



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia waves at the people during a public meeting at Noakhali Zila School ground on Saturday.

AL desperate to thwart uplift programmes: Khaleda

BSS, Noakhali

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said opposition Awami League is hell-bent on thwarting uplift programmes since the government has embarked on a massive development plan for the nation.

"The country has got assurances of huge aid from donor agencies. If we can use the money properly, there will be massive development and employment opportunities in the country," she said while addressing a public meeting at Noakhali Zila School ground on Friday.

Khaleda said the flow of foreign aid came to a halt during the past regime as the donors had lost confidence. But the present government received assurances of huge development assistance, she added.

Unnerved at the on-going and future development programmes of the four-party alliance government, the opposition is trying to hinder the process through destructive activities, holding the people hostage, she said.

The prime minister said the AL is opposing the government only for the sake of opposition as it has actually no issue in hand.

She criticised the AL for not joining the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference even after all its demands were fulfilled.

Presided over by local MP Mohammad Shajahan, the meeting was also addressed by Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed, State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Huq Milon, Advocate Mahbubur Rahman MP, Adviser to the Commerce Ministry Barkatullah Bulu, Maj (ret'd) Abdul Mannan MP, MA Hashem MP, and Zainal Abedin Faruq MP.

Earlier, the prime minister laid the foundation of Noakhali Science and Technology University at Shalyagatia, about seven km off the district headquarters. Work on the first phase of the project is expected to be completed within next two years.

The prime minister said the Awami League, while in power, did no development work for the country. "Rather, it indulged in plundering public money and harboured crimes."

She said the present government had inherited a shattered economy, perilous law and order, and social conditions.

She focussed on various development programmes of the government, particularly the programmes for female and primary education.

Dwelling on the efforts to curb cheating in public examinations, the prime minister sought cooperation from all to put an end to copying in examinations.

She pointed out irregularities in distribution of stipends among the primary school students.

Some students do not come to school regularly but draw the stipend, she said and urged the guardians to send their kids to schools regularly and enjoy the facilities offered by her government.

Responding to some demands of the local people, the prime minister pledged that steps will be taken to set up and construct new educational institutions, and repair school buildings, roads and a hostel at the local women's college.

A technical training centre will also be established here, she added.

Besides, she said, measures will be taken to resolve water logging problem, increase electricity supply and ensure development of telecommunications.

National Cooperative Award 2002 announced

BSS, Dhaka

The national committee for selecting cooperative organisations and persons for National Cooperative Award-2002 at a meeting here on Saturday finalised the names of 15 organisations and 12 persons for the award.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and Chairman of the selection committee Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan presided over the meeting at the LGRD and Cooperatives ministry.

Each recipient will be given a gold medal and a certificate through a national function on November 1.

SAARC UGC chiefs recommend 15-yr edn for bachelor's degree

BSS, Dhaka

Chiefs of University Grants Commissions (UGC) or equivalent bodies of the SAARC countries ended a two-day meeting yesterday, recommending 15 years of education for a bachelor's degree.

They suggested that the minimum timeframe for acquiring a bachelor degree except professional one should be 12 plus three years in the SAARC member-states.

Bangladesh UGC Chairman Prof M Asaduzzaman, who chaired the closing session at Hotel Purbani, told BSS that the meeting had recommended inclusion of a chapter on the SAARC in the secondary level curricula.

The meeting also recommended that the degrees awarded by the chartered universities of the SAARC countries be recognised by all member countries on the basis of number of years studied, grades and credits obtained, he said.

It viewed that the focal point in the SAARC member-states should be the UGCs or equivalent bodies for effective implementation of the revised schemes of SAARC chairs, fellowships and scholarships.

The meeting also encouraged the member states to announce expeditiously but not later than March 2004 their offers for the chairs, fellowships and scholarships under the revised scheme.

The meeting sources said the UGC chiefs emphasised that the medium of education at the higher level should be English to facilitate mutual recognition of degrees.

With a view to enhancing cooperation among the member states in the field of education, the meeting suggested introduction of exchange programmes of officials of UGCs or equivalent bodies.

The commendations will be placed in the 12th SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Pakistan in January 2004, sources said.

The meeting also decided to hold the next meeting of the UGCs of equivalent bodies in Islamabad before June 2004.

