



A UW Support Foundation chairman due tomorrow

Jack Meyer, who helped quadruple Harvard University's endowment to \$26 billion turning it into the largest fund of its type in the world, will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow on a four-day visit, says a press release.

Meyer was recently elected chairman of the Board of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation -- the Boston-based US foundation that is sponsoring the planned Asian University for Women in Chittagong.

He will finalise plans with the education ministry for the construction of the university campus over 1.5 million square feet of space with international standard classrooms, laboratories, faculty and student residences and other academic facilities.

Meyer will also hold meetings with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who co-chairs the International Support Committee for the university, Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk and Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan.

He will meet the university project's Bangladesh Board of Advisors that includes Rokia A Rahman, president of the Women Entrepreneurs' Association, Bangladesh, Dr Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, and FHAbed, founder of the BRAC.

He is also expected to meet the American Chamber of Commerce at a luncheon and speak on 'Institutional Investing: An Insider's View of the Harvard Management Company'.

Meyer, a graduate of Harvard Business School, took over the presidency of the Harvard Management Company -- the group responsible for the management of Harvard University's endowment -- in 1990.

Meyer's visit follows an earlier visit by Lady Judy Moody-Stuart of the UK, vice-chairman of the Board of the A UW Support Foundation.

Follow Hamas to establish right to issue fatwa

Amini tells his men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islamic Oikya Jote Chairman Mufti Fazlul Haque Amini MP yesterday urged his followers to carry out their campaign like Hamas, the main Islamist movement in the Palestinian territories, to establish the rule of Islam and the right to issue fatwa in the country.

He also called for forming Islamic Ain Bastabayon Committee in all mosques.

"Follow the ideology of Hamas and its activities and form Islamic committees in all mosques and villages to settle all disputes through fatwa," he said at a conference of the representatives of Islamic Ain Bastabayon Committee at the Institute of Engineers in the city.

"The rule of Islam cannot be implemented without establishing the right to issue fatwa in the country," Amini said.

He said Khaleda Zia has formed four-party alliance with the Islamic forces, but Sheikh Hasina has formed the 14-party alliance with the anti-Islamic forces.

Giving an ultimatum to the alliance government, Amini said the Islamic forces will launch a tough movement if the government does not take effective steps to cancel the court verdict against fatwa by March 23.

Oikya Jote leaders Obaidul Haque, Mufti Mohammad Tayeb, Nur Hossain Kahami, Abdul Latif, Mahiuddin and Nurul Islam also spoke.

Chehlum



Chehlum of Brig T U M Iftekharul Bashar will be held at his residence at House No-225, Lane-15, New D O H S. Mohakhali in the city today (Friday), says a press release.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and wellwishers have been requested to attend the chehlum.

'Reforms in political parties a must for free, fair election'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reforms of the political parties alongside those of the Election Commission (EC) and the caretaker government system are a must for a free and fair election, speakers at a view exchange meeting said yesterday.

To curb criminalisation of politics, the political parties should ensure internal democracy, their registration and transparency in financial sources and in the nomination process for the election, they said.

Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujon) organised the meeting titled 'The 9th national parliamentary election: Expectations from the mass media' at the National Press Club in the city.

The role of the mass media in the upcoming national election is very significant, the speakers said, adding that the media should provide detailed information about the potential candidates so that people can vote for the right person.

The media should collect the detailed information about the candidates such as their educational and professional backgrounds, income sources and contribution to society and make those public with a view to ensuring transparency in the nomination process, they said.

A free and fair election is not enough, said eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, convener of the Sujon.

If the dishonest candidates are elected, there will be no hope for the nation, he said, adding that providing detailed information about the candidates to the voters can help them elect the right and honest candidates.

"We want to establish democracy in our everyday life and we should practise it. Democracy should also be reflected in our political culture," he said.

"If the political parties practise internal democracy, we need not caretaker government at all," he added.

Member Secretary of Sujon Dr Badiul Alam Majumder said criminalisation of politics, poor public service, poverty and mili-

tancy are the main hindrances to long-cherished 'functioning democracy'.

"The EC should be independent and at the same time the EC should stop playing with the voter list," he said.

He also called for providing some facilities such as provision of 'No' vote in case of voters finding no-one eligible, putting the seal on the picture of the candidate instead of the symbol on the ballot paper and resolving electoral conflicts immediately.

Executive Director of DemocracyWatch Taleya Rahman said different organisations have started monitoring the voter listing process.

