

DHAKA TODAY

Bird fair

The inaugural ceremony of a daylong bird's fair, organised jointly by Bangladesh Bird Club and Nature Study Club will be held. Venue: Institute of Education and Research, Dhaka University. Time: 10.00am.

Debate festival

The inaugural ceremony of Hamdard EFA Debate Festival will be held with Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui as chief guest. Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium, Central Public Library. Time: 9.00am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'A Knight's Tale'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Discussion

A discussion on 'Union Parishad Elections 2003: Lessons for the future', organised by Brotee, a centre for people's participation, will be held with Professor Rehman Sobhan, chairman of CPD, in the chair. Venue: IDB Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 3.00pm.

Meeting

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises an opinion sharing meeting on the 'Participation of children in formulating national policy'. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, Topkhana Road. Time: 11.00am.

Seminar

A seminar on 'Urbanisation in China', organised by Greenforce, will be held. Venue: BUET auditorium. Time: 4.00pm.

FEJB seminar

A seminar on India's water diversion project and its adverse impact on Bangladesh, organised by the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB), will be held. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 2.30pm.

Rally

Left Democratic Forum organises a rally to protest the Cancun summit of the World Trade Organisation. Venue: Mukhtangan. Time: 4.00pm.

AGM

The annual general meeting of Pharmaceutical Executive Club will be held. Venue: Serai restaurant, Mohakhali. Time: 7.00pm.

Rotary meet

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club, Ramna. Time: 1.30pm

DHAKA TOMORROW

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Show time'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Energy seminar

A national seminar on 'Renewable energy in Bangladesh: Research and application', organised jointly by Bangladesh Solar Energy Association and Renewable Energy Research Centre, will be held. Venue: Seminar room of Physics department of Dhaka University. Time: 10.30am.



The Jatiya Garments Sramik Federation stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding steps to ensure duty- and quota-free access of Bangladeshi garments to the world market.

'Implement Modhupur development project'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting called for immediate implementation of Modhupur National Development Project, including the wall encircling the core area of Modhupur forest. They said those who are opposing the project want to destroy the peace in the area and do not want the development of Modhupur. The meeting was organised by a section of local Bangalees and indigenous people at Chuniya cottage premises of Dokhla forest range office yesterday. Rev. Eugene E Homrich of St. Paul Church attended the meeting as chief guest while Michle Simsung, chairman of Bangladesh Tribal Welfare Association, Modhupur branch, was in the chair.

Rev. Eugene said the wall was needed for their protection. "The Garos are being educated now. They don't need to make protest against the government plan," he added. Rev. Eugene said that as peace-loving citizens, we are to obey the law of the country. The speakers said the indigenous people would give all possible assistance to complete the construction of the wall. They urged the government to implement the project immediately and punish those who are opposing the project. The meeting was addressed by William Dajel and Helim Jatra, local tribal leaders, Md Zakir Hossain, chairman of Auronkhola UP, Md Yakub Ali, chairman of Shelkuri UP

and Abdus Samad, commander of Muktijoddha Sangsad. Earlier, a group of indigenous people organised rallies and staged demonstrations against the implementation of the project. They said that if the wall was constructed, they would be confined by it like the animals of the zoo. The Tk 10 crore ADB-funded project started in 2000 and was supposed to be completed by this fiscal year. The project included construction of 61,000-foot wall, 10 picnic spots, three cottages and two bird sanctuaries. Only some 18,000-foot wall has so far been constructed. The rest of the work has been stopped in the face of the protest.

Egypt uses science to dispel pharaonic curse

REUTERS, Cairo

Egypt will use science to dispel the curse of the pharaohs, which popular myth blames for the deaths of those who have opened the tombs of Egypt's ancient rulers, Egypt's antiquities chief said. Zahi Hawass told Reuters a study would examine unexcavated tombs for dangerous substances, gases or germs, to explain the curse, whose fame spread in the 1920s following the death of a British aristocrat who entered King Tutankhamun's tomb. "At one of my excavations ... I found inscriptions telling us 'If anyone would touch my tomb he would be eaten by a crocodile, a hippo and a lion.' It doesn't mean that this will actually happen," Hawass said in an

interview this week. "Scientifically we want to ... show when the Egyptians put a curse inscription on a tomb they did not mean they could hurt anyone today who opened the tomb," he said. Part of the study would focus on dangerous germs that may have developed over the centuries in mummified human remains, said Hawass, secretary general of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. British archaeologist Howard Carter and his sponsor, Lord Carnarvon, were among the first to enter the tomb of boy-king Tutankhamun, who ruled Egypt more than 3,000 years ago, in Luxor's Valley of the Kings in 1922. Lord Carnarvon died shortly afterward from an infected mosquito

bite. Newspapers at the time said a pharaonic curse had killed him and other people linked to the discovery. Scientists have in the past suggested that a disease lying dormant in the tomb may have killed the British aristocrat. "We will start the work soon, perhaps next month. But we don't know when we will end ... we are going to study in unexcavated, intact tombs," Hawass said. Hawass said he had once been accidentally knocked unconscious in an ancient Egyptian tomb. "When I woke up I told people if anything had happened to me people would think this was the curse of the pharaohs. But it was just an accident."