Member of Bangladesh UGC Prof. Monirul Hoque, Prof. KM Mohsin and Prof. Mahfuzul Hoq, Director of Adult and Higher Education Division of Education Ministry of Bhutan Nim Dem, Chairman of Nepal UGC Prof. Bidur Prasad Upadhyaya, Member of Higher Education Commission (Academic) of Pakistan Dr. AQ Mughal and Director of SAARC Secretariat Amjad Hussain B. Sial attended the meeting.

Newspapermen submit memo to PM Dec 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sangbadik Sramik Karmachary Oikya Parishad will hold a grand rally at the National Press Club on December 21 to press home their seven-point demand including 6th Wage Board and a national policy on newspaper industry.

After the rally, they will march towards the Prime Minister's Office to submit a memorandum consisting of their seven-point demand.

This was decided at a meeting of the Sangbadik Sramik Karmachary Oikya Parishad at the National Press Club yesterday.

The meeting also decided to hold an extended meeting of three federations and Dhaka Union of Journalists at the National Press Club at 11.00am on October 22 to press for 7-point demand.

Presidents and general secretaries of all the union under the federation and unit and deputy unit chiefs of all the DUJ units have been requested to be present at the meeting.

Journalist union leaders Gias Kamal Chowdhury, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Monzurul Alam, Elahi Newaz Khan, Abdul Jaiil Bhuiyan, Abdu Shahid, Omar Farook, and press workers leader Fazle Imam, Asadullah, Abul Hashem, Golam Sanwar Azad, Md Motiur Rahman Talukder, Md Shahjalal Miah, Khairul Islam and Md Shahjahan Talukder were present at the meeting.

Extortionist caught red-handed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Local people yesterday caught an extortionist red-handed and laid a siege to Kotwali police station demanding his trial and punishment under the Speedy Trial Act.

Police and witnesses said, the extortionist Anisul Islam, 28, entered a shop at Khalifapatti of Ghat Farhadbeg area at around 3.00pm and demanded toll from Ahmedur Rahman Patwary, 55, owner of the shop.

Being refused, Anisul beat up the elderly owner mercilessly.

On hearing a hue and cry, the local people rushed to the shop and caught Anisul red handed.

The mob gave him a good beating before handing over to police.

They also laid an hour-long siege to Kotwali police station demanding his punishment under the Speedy Trial Act.

The siege was withdrawn after a case was lodged with the police station under the act.

The World Food Day will be observed in the country on October 16 as elsewhere in the globe. Every year on 16 October, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations observes World Food Day in commemoration of its founding on that day in 1945.

The World Food Day/Tele Food theme for this year is "International Alliance Against Hunger," a press release of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) said.

To mark the day, a national seminar will be held at BARC auditorium at Farmgate at 10.00am on October 16.

Besides, a three-day Food Fair will also be arranged on the BARC campus on the same day.

DHAKA TODAY

Korean products show
The inaugural ceremony of a four-day Korean products show, organised by Korea Trade Centre, will be held with Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 10.00am.

Film show
The Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Omen 2'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Meeting
A meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh Book Club will be held. Venue: 83, Aziz Super Market, Shahbagh. Time: 5.30pm.

Reception
Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir will accord a reception to meritorious students who secured A+ in last SSC examination with Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid as chief guest. Venue: BIAM auditorium, New Eskaton. Time: 2.45pm.

Blood donation
Quantum Foundation organises a voluntary blood donation camp. Venue: Alifia Park Army office, Dhaka. Time: 11.00am.

BTV earns Tk 123 cr

BSS, Dhaka

The state-run Bangladesh Television has earned revenue of nearly Tk 123.41 crore in the fiscal 2002-2003 from licences fees and advertisements.

Officials said during the period, the state-run Bangladesh Betar earned Tk 10.62 crore.

They said the BTV earned Tk 86.25 crore from advertisements in the past one year and the amount is 82.3 per cent higher than that of the previous year.

Bangladesh Betar earned Tk 9.89 crore in 2001-2002.

During the period, the Betar also expanded its broadcasting period to 107 hours and strengthened its communication networks with modern transmitters.

The Betar also brought about changes in its programmes highlighting the issues of education and women education along with other development activities.