Columnist Sayd Abul Moksud said it is not possible for the EC alone to conduct a free and fair election, the civil society should come forward to ensure it.

Former advisor to a caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan and women leader Dr Hamida Hossain were also present.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday stressed that the auditors should play their role properly in ensuring accountability of the government and the administration through putting the record straight in public accounts.

The PM expressed the hope when Comptroller and Auditor General Asif Ali presented a report of their success during January 2003-February 2006 period at the PMO.

Khaleda thanked them for those successful steps and hoped that "the trend of the success would continue".

The successful works and achievements included a revised format of audit report, upgrading traditional audit into performance, issue-based and special audit, and dispute settlement through crash course with secretaries.

Issuance of two audits manually and four guidelines, training of 53 officials abroad and 446 others at home, training of 20 percent women officers and staff, shifting to the newly built Audit Bhavan by June 2006 were also cited as their successful doings.

Starting construction of training academy by 2006, invitation to one official from French Auditor General office to participate in UN audit, appreciation, evaluation letters by World Bank and UNDP and hosting regional conference of Auditors-General in 2004 were also listed.

PM asks auditors to ensure accountability in admin

UNB, Dhaka

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Family members of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria and members of the civil society line up in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday as part of the 'Blue for Peace' programme demanding fair trial of the Kibria murder case.

POLICE REFORM PROJECT Construction of five model police stations begins in April

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Construction of five model police stations under UNDP-DFID-aided police reform project will start by April next.

Of them, two will be set up in Dhaka and two in Chittagong. The much-talked-about project starts its operational activities throughout the country on completion of the groundwork.

Eleven model police stations will be established primarily to demonstrate how these can meet the needs and expectations of the people and benefit the community.

Personnel of the model police stations will be gender inclusive and trained to enhance their skill levels and prepare them for a more pro-people policing approach in their engagement with local community.

This was revealed at a daylong workshop titled 'Stakeholder Consultation Workshop' at a city hotel to detail the background of the project outlining its aim and objectives and workplans over the next three years.

Presenting a report at the workshop, Mohammad Mohsin, additional secretary to home ministry, said with a \$14 million fund, the reform project will require a 9-10-year timeframe in three phases for its implementation.

The project has been designed to improve the efficiency of police by ensuring people's access to justice, promoting crime prevention, optimising human resource management and introducing public consultation and accountability, he added.

Quoting a recent BBC survey that showed police as the least trusted people amongst the poor, Richard Miles, senior advisor to DFID in Dhaka, said poor people's contact with local thana in difficult circumstances results in even more problems.

Speaking at the workshop as chief

guest, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar said, "By this programme, we expect to create a more efficient and more effective police force with improved skill in crime prevention, investigation of offences and prosecution of cases. We expect to create a safe, secure and peaceful environment which will be conducive to overall development of our country."

With Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain in the chair, the workshop was also addressed by Larry Maramis, resident representative of UNDP in Dhaka, and Inspector General of Police Abdul Quayum as special guests.

National Project Co-ordinator AYBI Siddiqi delivered the welcome speech. Later a technical session was held.

ASM Shahjahan, project advisor to UNDP, chaired the session where David Wolstenholme, a project implementation specialist, presented the keynote paper.

DUAA reunion tomorrow

DU CORRESPONDENT

To mark the 58th founding anniversary of Dhaka University Alumni Association (DUAA), a daylong mega reunion will be held at the Gymnasium ground tomorrow, says a press release.

About 50,000 trained workers and 7.5 lakh volunteers will carry out the programme.

All the children aged between nine months and 10 years will be given measles vaccine to improve their resistance to the disease, the minister said.

Former students, eminent politicians, intellectuals, bureaucrats and distinguished personalities are expected to attend the programme.

It will begin at 8:00am and will continue till 10:00pm.

Guests have been requested to wear security badges for the sake of safety.



Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad speaks at a meeting titled 'The 9th national parliamentary election: Expectations from the mass media' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Columnist Sayd Abul Moksud and on his left is former advisor to a caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan.

Civil society, NGOs urged to help tackle bird flu threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting yesterday urged the civil society and non-government organisations to come forward along with the government to tackle the bird flu threat.

They also called on all not to panic and make all-out efforts to prevent the bird flu outbreak.

The BRAC Avian Influenza Prevention Project organised the meeting at the BRAC Inn Centre in the city.

