas of development could be further consolidated through the OIC.

"The Pakistan president believes that Bangladesh, recognised internationally for its modern and forward-looking vision, can take the leading role in further strengthening the Organisation of Islamic Conference," Kasuri said.

Other common bilateral and regional issues, including the scope for increasing trade and commerce, also came up during the talks which dwelt on reactivating the Joint Council of the two countries.

The two sides agreed that the private sector should be encouraged. Importance was also laid on regular consultation at the foreign minister and foreign secretary levels for promoting ties between the two countries.

Collaboration in ICT sector and agricultural research, and student-exchange programme also came up for discussion.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, PM's Principal Secretary Dr Kamal Siddiqui, Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury and Pakistan High Commissioner Iqbal Ahmed Khan were present.

3 bus terminals

FROM PAGE 1
Barrister Nazmul Huda was present at the function as chief guest.

Each terminal will have an array of infrastructural facilities, including a number of terminal buildings, taxi stand, parking bay for buses, covered walkway, 200 toilets, parking lot for 200 heavy vehicles, loading and unloading facilities for 300 buses per hour and computerised ticket counters.

Speaking on the occasion, the communications minister said the bus terminals will help improve city's traffic congestion to a great extent by way of reducing the haphazard parking of buses and trucks that currently contribute to traffic jams.

Private operators will run the terminals and ensure that terminal areas are free from extortion, said the minister, adding that this will also help improve the city's law and order.

Communications Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat, Executive Director of Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) Kamrul Islam Siddique and DUTP officials also attended the programme.

Letter to Indian CJ

FROM PAGE 1
divert waters from the shared rivers, reducing the flow of Bangladesh's two major river networks – the Jamuna-Brahmaputra and the Ganges-Padma, the letter said. "Since Bangladesh is dependent mainly on the Brahmaputra for two-thirds of its dry season requirement of water, withdrawal of water from it will adversely affect at least 100 million people."

Withdrawal of water by the upper riparian will have serious repercussions on the climate, ecology, geomorphology, bio-diversity, wetlands and navigational activities in Bangladesh. Besides, it will lead to drying up of rivers in vast areas for much of the year, seriously affecting production of rice and also causing spread of salinity in farming areas, the letter said.

8 killed

FROM PAGE 12
Modhupur bound pic-up van from Dhaka on board passengers hit a tree, as the driver lost its control at 6:30am, killing three on the spot. The injured were rushed to Modhupur Upazila Hospital, where another died. Shahyahan Ali, 40, of village Raktipara and Nurmoammad of village Brahman Bari of Modhupur could be identified among the dead.

A case was filed with Modhupur Police Station.

Meanwhile, a Pabna-bound ambulance hit a tractor, parked beside the road, at 10:30pm and then collided with a truck, killing three on the spot and one on the way to hospital, a UNB report said.

The dead were identified as Aslam Hossain Moni, 35, Razib, 18, Pravat, 35, and Pradip, 26.

The injured were admitted to Pabna General Hospital.

5 jailed for tiger killing

FROM PAGE 1
charges, told the Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

A butcher bought poison and meat from outside on November 8, 1996 and fed three tigers on poisoned food after entering their cages with a caretaker.

One of the tigers died the following day, another two on November 11 and a cub died from suffocation on November 13 after sucking toxic milk of its mother.

The convicts – Osman Gani, the butcher, and Azizul Haque, Yaad Ali, Sadek Ali and Sohrab Hossain, all caretakers – have to serve two more years in jail in failure to pay the fines.

The court acquitted nine people: caretakers Alek Chand, Mobarak Hossain, Mohammad Mostafa, Shah Alam and Abdul Baten, medical assistant Hafizur Rahman of the zoo's veterinary hospital, electrician Lal Mia, security guard Abdus Sohan and the zoo's driver Khalilur Rahman.

Judge Habibur Rahman in his verdict said he was unable to hand down death sentence to the convicts, although sections 15 (1) (3) and 25 (D) of the Special Powers Act, 1974 prescribe death penalty for such a crime.

Rahman said he handed down lenient punishment to the accused because of their longtime harassment and blamed the leniency on 'neglect and indifference' of the prosecution for seven years.

The judge summoned witnesses in the case through the home secretary on different dates, but they did not appear before court on time, making the case linger.

In his