Work is underway to bring the greater Cox's Bazar under television network installing a 10-kilowatt TV relay station.

As part of its development initiatives, an archive has been set up in the BTV office to preserve different important documentaries.

President, PM greet Spanish counterparts

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia have conveyed their greetings and felicitations to Spanish King Don Juan Carlos and President Don Jose Maria Aznar Lopez on the occasion of the National Day of Spain.

In a message to the Spanish King on Saturday, the president expressed his firm belief that the existing friendly relations between the two countries would be developed further in the years to come.

Khaleda in her message to Lopez, expressed her confident that the existing bonds of friendship and cooperation, which had developed over the years, would further strengthen and consolidate in the years ahead to the mutual benefit of the two nations.



Delegates to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference place wreaths at the National Memorial at Savar on Saturday to pay tribute to the Liberation War martyrs.



West Bengal Assembly Speaker Hashim Abdul Halim discussed the water issue with the leaders of the Workers Party at its office in the city yesterday.

World Standards Day tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The 34th World Standards Day will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world tomorrow with a vow to uphold standard and quality of products aimed at improving living standard of people.

This year's theme of the day is "Global Standards for the Global Information Society."

Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) has chalked out a special programme to observe the day, says a BSTI release here yesterday.

The day's programme includes a special discussion at Hotel Purbani at 3.30 pm tomorrow to be participated by leading scientists, technologists, experts and businessmen.

Industries Minister Matiuir Rahman Nizami will attend the discussion as chief guest.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia issued separate messages marking the day urging all concerned to maintain quality of products in order to sustain in the present open market economy.

The President said it is not possible to sustain in the open market economy by producing low standard products and marketing it by giving attractive advertisements. We have to sustain in the world market with our products by ensuring its high quality, he said.

He called upon the producers, traders, consumers, media men and civil society to play a leading role for improving the quality of products and service by taking advantage of information technology.

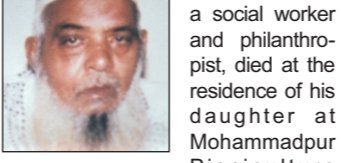
The prime minister described quality of products as the only criterion to get a place in the current competitive global market.

"There is no alternative to improve quality of products and services with bringing diversification to cope with the present competitive world market," she said.

Newspapers will bring out special supplements and Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television and private television channels will broadcast special programmes highlighting the significance of the day.

The BSTI will also organise similar programmes in its Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet offices on the day.

Obituary



Shahaadat Hossain Mridha, a social worker and philanthropist, died at the residence of his daughter at Mohammadpur Pisciculture Road in the city on Saturday at the age of 70, says a press release.

He had been suffering from Cancer since long.

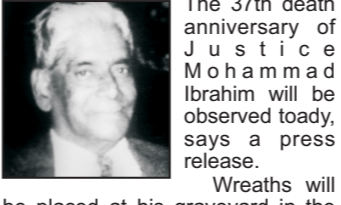
He left behind his two sons, five daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest at Raghunathpur village under Padri Shibpur union of Bakerganj thana in Barisal district after his namaj-e-janaza there yesterday.

His qulkhwani will be held at his village home today.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Justice Ibrahim's anniversary of death today



The 37th death anniversary of Justice Mohammad Ibrahim will be observed today, says a press release.

Wreaths will be placed at his graveyard in the morning. A milad mahfil will also be held.

Mukundalal

The 24th anniversary of death of Mukundalal Sarker, a prominent leader of anti-British Movement, will be observed here today, says a press release.

On the occasion, prayers will be offered for salvation of his departed soul at his son's residence at 8/3, Block-C, Lalmatia.

Sarker was born in 1909 at Dharmarayer Bari village in Gopalganj.

He was a close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

WEATHER TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the country till 6pm today.

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

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and the lowest 22.1 degree Celsius at Srimangol.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:35 pm today and rises at 5:56 am 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	33.3	25.4	80	62
Chittagong	32.8	25.0	81	74
Rajshahi	32.8	24.8	90	83
Khulna	33.8	24.4	82	80
Barisal	32.2	24.4	87	--
Sylhet	31.6	22.6	75	85
Cox's Bazar	31.8	23.4	92	82