"It is necessary for all to know accurate information about bird flu virus in order to prevent the menace," said Afsan Chowdhury, director, Advocacy and Human Rights cell of the BRAC.

Citing a report published in a British newspaper, he said Vietnam has successfully tackled the bird flu outbreak and not a single case has been reported there since November last year.

"It proves that the avian influenza can be contained if we take proper steps," he added.

Under a joint programme with the government to control the disease, BRAC has been providing assistance in detecting the virus in migratory birds.

BRAC has been providing chemicals and reagents to Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI) that has the lone laboratory to detect avian influenza virus.

The experts at the BLRI have been working on 10,422 samples and they would complete their work within a month.

Besides, the BRAC has distributed 10,000 gloves and 32,000 masks and bleaching powder among the poultry farm owners and workers.

It has also distributed 35,000 posters and 1,00,000 pamphlets to make the people aware about the bio-safety matters of poultry farms and bird flu.

Abul Hasan Rubel, a representative of the People's Committee to Prevent Bird Flu in Bangladesh, and Dr Mizanur Rahman of BRAC Avian Influenza Prevention Project also spoke.

Bush policy to increase global conflict

Experts tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a discussion yesterday criticised the US foreign policy under the Bush administration saying this is more aggressive than tolerant with regard to terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

The post 9/11 US foreign policy, if continues, will lead to further confrontations among the states, rather than contributing to establishment of peace, democracy and development in the world, they said.

The discussion on 'US Foreign Policy under Bush Administration' was organised by the Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies (CSPS) at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Speaking as chief guest, former ambassador CM Shafi Sami said the US foreign policy under Bush administration permits pre-emptive war against the potential aggressors before they mounted attacks against the United States.

Unilateral action is both possible

and justified in it, he added.

"The post 9/11 incident and paradoxically the response to it have forced people all over the world to confront an ever changing and increasingly dangerous world. An atmosphere of global insecurity is all pervasive," he said.

In his keynote speech, Prof Daniel Chirof of Washington University said the US invasion of Iraq was a mistake of Bush administration and it is linked to religious fundamentalism.

The people who wanted the Iraq war were the oil-obsessed strategists, he said.

Daniel Chirof observed the USA will return to reality, but leave behind a more chaotic and troubled Middle East, extreme Iran and a more radicalised Muslim world.

"The US maintains a dual foreign policy. In one hand it encourages Israel to proliferate nuclear weapons and on the other hand it threatens Iran of punishment when it just pronounces of conducting nuclear

research for peaceful purpose," said Dr Tareque Shamsur Rahman of Jahangirnagar University (JU).

The Iraq invasion by the world superpower has failed to establish peace and democracy when the divided Iraqi people are still in conflicts, he said.

Dr Tareque also slammed the US concept of democracy saying the winning of Hamas in Palestine is a people's choice, but the Bush administration was not ready to accept it as Hamas's strategy contradicts the Bush policy.

Prof Muhammad Shahiduzzaman of Dhaka University, former state minister for foreign affairs Abul Hossain Chowdhury and veteran politician ASM Abdur Rab also took part in the discussion.

CSPS Executive Director Major General (Retd) Ghulam Quader moderated the discussion chaired by its Chairman of the board of governors Commodore (Retd) MA Rahman.

GMG airlines female official shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female official of GMG airlines was shot at Uttara in the city yesterday.

Nafiz Ahmed Raka, 30, pregnant for four months, is undergoing treatment at the Holy Family Hospital.

Doctors said as a bullet hits her waist the foetus could not be saved and condition of the mother is also critical.

"Some unidentified criminal shot her thrice from behind when Raka was about to board a taxi cab at around 10:00am," Sub-Inspector Abdul Quayum of Uttara Police Station quoted a witness as saying.

He said Raka was going to GMG office at Banani. Her designation in the office, however, could not be known immediately.

Police suspected that the incident might take place over a sequel to previous enmity as the attackers did not take anything from Raka.

Police said relatives are not helping them in investigation.



Rain or thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division and the regions of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Mymensingh and Tangail in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged night temperature.

Highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 17.0 degree Celsius at Ishardi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:58pm today and rises at 6:24am tomorrow.

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

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Icon Photo contest for women photographers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Icon Photo will arrange a national photo competition for the women photographers on the occasion of the International Women's Day 2006, says a press release.

The selected photos of the competition titled 'Keboli Drishyer Janmo Hoi' sponsored by Banglalink will be displayed at the Drik Gallery in the city from March 8 to March 14.

