



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Another day dawns for the thousands living in Dhaka's streets and parks, unable to afford a roof over their heads. World Habitat Day is being observed today, but the many meetings and conferences are not enough to change the lot of those living out in the open every day.

World Habitat Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

World Habitat Day is being observed in the country today.

The day is observed every year in all the countries of the world as per the decision of the United Nations, says a press release.

The government has taken up elaborate programmes to observe the day in a befitting manner. Bangladesh Bastibasi Union has taken up a month-long programme to mark the occasion. These included meetings, rallies and processions throughout the country including the capital city Dhaka.

The union will form a human chain at Muktangan in the city at 4.00pm today demanding of the government to build houses for slum dwellers and not to evict them without providing alternative accommodation.

In a statement, union President Mohiuddin Ahmed and General Secretary Abdur Rashid Khan urged the authorities concerned to stop eviction of slum dwellers

and taking housing projects for them on an urgent basis.

World Space Week inaugurated

The World Space Week 2003 was inaugurated on Saturday at the Mirpur Bangla High School the auditorium at Section-II in the city, says a press release.

Bangladesh Astronomical Society vice president and the former Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Dr. AKM Aminul Haque presided.

Bangladesh Astronomical Society General Secretary and the Coordinator of World Space Week in Bangladesh FR Sarker addressed the meeting. The Treasurer of Bangladesh Astronomical Society Dr. Mobarak Ali Akand, Mirpur Bangla High School Headmaster Syed Abdul Kaum, and Science Teacher and Adviser of the Science Club of Mirpur Bangla High School Siba Ranjan Datta and two students, Master Amit and Master Rahim also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Child artistes perform at a cultural function at the Shishu Academy auditorium yesterday in observance of the Child Rights Week-2003. Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum, an NGO, organised the event.

Govt claims success in food sector

BSS, Dhaka

The country achieved a remarkable success in the food sector during the last two years of the present government with efficient management and ensured food safety.

The government has restored discipline in the food sector bringing dynamism to food procurement, distribution, transportation, stock and import activities to fulfil one of the basic needs of the people.

The government has implemented a massive development programme to renovate and reconstruct godowns in 2001-02 and 2002-03 fiscals aiming at strengthening food security, food ministry

sources said.

With the implementation of the development work, the stock capacity of the godowns now reached nearly 15.48 lakh tonnes, they said. Besides, the government provided farmers with the highest price assistance to ensure fair price of foodgrains.

In the current season, the government procured 7,50,413 tonnes of Boro till August, they added.

The government has brought dynamism in food distribution under several development and target-oriented programmes including food for education, training programme for self-employment and food assistance programme to

save the people from natural disasters and other calamities.

The food ministry which is working as a stock holder in monitoring and planning different food-based welfare activities distributed 12.13 lakh tonnes of foodgrains in 2001-02 and 7.92 lakh tonnes in 2002-03, ministry sources said.

Regarding food import through private sector, the government took various steps to keep prices of foodgrains stable across the country, the sources said.

Reduction in bank LC margin and regulatory duty, and withdrawal of other taxes and fees on import of foodgrains helped the private sector to contribute to a lot during the crisis period.

Some 29.66 lakh tonnes of foodgrains had been imported through the private sector during 2002-03, they added.

The government sold 3,88,635 lakh tonnes of foodgrains in the Open Market Sale (OMS) at fair prices among the poor consumers that would help keep market price stable in 2002-03.

Sources said the present government has also attained a success in transportation of foodgrains.

The rate of godown shortfall reduced to 0.14 per cent in 2001-02 and 2002-03, sources said.

"Development partners of Bangladesh also expressed satisfaction at improvement of transportation and reduction of food deficit," the ministry sources said.

Meanwhile, the government has earned foreign currency of 64,781.28 US dollars and 21,700 euros by transporting 6.08 lakh tonnes of foodgrains from Rajshahi division and unloading 4.06 lakh tonnes at Chittagong and Mongla sea ports in 2001-02.

President hosts reception for Hindu community representatives

UNB, Dhaka

President Prof Dr Iajuddin held a reception for the representatives of the Hindu community at Bangabhaban yesterday on the occasion of their greatest religious festival, Durga Puja.

President Iajuddin and his wife Prof Dr Anwara Begum greeted the eminent personalities and wished them peace and prosperity.

The guests included politicians, educationists, lawyers, physicians, freedom fighters, artists, litterateurs, journalists, businessmen, government officials and ambassadors.

'Ensure land rights for food security'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government must ensure food security of the common people through ensuring land rights, said a study.