Underwater Stone Age site found in UK

REUTERS, London

Archaeologists have stumbled across the first underwater evidence of Stone Age settlements in Britain. A team from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in northeast England say they found flint artifacts including tools and arrowheads off the coast near Tynemouth during a training session to prepare them for dive searches elsewhere. They say the items pinpoint two sites dating as far back as 10,000 years ago which would once have

been on dry land but were gradually submerged as sea levels rose after the end of the last Ice Age. Dr. Penny Spikins, the archaeologist leading the team, said she had originally applied for funding to search for this type of site in Scotland and had been amazed to find the items lying undisturbed on the sea bed near such a built-up area. "It was a totally stunning find really because although we'd prepared ourselves to be looking for these type of sites... we hadn't really started the project when we already

came across these types of artifacts," she told Reuters. "These sites are set to provide us with a unique opportunity to begin to understand early Mesolithic coastal occupation," Spikins said. According to the team, one site dates back to the late Mesolithic period 8,500 to 5,000 years ago while the other, found further out to sea, is thought to be early Mesolithic -- 8,500 to 10,000 years ago. Mesolithic people were hunter-gatherers and lived in the Middle Stone Age which began around 10,000 years ago.

Section 144 in Munshiganj

UNB, Munshiganj

Section 144 will be imposed in Super Market area in the town today to avert clashes between two organisations. The district administration took the decision last night as the two organisations called two religious meetings at the same venue and same time. Deputy Commissioner Syed Mustafijur Rahman told UNB that the decision to impose emergency section was taken to maintain law and order. Founder of monthly Al Baiyat magazine and Pir of Rajarbag in Dhaka Dillur Rahman sought the permission first to hold a religious meeting. Later, Iman Akida Protection Committee on Thursday also sought permission to hold another religious meeting there. The district administration asked both the organisations not to hold any meeting there and they will enforce Section 144 at the meeting venue throughout the day. Meanwhile, general secretary of the committee Moulana Monirul Islam Ashrafi said they will resist the Pir wherever he tries to hold religious meeting.

Navy passing out parade held

BSS, Kaptai

The passing out parade of the New Entry Sailors of Bangladesh Navy was held at BNS Shaheed Moazzam parade ground here on Thursday. A total of 130 sailors were inducted into different trade groups which included seamanship, engineering, electrical engineering and radio engineering, an ISPR press release said yesterday. Defence Secretary K M Ehsanul Haque reviewed the smartly tuned out parade and took salute at the impressive march past. He also distributed awards among the outstanding sailors. M T Islam, OD/UT was adjudged the best allround New Entry Sailor and was awarded with the coveted Cup of the Chief of the Naval Staff. He also received the Mahub Cup for his performance in the Seamanship Branch. M M Zaman, EN/IT/UT was awarded the Shaheed Moazzem Cup for his proficiency in technical branch.

1,462 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,462 people, including four listed criminals, during their ongoing countryside during the last 24 hours ending at 6.00am yesterday. They also recovered five firearms, three other weapons and seven rounds of bullet. Four cases were filed against six people under the Arms Act, said a police headquarters press release.

More SARS-like diseases likely: WHO chief

REUTERS, New Delhi

Countries across the globe must prepare to face the onslaught of many more SARS-like diseases in the new century, the head of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned. "SARS was the first disease in the 21st century, but it will not be the last one. I expect there will be many new SARS-like problems in the coming years," WHO director-general Lee Jong-wook told Reuters in the Indian capital late on Thursday. Singapore this week reported a mysterious fresh case of SARS, (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), the virus which killed more than 800 people worldwide before the outbreak was declared over in July. Lee said the latest case, involving a 27-year-old Singaporean scientist, did not meet the WHO's definition of the disease. However, Singapore medical authorities said the man had tested positive for the SARS. "Looking at the picture it appears it is not SARS, it is not SARS-like but it does not mean definitely it is not SARS. We have to wait," Lee said in an interview. Although WHO has said the Singapore case was not an international health concern, the incident has put Asia on alert for a feared winter revival of the deadly disease that infected almost 8,500 people globally this year, most of them in Asia. The impact of the outbreak battered tourism and economies across the region. "Whether it will be back or not, nobody knows... WHO's working assumption is that it will come back and we have to prepare for this," Lee said. Lee also dismissed fears the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Asia was on the verge of a catastrophe that threatened to overtake Africa.



Winners of the Shapla Kuri 2003 competition in the category of rhyme song pose with the judges at the Shishu Academy yesterday. The Zia Shishu Academy organised the competition.



The alliance of four left-leaning parties took to the streets of the city yesterday to protest against the World Trade Organisation's new round of trade liberalisation talks being held at the Mexican resort of Cancun.