Three grand prizes of Tk 50,000 and three honorary prizes of Tk 10,000 will be given in the competition.

Interested women photographers are requested to send photos with entry-form by 8:00 pm on March 3 to Icon Photo, House 41, Road 27 (old), Dhanmondi in the city.

The participants are also requested to see the national dailies and Icon Photo website-www.iconphoto.org.



Bangladesh Sangjukta Krishak O Khet Majur Samity stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday to protest against the persisting power, diesel and fertiliser crises in the northern region of the country.



Discussion

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon organises a discussion titled 'Ganges Barrage Project: An open discussion'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Talk

Centre for Human Security will hold a talk on 'Genocide and mass political killing: Why does it happen?'. Venue: RC Majumder Auditorium, Dhaka University. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

A workshop on 'Community-based approaches to flood management in

Bangladesh', organised by Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, will be inaugurated. Venue: LGED conference hall, Agargaon. Time: 3:30pm.

Festival

A rhyme festival, organised by Kendro Kheylagar Asar, will be inaugurated. Venue: Liberation War Museum, Segun Bagicha. Time: 3:00pm.

Fair

The concluding function of the Job Fair, organised by Jubo Kamangshon Society, will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Sher-e-Banglanagar. Time: 10:00am.

Int'l probe into Kibria killing demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different organisations and civil society members yesterday reiterated the demand for an international investigation into the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria.

They along with the family members of Kibria lined up in front of the National Museum at Shahbagh in the city as part of the 'Blue for Peace' programme to voice their demand.

Expressing concern over the killing of intellectuals across the country, they also criticised the government for its indifferent attitude towards such violence.

Referring to the murder of Prof Taher of Rajshahi University, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, said the government has failed to arrest all the culprits involved in the murder, which cannot be expected in a democratic country.

Advocate Sultana Kamal of Ain O Shalish Kendra said, "Through this demonstration we want to make the people aware of their rights to justice."

Wearing blue dress, family members of Kibria joined the programme. But Kibria's wife Asma Kibria could not attend it because of her illness.

Leaders of Mahila Awami League, Bangabandhu Jubo Parishad, Sonar Bangla Jubo Parishad, Bangabandhu Lalitkala Academy, Bangabandhu Ain Chhatra Parishad and Sonali Bank Employees Union B-20 Central Committee took part in the human chain.

Kibria, also an Awami League lawmaker, was killed in a grenade attack in his hometown Habiganj on January 27 last year.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST MEASLES

3.35 cr children to receive vaccine

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 3.35 crore children will receive measles vaccine during the second phase of countrywide vaccination campaign beginning tomorrow, Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said yesterday.

The three-week vaccination programme will continue until March 16 in all the districts except Rajshahi and Bogra as the two districts were covered in the first phase of the programme, the minister said at a press briefing in the city.

The American Red Cross, World Health Organisation (WHO), Unicef and the government are funding the campaign involving Tk 80.7 crore.

The vaccination campaign will be conducted at all primary level educational institutions across the country during the first week while the government vaccination centres will conduct the campaign during the second and third week from 8:00am to 3:00pm everyday.

About 50,000 trained workers and 7.5 lakh volunteers will carry out the programme. All the children aged between nine months and 10 years will be given measles vaccine to improve their resistance to the disease, the minister said.

Man kills 6-month old baby

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man thrashed his six-month-old child to death following a feud with his wife in front of a fair at Badda in the capital yesterday.

Tanvir Hassan and his wife Anamika went to a local fair in North Badda in the afternoon. The two locked in argument on some family matters.

At one point, Tanvir snatched the infant, Tarek Hassan, from his mother's lap and threw him on the ground.

The baby was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where doctors declared him dead at 6:00pm.

Anamika, traumatised since the incident, is yet to recover from the shock and could not give any details as to why Tanvir became angry. Local police held Tanvir from the spot.

Huge Bata shoes gutted in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A large quantity of footwear of Bata, a reputed shoe company, was damaged in a fire at its warehouse and showroom at the city's Agrabad Commercial Area on Wednesday.

The fire broke out at the Bata Bazar storeroom on the first floor of a 4-storey building at Azmal Centre of Sheikh Mujib Road at around 8:45pm, fire service sources said.

It damaged a large stock of footwear on the storeroom before it spread to the Bata Bazar showroom at the ground floor of the building.

The fire originated from an open lamp while the damages of property in it was estimated at around Tk 2 lakh, fire service sources said.