It said the rural people are deprived of their right to food due to land grabbing by the influential members of the society.

The study was conducted by Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), an international organisation working in Bangladesh.

"The lack of political will and widespread corruption are the main reasons behind the violation of the right to food of the vulnerable people," said Michaela Magrel, a member of the FIAN while presenting the study report at Dhaka Reporters Auditorium (DRU) yesterday.

The study also found that conflicting laws and inappropriate land documents are also responsible for land grabbing by the unscrupulous people.

It said on many occasions, the actual victims have to face false cases while there is no prosecution against the real culprits.

Divided into three groups, FIAN study teams comprising members from different countries, visited Tangail, Moulvi Bazar, Faridpur, Pabna, Noakhali, Khulna, Satkhira and Patuakhali districts and investigated cases of land rights violation.

Khorshed Alam, FIAN Bangladesh, and Sabina Papst of FIAN International, also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Members of the delegations of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPA) visited the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.

Malaysian food festival held

BSS, Chittagong

A two-day 'Malaysian Food and Cultural Festival' was held at Ichamati Hall at Hotel Agrabad here on Saturday.

Tourism Malaysia, Malaysia Airlines and Hotel Agrabad have jointly organised the festival.

Area Manager of Malaysia Airlines Mohammad Anuar Bin Mat Piah inaugurated the festival.

Earlier, organisers at a press conference said the core aim of the festival is to work together for the promotion of tourism in both countries through increasing people-to-people contact.

Mohammad Anuar Bin Mat Piah and Kabirul Anam Khan of Malaysia Airlines, Chief Executive of Hotel Agrabad H M Hakim Ali

and Zulhelmi Mohammad of Tourism Malaysia spoke at the press conference.

Anuar said Bangladesh and Malaysia could be benefited immensely if the two countries would be able to extract vast potentials exist in their tourism sectors.

He said Malaysia Airlines would consider in future to introduce flight operation from Chittagong Shah Amanat International Airport which will depend on business prospect.

H M Hakim Ali said the Malaysia Airlines, Tourism Malaysia and Hotel Agrabad authorities have agreed to work closely in future to promote tourism in both the countries.



State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman inaugurated a nine-month 'painting restoration and conservation training workshop' at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy yesterday.

Mohora Water Supply Project foundation to be laid in Ctg today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The foundation stone of Mohora Water Supply Project (MWSP) in the port city will be laid today.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to lay the foundation stone at Kalurghat under Chandgaon thana as chief guest.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan and Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury will be present on the occasion.

The TK 197.70 crore project, to be financed by the government, was approved at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on September 16, sources said.

At a meeting with the members of the local press here on Saturday, Md Azizur Rahman, chairman of the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA), Chittagong said work on the installation of the project would start soon and it would be completed by within four years.

"Since the government is financing the project, formalities like appointment of consultant and approval of the project design would not take much time," he added.

The chairman said on completion of the project with the production capacity of two crore gallons of water per day, the daily production of WASA,

Chittagong would be raised to over 5.50 crore gallons per day.

At present Chittagong WASA, through its Mohora Water Treatment Plant (MWTP) and deep tube-wells, produces some 3.70 crore gallons of water per day as against the city dwellers' daily need of over 11 crore gallons resulting in an acute crisis of water.

The chairman said the government is financing the project as an expansion of existing Mohora Water Treatment Plant (MWTP) due to failure of WASA, Chittagong to get financial assistance from the Japanese Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) for the project when it was titled as MWTP Phase 2.

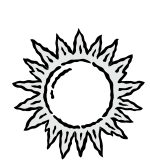
Khaleda goes to Feni today

UNB, Feni


Prime Minister Khaleda Zia arrives here today to lay the foundation stone of the country's first Computer Institute.

The institute will be built on 1.5 acres of land at a cost of Tk 24.13 crore at Malipur in the town.

After the foundation laying ceremony Khaleda Zia is scheduled to fly to Chittagong.



WEATHER TODAY



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet and a few places over Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions with moderately heavy falls at places till 6pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Kutubdia and the lowest 22.6 degree at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:41pm today and rises at 5:52am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	31.8	26.3	78	76
Chittagong	35.0	25.5	71	71
Rajshahi	29.6	23.8	95	90
Khulna	32.4	25.5	82	87
Barisal	33.0	25.6	77	83
Sylhet	30.0	24.0	98	83
Cox's Bazar	35.0	25.8	72	82



PHOTO: STAR

Customs and Excise Intelligence personnel in a joint drive seized huge quantities of contraband medicines worth some Tk 2 crore from a Biman flight from Karachi at the Zia International Airport yesterday.